

ACONA Meeting Notes

May 25, 2021

After introductions, the following topics were presented.

Southern California Edison: Tree trimming, the drought, and fires

David Guzman, SCE Operations Manager, Vegetation Management

David Ford, SCE Operations, Government Relations Manager

2020: 4.2MM acres, 10,000 fires. More than 70% more red flag days compared to 2019. Public Safety Power Shutoffs during high winds or other hazardous situations.

Vegetation management:

Looking for structural defects in trees around electrical equipment. Maintain safety clearances in healthy trees. Look for trees in decline. Clear anything that can drop onto or grow into lines. 6' clearance in high fire areas, 4' otherwise. Use LiDAR (light detection and ranging) to monitor the lines. Drought Resolution Initiative: Looks for dying trees. A tree can die in less than 90 days from first detection of decline. Inspect for invasive insects which can be an indicator of trees that are stressed. Pole brushing: making sure the area around the bottom of a pole is clear. Supplemental summer patrols: proactive examination of high risk areas; increased surveillance in high wind situations. SCE has identified areas that haven't burned in a long time and are dry. Closest to us is in Glendora. Those areas are prioritized to make sure they are compliant. SCE does environmental compliance reviews for all of their work.

Parking Enforcement in Altadena

Jonathan Gonzalez, Senior Civil Engineering Assistant, LA County Public Works
Lt. Mark Skaggs, Altadena Sheriff's Station

Q: Many curbs at street junctions are not marked red. Cars are often parked at the corner of our street (Devonshire/Mariposa) blocking the view for safe entrance onto Mariposa. What is the law and how can we make these corners safer?

A: It's not inherently illegal to park there, but in Altadena there is a blanket restriction for vehicles more than 7.5' tall 8' wide and 20' long.

Comment from Diane Marcussen: Altadena has an oversized vehicle ordinance that should help with motor homes.

Q: An SUV with flat tires sat on Mariposa near Molina for several weeks, maybe more, gathering dust and debris. What is the law and how can citizens report and follow up on abandoned vehicles that take up precious space curb real estate?

A: There is a section of the vehicle code that allows the Sheriffs to tow vehicles, but it's a pretty stringent list of requirements. But the Sheriffs can put a 72-hour red tag on it and it can be towed after that if the vehicle hasn't moved. Prefer voluntary compliance wherever possible.

Q: Cheney Road near Millard Camp regularly has cars parked blocking half the road in violation of the posted signs, especially on weekends as people crowd the trails. The illegally parked cars are blocking vital access for fire trucks and fire suppression teams who depend on this access point into the foothills above Altadena/Pasadena. This is also an “Adventure Pass Required” parking area and yet that requirement mostly goes ignored. How can we encourage Parking Enforcement to regulate this dangerously congested road and work with the Forestry Service before this ongoing problem has catastrophic consequences?

A: Adventure Pass: They can only ticket cars parked in improved parking area at the trailhead if they don't have an Adventure Pass. But if they're actually blocking the road they can be cited. Look for voluntary compliance but will tow if necessary. Starting next weekend, Eaton Canyon is going to be opening fully, so that might relieve some of the traffic on the other trailheads. Reserve deputies will be doing weekend patrols at all the trailheads for illegal parking, but also for thefts from vehicles.

Parking restrictions:

Respond to requests for restrictions and related traffic concerns. Multi-step process of evaluation. 75% of affected community must be in favor.

The Drought

Jennifer Betancourt Torres, General Manager, Lincoln Avenue Water Company

Three water sources: groundwater, canyon surface water, imported water (Colorado River, Northern California). Precipitation is the driving factor for availability. Altadena averages 22” per rainy season. We are at 7.5” this year.

Warmer than average temperatures in April/May evaporated a lot of the snowfall that normally provides water. Snow pack is at 6% of normal levels. Nearly 3/4 of the state is in extreme drought. Increased wildfire danger because of that. 41 of 58 counties have been declared by the Governor to be in drought conditions.

Metropolitan Water District said it will be able to adapt to the latest water supply challenges. While there are no mandated water restrictions, conservation measures are strongly recommended. Agencies are allowed to take only a mandated amount of ground water each year. There is an interagency exchange program in place. Surface water is a seasonal source, dependent on rainfall, and is therefore unreliable. Rainfall is also an important component of groundwater: less rainfall means less groundwater recharging.

Permanent water-use prohibitions:

- Hosing off hardscape (sidewalks, driveways...)
- Watering in a way that causes runoff
- Washing vehicles using a hose with no shut-off valve
- Using non-circulating water in water features
- Watering ornamental turf in public medians

Rebate programs: www.socalwatersmart.com

- HE clothes washers: \$85 and up
- Premium HE toilets: \$40 and up
- Weather-based irrigation controllers: \$80/controller

Rotating sprinkler nozzles: \$2/nozzle
Rain barrels: \$35/barrel
Cisterns: \$250-\$350 depending on capacity
Soil moisture sensor system: \$80/controller
Turf removal, \$2/sq. ft. up to 5,000 sq. ft.

Since stay at home order, water usage has gone up.

Q&A

Q: Heard there is massive brush and vegetation clearance in the months. How extensive is it? **A:** No plans to do vegetation clearance. US Forest Service is consulted when any work is contemplated.

Q: What's the best way to contact SCE with a concern? **A:** Contact Geraldo Avila, gerardo.avila @sce.com; phone 626-260-0630, or Luis Perez, luis.3.perez@sce.com; phone 805-393-0104.

Q: Is SCE prioritizing and planning to replace insulated cable? **A:** For grid hardening, we have an ambitious annual goal. So far, have installed 6000 fire resistant poles, 960 circuit miles of covered conductor and 3000 fast acting fuses.

Q: Has Edison looked into reducing wires, either via more efficient placement of poles or taking away old or inactive wires. **A:** SCE is making a significant investment in replacing old infrastructure.

Q: Is the 72-hour red tag process applicable on private streets? **A:** Not unless the private-street's association elects to have some kind of process. Will follow up with parking enforcement to verify.

Q: Any plans to put high voltage wire underground? **A:** It's an option we consider but it depends on topography and geographical area. SCE is still pretty much an overhead line company: less expensive, easier to troubleshoot and repair.

Q: Will Lincoln Ave Water Co. be available this summer to host a community water tour? **A:** Still coming out of Covid, but as soon as it's safe we will be planning one.

Q: If we see water leaking onto the street from a private property, whom should we contact? **A:** Call the water company who will determine where the leak is coming from.

Q: Lincoln Avenue will not address for the other companies, though, right? **A:** Call the appropriate water company. The company you call should direct you to the applicable water company if you are at a boundary.

Q: What are the plans for the safe street signs? **A:** The program is going to be continuing. Not sure what will happen post-pandemic, but believe a new program will be going into effect. If there's a damaged sign, call LA Co. Public Works to fix or replace the sign.