# Meeting Information

The Wildfire Safety Advisory Board (WSAB or the Board) was held in-person and via Zoom on Monday, December 4, 2023.

# Video Webcast Recording

 Video webcast recording: [Wildfire Safety Advisory Board Meeting - 12/4/2023 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXT2V1PQ5ZU)

# Actions Taken or Discussion Points

The relevant documents discussed or approved during the meeting are posted on the Board’s webpage at

<https://energysafety.ca.gov/who-we-are/wildfire-safety-advisory-board/>.

# Board Member Attendance

The online meeting was led by Chair Jessica Block. Also in attendance were Vice Chair Chris Porter and Board Member Tim Haines. Board Members Ralph Armstrong and Diane Fellman were in attendance online. Board Members Alexandra Syphard and John Mader were absent. Board Member Armstrong departed at 11:00 a.m.

**Agenda Action Taken/Discussion Points**

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| 1. Public Comment
2. October 3, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes
3. Electric Safety Policy Division, Office of

Energy Infrastructure Safety Update. 1. Board adoption of Advisory Opinion for the 2024 WMPs of the Electric Publicly Owned Utilities and Rural Electric Cooperatives.
2. Presentations and

Discussion on Above-Grade Distribution Systems1. Board discussion on Utility Vegetation Management (UVM) Recommendations and Policy Paper
2. Updating Utility

Regulations in light of Climate Change and Wildfire Risks Policy Paper1. Subcommittee Assignment Recap and Activity Updates

9. Meeting Adjourned | No public comments were received.A motion was made by Member Armstrong to accept the October 3, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Member Diane Fellman. Votes: 4 – Ayes 0 – Nays 1 - Abstention.Lucy Morgans, Program Manager, provided updates on the following:1. The status and next steps associated with Energy Safety’s evaluation of the electrical corporations’ 2023-2025 Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMPs)
2. The development of Energy Safety’s new Guidelines for the 2025 WMP Updates
3. An update on the work of our Risk Modeling Working Group
4. Brief updates in other areas, such as safety culture assessment, executive compensation, and our work to review existing safety requirements.

Sang Soble provided a summary of the board’s recommendations. After a significant discussion and public comment, a motion was made by Vice Chair Chris Porter and seconded by Member Tim Haines to adopt the Advisory Opinion for the 2024 WMPs of the Electric Publicly Owned Utilities and Rural Electric Cooperatives. Votes: 5 – Ayes 0 – Nays. Matt Pender (PG&E) and Brad Koelling (PG&E) presented on PG&E’s Ground-Level Distribution System (GLDS) Pilot and their progress and challenges in hardening their distribution system. Rudy Movafagh (Rudd Engineering) presented on Minimum Cover Cable (MCC) & GLDS Systems that are resilient to wildfire and other hazards. The board discussed the benefits and drawbacks of different types of above ground distribution systems and asked questions to the presenters.Larry Kahn (Tulane University) presented UVM policy recommendations. Kahn presented findings and recommendations of his initiative, which aims to improve the utility vegetation management practices and regulations in California and other states. A few examples of Kahn’s recommendations include harmonizing California’s UVM regulations and aligning them with existing national standards and demarcation of legal responsibility for the UVM work both on and off the utility right of way. The Board expressed appreciation for Kahn’s work and asked questions about the legal and policy implications of his recommendations. Jonathan Frost provided a high-level overview of the draft UVM policy paper which included the current UVM practices and regulations in California and recommendations for improvement. After a significant discussion and public comment, a motion was made by Board Member Chris Porter and seconded by Member Tim Haines to postpone the adoption of the paper until the next meeting and to solicit more input from the stakeholders and experts. Votes: 4– Ayes 0 – Nays.A motion was made by Board Member Chris Porter and seconded by Member Tim Haines to postpone the discussion and adoption of the paper until the next meeting and to review it more thoroughly. Votes: 4 – Ayes 0 – Nays.The Board assigned leads for each subcommittee topic and agreed to provide updates at future meetings. The Board also discussed the need for a strategic planning meeting and a work plan for 2024. The Board learned that a contract for a strategic planner was approved and that the workshop would be held next year.The meeting was adjourned following a motion to adjourn made by Board Member Chris Porter and seconded by Member Tim Haines. The motion was unanimously approved. |