

I am John Scarborough, the volunteer Vice-Chair of the Wildfire Safety Commission for the City of Ashland. I have lived in Ashland since 1999.

During the Almeda fire (Sept 8th, 2020), some areas near if not in Ashland were without cellphone service for a period of time that anecdotally ranged between 15 minutes and several hours. A few weeks after the fire, I made telephone inquiries to the City, Jackson County, and Oregon's Public Utilities Commission (PUC). I was told that regulations for disaster readiness are handled only by the FCC.

On February 6th, 2022, several areas in Ashland experienced failing or sketchy services from AT&T. I contacted AT&T via online support; they confirmed that there were outages in my area. They said the problem would be fixed by February 11th. Note the 5 day delay. If we had had a wildfire disaster between the 6th and the 11th, Ashland citizens in the area would have been at high risk because they may not have received Nixel alerts, for Nixel depends on mobile carriers.

What can be done to fortify this aspect of disaster preparedness in Ashland (and elsewhere in Oregon)? California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill 2421 on Sept 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, which created an expedited process for installing low-emission, emergency standby generators to provide back-up power for cell tower sites throughout California during a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) electrical power outage or a catastrophic emergency. Wildfire management in Oregon has been greatly assisted by grants this year, but if we can't keep mobile networks connected so that disaster warnings are received by citizens who rely on them, we put residents at high risk.

Can someone tell me whether Oregon's legislature is considering similar legislation for Oregon?

John Scarborough