



## October is Fire Prevention Month - Black Hills Energy Highlights Wildfire Mitigation Programs

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RAPID CITY, S.D., Oct. 25, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Safety is a fundamental component of Black Hills Energy's mission of improving life with energy. In recognition of "Fire Prevention Month" this October, the company is building awareness of its wildfire mitigation initiatives, which are designed to support the safe and reliable delivery of energy to customers and communities across its service areas.

"Safety and reliability go hand-in-hand and are top priorities at Black Hills Energy," said Marne Jones, senior vice president of utilities. "For decades, we have employed a wide variety of wildfire mitigation measures and initiatives to support the integrity of our energy delivery systems, while safeguarding our facilities and the surrounding environment. These efforts are part of our comprehensive approach to mitigate not only wildfire risk, but also a variety of extreme weather events, including ice storms and high winds.

"Wildfire safety is a daily focus for our operations teams," continued Jones. "We use a combination of tools, practices, and programs as part of our everyday work to support our risk mitigation efforts and drive reliability for our customers and communities. These wildfire mitigation practices have helped our electric segment consistently maintain top quartile reliability."

Black Hills Energy manages its wildfire risk mitigation through a three-layered approach including: 1) asset programs, 2) integrity programs and 3) operational response. These include but are not limited to:

- **Asset Programs** – We conduct proactive equipment inspections and repairs and utilize maintenance practices that include vegetation management within our rights of way, electric power line patrols (air and ground), in addition to power pole inspections and replacement.
- **Integrity Programs** – We make system investments aimed at improving reliability and reducing risk, undergrounding electric distribution lines, and applying construction standards that reduce the likelihood of wildlife interactions with facilities.
- **Operational Response:** We make risk-driven decisions including system reconfigurations and daily work activities and equipment operation (non-reclosing energized power lines), and use fire weather forecasting tools to enhance our team's situational awareness and better understand and appreciate potentially hazardous fire areas.

"In addition to our operational activities, we work diligently to engage our customers and communities in public safety practices and how to stay safe around overhead and underground electric lines," stated Jones. "This is an essential part of Black Hills Energy's work to maintain a safe environment because we live here, too, and are deeply embedded in our local communities. To further our efforts, each year we conduct public safety training for first responders and large-scale emergency response drills to help ensure our team and partners are ready to serve our communities during natural disasters or other times of need."

"As we build awareness of "Fire Prevention Month" and wildfire risk, our team understands the critical natural and importance of the ongoing development and implementation of wildfire risk mitigation strategies, for the betterment of the environment and our customers, employees, and communities," concluded Jones.

Additional details on Black Hills Energy's risk-mitigation programs can be found on its website at [www.blackhillsenergy.com/wildfire-safety](http://www.blackhillsenergy.com/wildfire-safety).

### Black Hills Corporation

Black Hills Corp. (NYSE: BKH) is a customer focused, growth-oriented utility company with a tradition of improving life with energy and a vision to be the energy partner of choice. Based in Rapid City, South Dakota, the company serves 1.33 million natural gas and electric utility customers in eight states: Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

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