

MOTION

On January 7, 2025, communities in Council District 7 were evacuated from their homes in response to the Hurst Fire. While the official cause of the fire is still under investigation, there have been reports that a nearby powerline may be the origin.

Powerlines can cause fires in several ways, particularly in regions with dry climates or during periods of extreme weather. One common cause is high winds. Weak or aging infrastructure worsens these risks, as they may be less resilient to high winds.

These factors, among others, highlight the importance of taking proactive measures to minimize the fire risks associated with wind and powerlines.

Underground powerlines offer significant benefits in reducing the risk of emergencies compared to overhead lines. These types of powerlines are less susceptible to damage from storms, high winds, and falling trees, which frequently cause power outages. Further, underground powerlines minimize fire hazards, as undergrounding eliminates the risk of sparks igniting vegetation, a common issue in wildfire-prone areas.

Although there are known challenges with transitioning to this type of infrastructure, including costs and maintenance, the long-term benefits make underground powerlines a valuable investment for mitigating the risks associated with local emergencies, and the City should explore its options.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power be INSTRUCTED to report back with a current map of all undergrounded and aboveground utilities in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, with the assistance of any needed department or government agency, be INSTRUCTED to report back on the feasibility and implementation of a tiered system for undergrounding powerlines. This report should also include the following information:

- Criteria for prioritizing areas for undergrounding, such as risk factors like Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones;
- A detailed cost analysis, including projected costs for different tiers, potential funding options, and the impact on utility rates and customers; and
- Strategies for community input and stakeholder engagement processes;

*MR*  
JAN 14 2025

PRESENTED BY:

*Monica Rodriguez*  
MONICA RODRIGUEZ

Councilwoman, 7th District

SECONDED BY:

*Katy Yarbrough*

*Bob Blumenthal*

ORIGINAL