

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

CORTEZ, COLO. – BRUSH FIRE CAUSES POWER OUTAGE

A brush fire south of Cortez, Colorado, was the primary cause of a power outage on the evening of June 21, 2017. The fire damaged an Empire Electric Association 115,000-volt transmission line that provides power to Empire Electric's Nuchu substation. The outage impacted approximately 667 members in Towaoc and the surrounding area beginning at 5:05 PM MDT.

The transmission line remained out of service as a safety precaution to protect the personnel from the Ute Mountain Ute Fire Agency that were fighting the blaze. Once the on-scene fire commander gave approval, Empire Electric repaired the damage, re-energized the transmission line, and restored power to all members at 8:57 PM MDT.

Empire Electric reminds residents to be vigilant as temperatures rise and fire danger increases. If you suspect a fire, report it to your local authorities. If you see a potentially hazardous condition around Empire Electric's facilities, like a down power line, foreign objects caught in power lines, or trees that have grown into a power line, please notify Empire Electric at (970) 565-4444 or (800) 709-3726. These conditions have the potential to start fires or cause power outages.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.