Thunderstorm Wreaks Havoc: Power Outages, Fires, Accidents

by Bend Weekly News Sources

A major power outage hit Bend on the evening of July 3rd at about 5:30 pm, knocking out power to over 20,000 Pacific Power customers for approximately Â½ hour.

A severe thunderstorm rolled through the Bend area Monday, producing lightning that started a series of fires on the Ochoco National Forest, Deschutes National Forest, the Prineville District of the Bureau of Land Management and private lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry. Most areas received precipitation and some hail.

According to the Central Oregon Interagency Dispatch Center, in Oregon there were over 6000 lightning strikes and 4372 of them were in Central Oregon. The storm tracked from southwest Deschutes County across Central Oregon to the southeast.

In Central Oregon there were 24 confirmed fires from the lightning storm. Aggressive firefighting has kept most of the 24 starts to less than a Â¼ of an acre.

In the city, Bend Police were called to flag at numerous intersections that were left without power to operate the light signals, on a day with particularly high traffic due to tomorrowâ€™s 4th of July holiday. Several minor car accidents occurred at intersections without signals.

On July 4th throughout the day, a full staff of local resources will be patrolling by air and ground for hold over lightning fires in the area. Forecasted weather calls for additional afternoon thunderstorms and lightning.

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