File: 0400.20

May 15, 2025

Shelley Martens
FortisBC - Electricity
#300-750 Vaughan Ave
Kelowna, BC V1Y 7E4

Dear Ms. Martens:

RE: Objection to Proposed Extreme Weather Preemptive Outage Plan

At the May 8, 2025, Protective Services Committee meeting of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, the Committee resolved the following:

> *THAT the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen write a letter to FortisBC and the Province to request reconsideration of the Public Safety Power Shutoff Policy.*

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am expressing our support for the Town of Princeton's May 7, 2025 opposition to FortisBC's proposed extreme weather preemptive outage plan. We agree that this plan inadequately considers critical factors, leaving rural communities throughout the Regional District highly vulnerable and at risk of substantial harm.

The following represents only a fraction of our concerns regarding the impacts of the proposed outages under this policy:

- Evacuation requirements for high-risk individuals reliant on electricity for medical equipment.
- Closure of businesses, limiting residents access to essential goods and services, including fuel, groceries, medical supplies, and basic necessities.
- Absence of community cooling centers during heat events.
- Substantial reduction or loss of fire protection capabilities, significantly increasing fire risk during critical periods.
- Significant threat to public safety from prolonged loss of communications systems, critically impairing residents' ability to contact emergency services.
- Increased risk of fatalities among vulnerable residents unable or unwilling to evacuate during prolonged outages, further exacerbated by communication disruptions.

While I acknowledge and appreciate the Commission's May 12, 2025 order that FortisBC suspend plans to implement this policy, I respectfully request that FortisBC reconsider this proposed policy. A thorough reassessment of the real and significant risks to our communities' economic stability, social cohesion, public health, and safety is crucial. I urge FortisBC to fully evaluate these consequences before proceeding further.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Pendergraft
Board Chair

Cc: Town of Princeton
Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Honourable Brittny Anderson, Minister of State for Local Governments and Rural Communities
Honourable Kelly Greene, Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Energy and Climate Solutions