

Storm Damage:

How We Respond and How to Report

How We Respond

For most businesses, operating hours are just that – hours they are available to provide service to their customers. Depending on the type of business, operations do not happen outside of those times.



That is not the case for the Florence Public Works Department. While the posted times that the office is staffed are from 8am to noon and 1pm to 5pm Monday through Friday, the field staff arrive for their regular shift much earlier! Our field staff regular hours are Monday through Friday 7am to 3:30pm. You will often see Public Works vehicles and equipment out and about before the sun has come up during winter, getting started on the necessary daily work that goes into maintaining our streets, parks and open spaces, as well as, keeping the clean water flowing to your home and the toilets flushing. Often times though, emergencies happen outside of “normal” business hours!





We were fortunate that the freezing weather was to the north and east of Florence during Oregon's first extreme winter weather event of the season. We had very little storm damage compared to the rest of the state and county, but Public Works staff had equipment ready for in the event that snow or ice were to come our way. Even though the ice missed us, we did experience some wind. The high winds combined with saturated soils led to some trees leaning heavily at Miller Park. Park crews utilized the aerial lift to safely remove sections of the trees before dropping the final section of the trees to the ground. The hazard trees were located on the east side of the park between the internal walking path and the Oak Street multi-use path.

With all of the ice that the rest of the state was receiving, Central Lincoln PUD did lose their Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) feed to our community around 1:30am January 14th. This triggered the need for our treatment plant operators to

respond (both the wastewater and water treatment plant operators) to reset some of our sewer pump stations; manually transfer power from the emergency power generator for Siuslaw Village Sewer Pump Station (the auto transfer switch is being replaced – bad timing to have the auto transfer switch out of service); manually transfer power from the generator at the 31st Street water pump station to the pump station; and adjust some controls at both the water and wastewater treatment plant. With low flow conditions and low water demands none of our customers saw any issues and everything ran very smoothly. We experienced no sewer overflows or water outages and everything went back to 'shore power' once the BPA issue was resolved. The community experienced a power outage for an hour that Sunday morning (January 14, 2024).

With a great team experienced in emergency response, it is expected that the community would never notice that an outage had occurred. This is what Public Works have trained for and having the emergency equipment in place to respond to these types of emergencies.

How to Report

Fallen Trees

- For all emergencies, call 911. This includes downed power lines, fallen trees that are blocking streets and safety issues that need immediate attention.
- For power lines that are threatened by trees or branches, call Central Lincoln PUD at 1-877-265-3211.
- For hazardous trees or branches over roads or in parks, during regular business hours call Florence Public Works at 541-997-4106. If it is after regular business hours, please contact the Florence Police Department at 541-997-3515.
- To report trees down on County Roads, contact the Sheriff's Office at 541-682-4141.
- To report trees down on State Highways, contact ODOT at 503-378-0457.



Downed Power Lines

- To report a downed power line, call Central Lincoln PUD at 1-877-265-3211.
- Stay clear of downed power lines and downed trees in their vicinity, even if you believe that the lines are dead or have been de-energized by the power company.
- Lines can become re-energized as circuits are restored or come into contact with live lines.
- Power company assessment crews often visit sites before repair crews are dispatched.
- Don't assume that lines have been de-energized just because a power company crew has visited the area.



Blocked Storm Drains

- Storm drains are designed to handle normal water flow, but occasionally during heavy rain, localized flooding will occur.
- With the debris that falls with heavy wind storms, these drains can easily become blocked with leaves and pine needles.
- To report a blocked storm drain, call Florence Public Works at 541-997-4106.



If you have any questions regarding reporting issues, you can always call Public Works at 541-997-4106 during normal business hours or the Florence Police Department non-emergency phone number at 541-997-3515 after hours.