

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

AVISTA CORPORATION D/B/A/ AVISTA UTILITIES

Respondent.

DOCKETS UE-220053, UG-220054, and UE-210854 (Consolidated)

**AARON TAM
ON BEHALF OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
PUBLIC COUNSEL UNIT**

EXHIBIT AT-21

Avista's Response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 289

July 29, 2022

AVISTA CORP.
RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

JURISDICTION:	WASHINGTON	DATE PREPARED:	05/17/2022
CASE NO.:	UE-220053 & UG-220054	WITNESS:	David Howell
REQUESTER:	Public Counsel	RESPONDER:	David James
TYPE:	Data Request	DEPT:	Wildfire Resiliency
REQUEST NO.:	PC – 289	TELEPHONE:	(509) 495-4185
		EMAIL:	dave.james@avistacorp.com

SUBJECT: Wildfire Plan, Avista’s Response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 179.

REQUEST:

The Company states in their response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 179, “50-70% of faults are temporary in nature, such as a lightning stroke or animal contact.”

- a) How much time on average does it take for these “temporary” faults to resolve?
- b) Are these faults temporary in nature because they resolve by themselves or because they are easily resolved by the Company?
- c) What is the predetermined length of time that is used for testing circuits during Base Level Dry Land Mode (DLM) and Elevated Risk: Fire 2 Shot?
- d) How many outages occurred due to DLM each year for the past three years? And how long were those outages before they were resolved?

RESPONSE:

- a) The average temporary fault resolves in 0-12 seconds.
- b) Distribution circuit breakers use two separate overcurrent elements to detect faults and de-energize a circuit. Instantaneous overcurrent relays operate in a fraction of second and are used to clear temporary faults. Most of us have witnessed this in our homes when the power goes out temporarily but is restored in just a couple of seconds. This initial trip, the dead line open period followed by an automatic reclose, is common throughout the industry and allows time for temporary faults such as small tree branches, animal contact, phase slap, and lightning hits to clear. No human or manual intervention is required in this circumstance. If the fault is permanent (e.g., tree fall, equipment failure, car hit pole) then the time-overcurrent element is active in the breaker. This allows time for downstream fuses to operate (blow) and isolate the fault without interrupting service to other customers. If there are no downstream fuses (e.g., main trunk line fault), the time-overcurrent element will ‘time-out’ and the breaker will open. In either of the latter scenarios, a field response is required to resolve the issue.
- c) Avista does not test circuits during Dry Land Mode operations.
- d) This data cannot be directly tracked because we do not know the exact nature of the fault incident. We can only assume outage counts for circuits in Dry Land Mode increase where circuit breakers are not allowed to auto-clear temporary faults due to the Dry Land Mode settings.