CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Electrical Grid Security

CWU is requesting $1,589,000 to secure unreliable electrical cabling to 13 highly trafficked facilities.

After a major power outage in May 2021, CWU determined that two feeder lines are vulnerable to a catastrophic electrical outage. There are no redundant lines, so failure would result in loss of power to all the facilities on them. If facilities lost power in late fall, winter, or early spring, loss of heating and air distribution in the buildings could produce cascading damages as water lines freeze, burst, and cause flooding in the buildings. Power outages would also cause major disruptions to teaching and learning and result in other property loss. During the May power outage, thousands of dollars of food was discarded as refrigerators and freezers in Dugmore dining hall lost power.

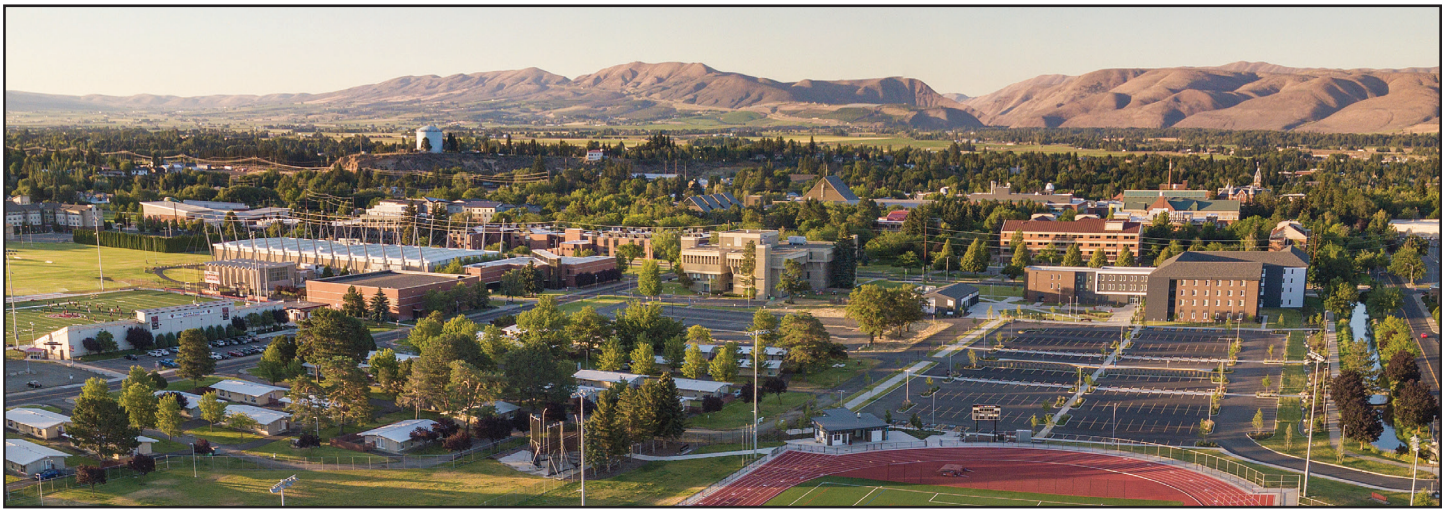
A major outage could have devastating consequences.

The existing old feeder lines pose a tremendous financial liability to CWU and the state. A fire sprinkler line froze and burst in February 2021 and caused over $1 million in damages to a single building, even though crews shut off the water supply in less than 15 minutes. Since an outage on the existing feeders could affect up to 13 facilities simultaneously, the potential risk is much higher.

An outage could also cause major disruption to every aspect of CWU's operations on the north side of campus. On a busy day, upwards of 3,000 students and employees could be affected by a major outage. Over the course of a day, the majority of CWU students might be scheduled for a class in one or more of the affected buildings. Additionally, the residential facilities served by the feeders, house up to 610 students. For students nearing graduation, an extended outage could have detrimental impacts on their progress toward graduation.

Reliable power distribution is key to reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

CWU has a long-standing commitment to energy conservation and improving the energy efficiency of campus. CWU reduced total energy consumption by 14 percent from 1998 to 2011, despite a net increase in campus building area of 300,000 square feet during the same period. As we aspire to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and increase reliance on renewable energy, it will be crucial that the electric distribution infrastructure on-campus is updated and reliable.



Fall 2021

For more information contact Steve DuPont, Director of Government Relations, at 509-201-0528 or Steve.DuPont@cwu.edu.

cwu.edu

CWU IS AN EEO/AA/TITLE IX/VETERAN/DISABILITY EMPLOYER. FOR ACCOMMODATION EMAIL: DS@CWU.EDU.