



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

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**CPUC PROPOSAL ADDRESSES UTILITY FAILURES TO PROTECT
PUBLIC SAFETY DURING 2019 PSPS EVENTS**

SAN FRANCISCO, April 20, 2021 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in ongoing efforts to hold utilities accountable for safely implementing Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events, today issued a proposal that finds that Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE), and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) each failed to comply with CPUC-required guidelines in many of their 2019 PSPS events. Based on this, the proposal recommends a financial remedy and a number of corrective actions. The proposal will be on the CPUC's May 20, 2021 Voting Meeting agenda.

In late 2019, PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E de-energized power to customers during high wildfire danger weather to reduce the risk of their infrastructure igniting catastrophic wildfires. In November 2019, the CPUC opened an [investigation](#) of those 2019 events to assess whether the utilities prioritized safety and complied with CPUC regulations and requirements when planning and implementing the PSPS events. The proposal issued today, called a Proposed Decision, focuses, among other things, on correcting future utility planning and implementation to drive utilities to safely execute any future PSPS events, including:

Revenue Remedy

- Forgo collection of revenues from customers that are associated with electricity not sold during future PSPS events until it can be demonstrated that utilities have made improvements in identifying, evaluating, weighing, and reporting public harm when determining whether to initiate a PSPS event.

Corrective Actions

- Take corrective actions to improve future compliance with the CPUC's existing PSPS guidelines.



- Improve, among other things, communications with customers dependent on electricity for medical reasons, especially life support, before, during, and after a PSPS event.

Continual Learning

- Share best practices and lessons learned for initiating, communicating, reporting, and improving all aspects of PSPS events by regularly holding utility working group meetings.

Emergency Training

- Provide Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) training for all personnel and contractors involved in PSPS planning.

Reporting

- File annual reports describing progress and status on improving compliance with PSPS guidelines.

Transparency

- Support the CPUC's Safety and Enforcement Division's development of a standardized 10-day post-event reporting template. Post-event reporting facilitates learning and improvement across utilities, state, and local public safety agencies and local jurisdictions.

In implementing the late 2019 PSPS events, PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E had, to different degrees, ineffective coordination with public safety partners, inadequate consideration of the access and functional needs communities, and lack of reasonable consideration of the public safety risks caused by PSPS events.

PG&E experienced communication network outages and lack of coordination of appropriate back-up power; inadequate notification efforts; inadequate outreach and education to identify additional resources available to the public; lack of outreach regarding Community Resource Centers (CRC), and inadequate services provided at CRCs; delays in coordinating with local jurisdictions to identify critical facilities and infrastructure; and difficulty providing Geographic Information System (GIS) shapefiles depicting PSPS information.

SCE provided illegible maps depicting PSPS event boundaries to the public; conducted insufficient outreach regarding CRCs, the number of CRCs, and services provided at the CRCs were insufficient; inadequately supported critical facilities and infrastructure providers who experienced outages



without an alternative source of power; failed to communicate PSPS information in languages other than English; and had difficulty providing GIS shapefiles depicting PSPS information.

SDG&E did not provide sufficient information on how it considered geographic and cultural demographics when developing a notice strategy and did not sufficiently establish primary and secondary 24-hour points of contacts at critical facilities and infrastructure.

The CPUC's investigation, opened in November 2019, enabled a comprehensive review of both the effectiveness, and the impacts, of all phases of the 2019 PSPS events. The CPUC is also separately investigating PG&E's implementation of certain aspects of its 2019 PSPS events in an Order to Show Cause in [R.18-12-005](#).

Since the 2019 PSPS events, the CPUC has taken a series of ongoing actions to further ensure utilities continue to reduce the scope and duration of PSPS events and prioritize customer safety.

Among those actions:

- In 2019 and throughout 2020 [required PG&E implement a series of actions](#) to correct deficiencies in 2019 PSPS events;
- In May 2020, adopted refinements and [improvements to existing PSPS](#) guidelines and requirements in advance of 2020 wildfire season;
- In January 2021, [required SCE implement a series of actions](#) to correct deficiencies in 2020 PSPS events; and,
- In March 2021, issued [staff proposal](#) for additional refinements and improvements to existing PSPS guidelines and requirements in advance of 2021 wildfire season.

The proposal of the Administrative Law Judge assigned to the proceeding is available at <https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Efile/G000/M378/K738/378738236.PDF>.

Documents related to this proceeding are available at

https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/apex/f?p=401:56:0::NO:RP,57,RIR:P5_PROCEEDING_SELECT:I1911013.

Members of the public can comment on the proposal by clicking on the “Public Comment” tab.



More information on the CPUC's actions regarding PSPS events is available at www.cpuc.ca.gov/pmps.

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians' access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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