



## California Public Utilities Commission 505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366, [news@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:news@cpuc.ca.gov)

### **CPUC TO EXAMINE SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR ELECTRIC AND COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES**

SAN FRANCISCO, November 6, 2008 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today said it will consider revising and clarifying its regulations designed to protect the public from potential hazards, including fires, which may be caused from electric utility transmission or distribution lines or communications infrastructure providers' facilities in proximity to electric overhead transmission or distribution lines.

The CPUC's current General Orders 95 (rules for overhead electric line construction), 128 (rules for construction of underground electric supply), and 165 (inspection cycles for electric distribution facilities) are already designed to promote the safe operation of electric utility and communications infrastructure facilities, and provide the minimum safety requirements that the utilities are supposed to supplement with additional safety precautions when local conditions warrant. Nevertheless, the CPUC determined that as the devastating fires in Southern California during the last two years have shown, there may be potential problems associated with the electric utilities' and communications infrastructure providers' facilities, which may necessitate additional CPUC safeguards.

In order to create a public record upon which to base a decision, all parties will be provided an opportunity to participate in a public workshop in January. After the workshop, the CPUC's Consumer Protection and Safety Division will serve all parties with proposed regulations and clarifications for the CPUC to consider adopting. All



parties will then have the opportunity to submit written initial and reply comments on the proposed regulations and clarifications, which would be issued after the workshop.

The CPUC preliminary issues to be addressed in the proceeding opened today include:

- Immediate reporting of fire related incidents and cooperation with CPUC staff
- Increasing vegetation management in high fire risk areas
- Mitigating high speed wind dangers
- Applying maintenance and inspection requirements at least every one to two years to all communication infrastructure providers and electric transmission facilities
- Strengthening rules against pole overloading

The proposal voted on today, which includes information as to how to become a party, is at <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/AGENDA/93401.htm>.

For more information on the CPUC, please visit [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

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