



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

Docket #: R.19-09-009

CPUC ORDERS DEPLOYMENT OF MICROGRIDS AND RESILIENCY STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT COMMUNITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE THREATENED BY POWER OUTAGES

SAN FRANCISCO, June 11, 2020 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today required large electric investor-owned utilities to accelerate deployment of microgrids and resiliency projects to minimize the impacts of wildfire-caused power outages and Public Safety Power Shut-off (PSPS) events.

Under today's Decision, utilities must streamline and expedite interconnection processes for microgrids, resiliency, and other projects, and collaborate with local and tribal governments in order to rapidly develop and deploy projects that could keep electricity on for critical facilities and other customers during power outages. This Rulemaking was fast-tracked after the mismanagement by utilities of the October 2019 PSPS events in the state and is intended to increase the deployment of new projects during this wildfire season.

Utilities must:

- Further standardize application processes for project approvals;
- Expedite sign-off on installed projects;
- Accelerate interconnection by increasing staffing;
- Adjust tariffs to better value resiliency; and,
- Enhance collaboration and coordination with local and tribal governments.

Today's Decision provides communities with a strong interest in microgrids and resiliency projects better access to the technical resources and support from utilities.



Additionally, several resiliency proposals from two utilities were approved:

- Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) will implement programs that will:
 - Upgrade substations that can be quickly and safely energized with local sources of power;
 - Procure temporary, portable generators for use at substations and other key locations of public benefit for the 2020 wildfire season; and,
 - Provide utility technical and financial support for community-proposed microgrids to enhance resiliency of critical facilities and vulnerable customers.
- San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) will implement software and hardware technology to enhance microgrid operation, as well as augment and interoperate with SDG&E's existing advanced distribution management system and microgrid projects proposed in other proceedings.

“This microgrids and resiliency Track 1 Decision is an integral part of the multifaceted approach that the CPUC is taking in preparation for the 2020 wildfire season and the resilient grid of the future,” said Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma, who is assigned to the proceeding. “We will use upcoming Tracks for this proceeding to explore the viability of non-diesel alternatives for next year’s wildfire season, further develop standards and protocols to support and reduce barriers to microgrid deployment without shifting costs between ratepayers, and develop rates and tariffs that are just and reasonable to support commercialization of microgrids.”

“Our Decision today ensures that utilities expedite deployment of back-up power for their customers that can be used if a utility calls a PSPS event,” said CPUC President Marybel Batjer. “The use of microgrids, coupled with the CPUC’s work to hold utilities accountable for creating and implementing wildfire mitigation plans, will help make communities more resilient in advance of the 2020 Wildfire season.”

This Decision is the latest in a series of actions that the CPUC has taken to improve preparation for the upcoming wildfire season. Other actions are described at www.cpuc.ca.gov/deenergization.

In response to Senate Bill (SB) 1339 (Stern, 2018), the CPUC initiated Rulemaking 19-09-009 to facilitate the commercialization and deployment of microgrids while prioritizing system, public, and



worker safety and avoiding shifting costs between ratepayers. The proceeding is organized into three tracks and this proposal is focused on track one issues.

The proposal voted on is available at

<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M339/K845/339845866.PDF>.

Documents related to the proceeding are available at

https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/apex/f?p=401:56:0::NO:RP,57,RIR:P5_PROCEEDING_SELECT:R1909009.

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, 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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