



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC APPROVES NEW PG&E MICROGRID PROGRAM FOR MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

SAN FRANCISCO, March 18, 2021 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today took action necessary for Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) to implement a new microgrid program to support local governments and tribes to provide resiliency in the event of utility outages.

A June 2020 CPUC [Decision](#) required large electric investor-owned utilities to accelerate deployment of microgrids and resiliency projects to minimize the impacts of power outages, including utility Public Safety Power Shut-off (PSPS) events. PG&E's [Community Microgrid Enablement Program](#) was approved as part of the Decision. The program will provide technical support and project management to help communities plan and implement their own microgrid projects, thereby promoting public health and welfare in preparation for wildfire and potential grid outages.

Local and tribal governments developing community microgrids serving multiple critical facilities located in outage prone areas are eligible for the program. PG&E will provide technical support to communities, including project scoping, project design guidance, and a dedicated PG&E project management office to provide support for projects.

One-time matching funds of up to \$27 million annually for 2021 and 2022 are available as matching grants to defray the cost of special facilities or distribution system upgrades. The program reserves one-third of the total budget, or \$9 million per year, for communities meeting the definition of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, with an opportunity to increase this reserved amount if needed.



“I’m glad to see the PG&E Community Microgrid Enablement Program launch as it will provide the technical tools and some financial resources to local and tribal governments to create and invest in microgrids for critical facilities and vulnerable customers such as fire stations, schools, and nursing homes,” said Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma. “The electrical grid is an essential infrastructure with key safety requirements, and this program will target grid upgrades needed to support local government- and tribe-driven resilience projects in preparation for wildfire and potential grid outages.”

“I appreciate this program’s emphasis on providing local and tribal communities with the support they need to build resiliency through access to clean energy options such as microgrids,” said Commissioner Darcie L. Houck. “I look forward to reviewing the program evaluation in 2023 with an eye towards how to best design microgrid incentive and technical support programs to achieve positive outcomes for these communities and reduce impacts in outage prone areas.”

The proposal voted on is available at:

<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M368/K308/368308908.pdf>.

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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