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PRESS RELEASE

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

SAN FRANCISCO, June 3, 2021 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in ongoing efforts to hold utilities accountable for safely implementing Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events, today determined 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 and has ordered financial remedies and a number of corrective actions.

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. Today's Decision orders utilities to take a number of actions to improve their PSPS planning and implementation, 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 PPS 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.

Since the 2019 PPS events, the CPUC has taken a series of ongoing actions to further ensure utilities continue to reduce the scope and duration of PPS 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 PPS events;
- In May 2020, adopted refinements and [improvements to existing PPS](#) guidelines and requirements in advance of 2020 wildfire season;
- In early 2021, held public meetings for the utilities to report on lessons learned and to hear from impacted communities and access and functional needs communities and [required SCE to implement a series of actions](#) to correct deficiencies in 2020 PPS events;
- In May 2021, issued for public comment a [proposal](#) that would enhance and update existing guidelines and rules for utility PPS events in advance of the 2021 wildfire season. Utilities would be required to take a results-based approach to improving notification and mitigating the impacts of PPS events; and,
- In May 2021, issued an Administrative Law Judge [decision](#) penalizing PG&E \$106 million for violating guidelines during Fall 2019 PPS events. The Decision offsets the penalty by \$86 million based on bill credits that were already provided to customers by PG&E shareholders at the Governor’s direction, making the net penalty assessed on PG&E \$20 million. The \$20 million penalty will be paid by shareholders in the form of customer bill credits and a contribution to a backup portable battery program.

The proposal voted on is available at

<https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M386/K377/386377209.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.

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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