

City of San Rafael

Public Safety Power Shutoff Guidelines

October 2019



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| This plan was developed as a supporting document to the City of San Rafael Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and is subject to revision at any time as determined by the City of San Rafael Director of Emergency Services.Comments and suggestions shall be directed to the City of San Rafael Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services 415-485-3308 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents

1. [PURPOSE 4](#_Toc21599530)

[II. BACKGROUND 4](#_Toc21599531)

[III. OBJECTIVES 4](#_Toc21599532)

[IV. THREAT ASSESSMENT 5](#_Toc21599533)

[V. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS 7](#_Toc21599534)

[VI. NOTIFICATION 9](#_Toc21599535)

[VII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILIITES 10](#_Toc21599536)

[VIII. EOC ACTIVATION 11](#_Toc21599537)

[IX. DEMOBILIZATION 12](#_Toc21599538)

[X. REFERENCES 12](#_Toc21599539)

[XII. APPENDIX A – INITIAL NOTIFICATION CHECKLIST 13](#_Toc21599540)

[XIII. APPENDIX B – 24-HOUR CHECKLIST 15](#_Toc21599541)

[XIV. APPENDIX C – 12-HOUR CHECKLIST 17](#_Toc21599542)

[XV. APPENDIX D – DEMOBILIZATION CHECKLIST 19](#_Toc21599543)

# PURPOSE

These guidelines will provide the City of San Rafael City staff a framework to respond to a threat of, or actual de-energization of electrical power and systems due to extreme fire danger or wind conditions. This is a supporting annex to the City of San Rafael Emergency Operations Plan.

This plan was developed and reviewed by the City of San Rafael Emergency Operations Center staff, mutual-aid partners, Marin County Office of Emergency Service, and non-governmental organizations supporting emergency response, planning, mitigation, or recovery for a de-energization event.

# BACKGROUND

The risk of wildfire increases when several factors (high temperature greater than 90 degrees F, sustained winds greater than 20 miles per hour, and humidity less than 20% RH) combine. During these weather conditions, the National Weather Service may issue a red flag warning. When a Red Flag Warning is issued, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), may shut off electric power to affected service areas. The referred to as "de-energization" or Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), to protect public safety under California law, specifically [California Public Utilities Code](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codesTOCSelected.xhtml?tocCode=PUC&tocTitle=+Public+Utilities+Code+-+PUC) (PUC) Sections 451 and 399.2(a). The purpose of deenergizing power lines is to reduce the threat of wildfire or accidental fire ignition caused by downed power lines that come into contact with trees or other vegetation.

De-energization of electrical systems in affected areas may pose a life-safety risk to residents on medical life support devices. The loss of power may impact other City infrastructure or systems that do not have a backup power supply including, but not limited to the following: traffic control systems, internet and cell phone towers, automatic teller machines, fuel pumps, emergency notification systems, emergency dispatch center, fire stations, or city offices.

This response guidelines are intended to provide guidance to the City of San Rafael departments and staff on how to prepare for and respond to a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) event.

# OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan are to:

1. Provide protection of life, public health, safety, and welfare to the community and responders.
2. Maintain situational awareness on any de-energization impacts to the City of San Rafael.
3. Provide situational updates and establish communications with the Marin County Operational Area partners.
4. Establish notification protocols for informing Elected Officials, City Staff, and San Rafael community of a de-energization event.
5. Establish upstaffing protocols for emergency response or EOC activation if needed.
6. Establish resource ordering procedures.
7. Coordinate with the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services Department and partner organizations to establish mass care and shelter services if needed.
8. Establish a demobilization process to document expenditures, after action report, and return the City to normal operations.

# THREAT ASSESSMENT

When the National Weather Service issues a Red Flag warning, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company will determine if there is an imminent and significant risk that strong winds may topple power lines or cause major vegetation-related damage to power lines. In the event, that PG&E decides to de-energize power lines, PG&E will notify their customers, public safety officials, first responders, and local municipalities.

When the extreme wind and weather conditions subside, PG&E crews will inspect the transmission and power lines and safely restore power to customers. Depending on conditions or if any repairs are needed, outages could last more than five (5) days.

1. Factors considered by PG&E to determine whether to shut down power include:
2. Red flag warning by the National Weather Service
3. Forecasted sustained wind speeds above 25 mph or wind gusts in excess of 45 mph
4. Relative humidity of less than 20%
5. Moisture content or condition of dry fuels
6. Site specific locations such as terrain or local climate conditions
7. General impacts of a power shutoff:
8. Loss of commercial and public-sector communications including wireless voice/data, mobile radios, cable television, and internet access.
9. Loss or degradation of public/private water and wastewater systems including monitoring, pumping, and treatment
10. Loss of traffic monitoring systems and signals
11. Adverse impacts on critical facilities including public safety buildings and hospitals.
12. Impacts on commerce including the loss or degradation of electronic points of sale, gas station pumps, security and/or fire alarms systems, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units.
13. Lost time by workers sent home due to inadequate lighting, HVAC, or safe work conditions.
14. Loss of elevators in commercial and residential occupancies.
15. Loss or reduction of fuel supply and/or loss of gas station pumps.
16. Inability for San Rafael to provide government services.
17. Access and Functional Needs Populations Impacts
18. Loss of power could impact individuals dependent on durable medical equipment, ventilators, home dialysis machines, wheelchair chargers, and specialized communication devices.
19. Potential disruptions to public services or facilities; school closures, community centers, or increased demand for cooling centers or emergency shelters.
20. Safety impacts
21. Loss or degradation of public safety voice and data communications systems
22. Loss or degradations of the County’s Community Alert and Warning System.
23. Increase in number of 9-1-1 calls for service.
24. Increase in number of fire or police responses for false alarms, elevator rescues, fire alarm activations.
25. Increase in EMS call volume due to heat related illnesses.
26. Loss of water pressure or water supply for firefighting.
27. Loss of potable water.
28. Loss of traffic signal systems resulting in significant gridlock.
29. Loss of food supply due to food spoilage.
30. Unsafe use of generators or candles.
31. Potential Areas of Impact
	1. The most likely circuits considered for shut off will be those in areas that have been designated by the CPUC as at elevated or extreme risk for wildfire Tier 2 and 3 areas.[[1]](#footnote-1)
	2. Per PG&E, areas subject to de-energization should be limited to the neighborhoods or communities served by electric lines that extreme fire danger conditions.
	3. Tier 1 areas may inadvertently lose power due to shut down of transmission or distribution lines that cross a Tier 2 or 3 area.

# PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

1. Weather indicators such as Red Flag Warnings should provide lead time to coordinate with the Marin County Operational Area and City of San Rafael staff to prepare for a power shutoff event.
2. According the California Public Utilities Commission Fire Risk Map, San Rafael has elevated or extreme fire hazard areas in various sectors of the City. Power shut down in the extreme or elevated fire hazard zones may impact properties in the low or moderate fire hazard zones because the power supply or transmission lines run through extreme fire hazard zones.[[2]](#footnote-2)
3. It is assumed that the City of San Rafael will lose power throughout the City up to seven days per shutoff event.
4. Power shutoffs in the northern portion of Marin County may still San Rafael due to the power grid layout.
5. Most public and private agencies providing public service may only have partial backup emergency power. Services to the public will likely be reduced or impaired.
6. Some Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and other residential or congregate care facilities may be affected.
7. Additional fire and law enforcement resources may be needed to respond to an increased call volume and fire weather conditions.
8. Public safety agencies may consider upstaffing to address call volume needs.
9. Emergency response protocols may need to be amended to handle multiple fire or burglar alarms caused by the power shutoff.
10. Emergency medical calls and transports will surge for patients requiring electrical power for medical devices like ventricular pumps, home dialysis machines, oxygen humidifiers and
11. The City of San Rafael will have limited back-up power at City Hall, Public Works building and several fire stations. City services will be significantly impacted.
12. Cell phones will become inoperable due after the event starts because cell towers only have four-hour back up batteries.
13. Traffic will be heavy through the downtown area and back-up on Highway 101 due to loss traffic management signals.
14. The American Red Cross, in their capacity to support a regional power shutoff is limited to the following: 1) Assist in the distribution of community donated snacks and water as a supporting agency. 2) Provide technical assistance and training for responding agencies related to mass care and respite services, including assessing shelter facilities, assisting in community work plans, connecting agencies with vendors, and providing shelter training;
15. Marin County Health and Human Services is the primary agency to manage and support cooling centers and/or care and sheltering operations.
16. Food service, delivery, or restaurant operations will severely be impacted due to food spoilage. Loss of food products will result in significant economic loss for the restaurant or food service industry.
17. Law Enforcement may be needed to support security concerns with cooling centers, charging centers, or PG&E personnel conducting safety assessments.

# NOTIFICATION

1. The CPUC guidelines endorse advance notification to customers of the need to turn off power. Prior to the termination of power, PG&E will attempt to contact customers at approximately 48 hours, 24 hours, and just prior to shutting off the power. PG&E will attempt to customers by phone call, email, and/or SMS text to contacts on file.
2. During outages and after restoration, PG&E will attempt to send updates using the same methods. Contact will be attempted between 9 AM and 9 PM. Final shutoff notifications may occur at any time, day or night.
3. For Medical Baseline customers, PG&E will place live calls to customers who aren’t reached by the initial automated alerts and will send a PG&E representative to check on customers they are unable to contact with the live call. If the customer does not answer the in-person contact, PG&E will leave an information door hanger. PG&E has indicated that they will not undertake any other additional outreach.
4. PG&E will attempt to contact public safety agencies and/or local governments prior to customer notification as conditions permit. Per the CPUC, “utilities must also notify, as feasible, fire departments, first responders, critical facilities, other potentially affected entities, and the CPUC before de-energizing.
5. The County of Marin Office of Emergency Services (Marin OES) may also provide additional notifications in their jurisdictions. Also, per the PG&E Notification Plan, “If feasible and appropriate, PG&E will provide city, county and agency officials with the content of our customer alerts, so they can be shared on channels such as Nixle, Nextdoor, and Reverse 911.”
	1. Operational Area Conference Call - In the case of wide-spread de-energization, a county-wide conference call may be initiated and scheduled by Marin OES. Marin OES staff will invite potential participants and lead the call to share emergency information and coordinate efforts. Should the Public Safety Power Shutoff impact communication links, Marin OES may invite the Marin County Sheriff’s Office ACS/RACES equipment and operators.
6. The City shall post on the City website and social media accounts a joint statement from the Op Area JIS information about the power shutoff.
7. When the City of San Rafael receives notification of a planned power shutoff in Marin County, the following internal notifications will occur:
	1. The City Manager will be notified of the planned event and notification will be made to the Mayor and City Councilmembers.
	2. City staff will be notified by the City Manager’s Office and requested to review and implement the Public Safety Power Shutoff Response Guidelines.
	3. If the EOC is activated, Department Directors will be notified to release assigned staff to the EOC.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILIITES

1. City staff will play a vital role by ensuring that the City of San Rafael provide essential service functions and ensure life safety actions remain the top priority. The roles and responsibilities of designated City staff in Table “1”.
2. Depending on the probability and situational outlook the City may activate a partial or full Emergency Operations Center (EOC). City staff assigned to the EOC may be reassigned to prepare and manage the event.
3. Staff not assigned to the EOC, may be assigned to other support functions outside their usual department responsibilities or assigned work hours for the need of the City.
4. Department Directors and staff shall review the task lists in Appendix A, B, or C when notified of the 48-hour, 24-hour, and 12-hour mark prior to a power shutoff.

Table 1.

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| --- | --- |
| **Department / Division** | **Responsibilities** |
| Administration / City Manager | Serves as Director of Emergency ServicesNotifies Executive TeamNotifies City CouncilApproves EOC Activation |
| City Attorney’s Office | Prepares disaster declarationsApproves media release |
| Recreation Division | Maintains Situational Analysis and EOC Planning Section needs |
| Community Services | Coordinates Care and Shelter operations |
| Economic Development | TBD |
| Finance Department | Coordinates Disaster Recovery plans and EOC Finance Section operations |
| Fire Department | EOC set-up and activationFire, Medical, and Rescue operationsFire Mutual Aid Incident Action PlanEmergency Response Directives |
| Office of Emergency Services | Incident Action PlanEOC OperationsMarin OES Coordination |
| Human Resources  | Disaster Service Worker training City Staff Plan |
| Digital Service and Open Government | Checks Uninterrupted Power SourcesBack-Up DataDistributes Computer Shutoff DirectiveServes as City PIOCoordinates with County PIO / JIS |
| City Librarian | Maintains Volunteer  |
| Parking Services | Supports Traffic Management Plan |
| Police Department | Coordinates Law enforcement mutual aidTraffic controlManages 9-1-1 dispatch centerCoordinates Public Alerting and WarningCoordinates Evacuation needsUpdates Emergency Response directivesSupport security needs at cooling or charging centersSupport security needs for PG&E personnel conducting safety assessments |
| Public Works Department | Supports fleet and apparatus operationsSupports building and facilities needsSupports communication (radio) needs  |

# EOC ACTIVATION

The Director of Emergency Services shall consider activating San Rafael’s Emergency Operations Center (partial or full activation) during a Public Safety Power Shutoff if the following impacts occur:

1. An emergency event that threatens loss of life or structures.
2. An emergency event that has the potential to impact life safety or loss of structures.
3. When an individual department supporting an emergency event or does not have enough human resources to manage or support the event.
4. When a planned event has information or intelligence that the event will require additional City resources.
5. Upon the recommendation of the Fire Chief, Police Chief, County Health Officer, or Public Works Director.
6. The level of activation will be determined by the scale of the event or the anticipated number of personnel required to support the event.

# DEMOBILIZATION

Demobilization of personnel is an important aspect of the emergency response cycle. Demobilization ensures that assigned staff have completed required documentation and collection of data, information, or feedback between the Emergency Operations Center.

When an Emergency Operations Center has been activated for a PSPS event, all sections, units or single resources shall submit a completed activity log (ICS Form 214), to document the ICS position, home agency, resources assigned, and notable activities of the section, unit, or single resource.

Demobilization of personnel shall be coordinated by the Demobilization Unit Leader, or the Plans Section Chief if a Demobilization Unit Leader was not designated.

An after-action report shall be completed by the Office of Emergency Services and forwarded to CalEMA via Marin County OES within ninety days of the event.

# REFERENCES

* <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/FireThreatMaps/>
* <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M217/K918/217918600.PDF>

# APPENDIX A – INITIAL NOTIFICATION CHECKLIST

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| **Initial PSPS Notification**  |
| **Position** | **Action Checklist** | **Notes** |
| Administration / City Manager  | Notifies Executive TeamNotifies City CouncilAssigns Public Information OfficerConsiders EOC Activation |  |
| City Attorney’s Office | Updates and reviews local declaration templates |  |
| City Clerk’s Office | Prepares Local Declaration of Emergency FormReviews Emergency Council Meeting Procedures |  |
| Community Development Department | Develops Incident Action Plan (ICS 201)Documents Situation Status and Updates |  |
| Recreation Division | Reviews Care and Shelter PlanProvide Care and Shelter Training |  |
| Fire Department | Coordinate with Marin County Fire ChiefsConsiders upstaffing for Red Flag DaysIssues temporary alarm response procedures |  |
| Office of Emergency Services | Coordinate with Marin OESPrepares EOC for activationCoordinates Communications Test with the Op Area | Test Satellite Phones |
| Economic Development | Coordinates Recovery Planning  |  |
| Finance Department | Establish Project Code for Incident TrackingProvides Vendor List and PO numbersReviews Cost Recovery procedures |  |
| Human Resources Department | Review Disaster Service Worker policiesTrack City staff schedule for release Determine EOC staff assignmentsPrepares unassigned employee lists |  |
| Digital Service and Open Government | Test UPS batteriesSchedule manual data back-up; Distributes computer shutoff guidelinesDetermine EOC staff assignments |  |
| **Department** | **Action** | **Notes** |
| City Librarian | Reviews Volunteer Resource ChecklistPrepares for Cooling Center Operations |  |
| Parking Services | Supports traffic management plan with SRPD |  |
| Police Chief | Issues public alert and warning Consider adding patrol unitsConsider upstaffing the communications centerIssues temporary alarm response proceduresConsider security needs for City or Cooling Center operations |  |
| Public Information Officer | Coordinates media releases Coordinates social media information releaseUpdates media release templates and media contact numbers |  |
| Public Works Director | Checks and tests city generatorsOrders fuel for city generators and fleet.Prepare City transport vehiclesSupports Traffic Management Plan Logistics |  |
| American Red Cross | Support Care and Shelter Operations |  |
| Marin County OES (Op Area) | Coordinate Op Area Conference CallTracks County Situation StatusCoordinates Op Area Resource Needs |  |
| Marin County HHS | Manages County Care and Shelter Operations |  |
| Marin County Health | Support environmental health guidelines |  |
| Marin County Water  | Support water delivery  |  |
| San Rafael CERT | Reviews fire station community centerNotifies NRG and members  |  |
| San Rafael Ham Radio | Tests radios at designated City facilities and fire stationsCheck supplies for extended operations |  |
| San Rafael School District | Prepares for care and shelter operation |  |

# APPENDIX B – 24-HOUR CHECKLIST

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| **24-hour Tasks Prior to Shutoff** |
| **POSITION** | **ACTION CHECKLIST** | **NOTES** |
| Administration / City Manager  | Notifies Executive TeamNotifies City CouncilAssigns Public Information OfficerConsiders EOC Activation |  |
| City Attorney’s Office | Updates and reviews local declaration templates |  |
| City Clerk’s Office | Prepares Local Declaration of Emergency FormReviews Emergency Council Meeting Procedures |  |
| Community Development Department | Develops Incident Action Plan (ICS 201)Documents Situation Status and Updates |  |
| Recreation Division | Reviews Care and Shelter PlanProvide Care and Shelter Training |  |
| Fire Department | Coordinate with Marin County Fire ChiefsConsiders upstaffing for Red Flag DaysIssues temporary alarm response procedures |  |
| Office of Emergency Services | Coordinate with Marin OESPrepares EOC for activationParticipate on Op Area conference calls |  |
| Economic Development | Coordinates Recovery Planning  |  |
| Finance Department | Establish Project Code for Incident TrackingProvides Vendor List and PO numbersReviews Cost Recovery procedures |  |
| Human Resources Department | Review Disaster Service Worker policiesTrack City staff schedule for release Determine EOC staff assignment |  |
| Digital Service and Open Government | Test UPS batteriesSchedule manual data back-up; Distributes computer shutoff guidelinesDetermine EOC staff assignments |  |
| City Librarian | Reviews Volunteer Resource ChecklistPrepares for Cooling Center Operations |  |
| **POSITION** | **ACTION CHECKLIST** | **NOTES** |
| Parking Services | Supports traffic management plan with SRPD |  |
| Police Chief | Issues public alert and warning Consider adding patrol unitsConsider upstaffing the communications centerIssues temporary alarm response procedures |  |
| Public Information Officer | Coordinates media releases Coordinates social media information releaseUpdates media release templates and media contact numbersCoordinate with County JIC if established |  |
| Public Works Director | Checks and tests city generatorsOrders fuel for city generators and fleet.Prepare City transport vehiclesSupports Traffic Management Plan Logistics |  |
| American Red Cross | Support Care and Shelter Operations |  |
| Marin County OES (Op Area) | Coordinate Op Area Conference CallTracks County Situation StatusCoordinates Op Area Resource Needs |  |
| Marin County HHS | Manages County Care and Shelter Operations |  |
| Marin County Health | Support environmental health guidelines |  |
| Marin County Water  | Support water delivery  |  |
| San Rafael CERT | Reviews fire station community centerNotifies NRG and members  |  |
| San Rafael Ham Radio | Tests radios at designated City facilities and fire stationsCheck supplies for extended operations |  |
| San Rafael School District | Prepares for care and shelter operation |  |

# APPENDIX C – 12-HOUR CHECKLIST

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| **12-Hours until Shutoff** |
| **POSITION** | **ACTION CHECKLIST** | **NOTES** |
| Administration / City Manager  | Notifies Executive TeamNotifies City CouncilAssigns Public Information OfficerConsiders EOC Activation |  |
| City Attorney’s Office | Updates and reviews local declaration templates |  |
| City Clerk’s Office | Prepares Local Declaration of Emergency FormReviews Emergency Council Meeting Procedures |  |
| Community Development Department | Develops Incident Action Plan (ICS 201)Documents Situation Status and Updates |  |
| Recreation Division | Reviews Care and Shelter PlanProvide Care and Shelter Training |  |
| Fire Department | Coordinate with Marin County Fire ChiefsConsiders upstaffing for Red Flag DaysIssues temporary alarm response procedures |  |
| Office of Emergency Services | Coordinate with Marin OESPrepares EOC for activationParticipate with Op Area Conference Calls |  |
| Economic Development | Coordinates Recovery Planning  |  |
| Finance Department | Establish Project Code for Incident TrackingProvides Vendor List and PO numbersReviews Cost Recovery procedures |  |
| Human Resources Department | Review Disaster Service Worker policiesTrack City staff schedule for release Determine EOC staff assignmentsPrepares unassigned employee lists |  |
| Digital Service and Open Government | Test UPS batteriesSchedule manual data back-up; Distributes computer shutoff guidelinesDetermine EOC staff assignments |  |
| **POSITION** | **ACTION CHECKLIST** | **NOTES** |
| City Librarian | Reviews Volunteer Resource ChecklistPrepares for Cooling Center Operations |  |
| Parking Services | Supports traffic management plan with SRPD |  |
| Police Chief | Issues public alert and warning Consider adding patrol unitsConsider upstaffing the communications centerIssues temporary alarm response proceduresConsiders law enforcement support for cooling center, charging centers, or PG+E personnel.  |  |
| Public Information Officer | Updates media release and media contact listFinalizes changes to media template pageCoordinates medial and public information releases with the County JIC if established |  |
| Public Works Director | Repairs city generatorsOrders fuel for city generators and fleet.Prepare City transport vehicles |  |
| American Red Cross | Support Care and Shelter Operations |  |
| Marin County OES (Op Area) | Coordinate Op Area Conference CallTracks County Situation StatusCoordinates Op Area Resource Needs |  |
| Marin County HHS | Manages County Care and Shelter Operations |  |
| Marin County Health | Support environmental health guidelines |  |
| Marin County Water  | Support water delivery  |  |
| San Rafael CERT | Reviews fire station community centerNotifies NRG and members  |  |
| San Rafael Ham Radio | Tests radios at designated City facilities and fire stationsCheck supplies for extended operations |  |
| San Rafael School District | Prepares for care and shelter operation |  |

# APPENDIX D – DEMOBILIZATION CHECKLIST

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| **12-Hours until Shutoff** |
| **POSITION** | **ACTION CHECKLIST** | **NOTES** |
| Administration / City Manager  | Notifies Executive TeamNotifies City Council |  |
| City Attorney’s Office | Review claims against the City |  |
| City Clerk’s Office | Provides copy of local declaration form to OESFiles City Council resolutions  |  |
| Community Development Department | Provide after action summary to OES. |  |
| Recreation Division | Restores Normal Operations |  |
| Fire Department | Submits after action summary Replace used or outdated equipment |  |
| Office of Emergency Services | Collect after action summariesCreate after action report |  |
| Economic Development | Coordinates Recovery Planning  |  |
| Finance Department | Collect expenditure data and provide after action summary to OES |  |
| Human Resources Department | Process after action summariesProcess worker compensation claims |  |
| Digital Service and Open Government | Restore normal operationsComplete after action summary and send to OESConfirm City’s desktops, phones, and software issues are functional |  |
| City Librarian | Provides after action summary to OES  |  |
| Parking Services | Supports normal traffic flow with SRPD |  |
| Police Chief | Complete department response summary and submit to OESEnsure all expenditures and payroll sheets have project code attached. |  |
| Public Information Officer | Updates media release and media contact listProvide after action summary to OES |  |
| Public Works Director | Provides after action summary to OESCreate work orders to repair equipmentOrder fuel for City generators |  |

1. CPUC Fire Threat Map [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)