

Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) Events: Backup Generator Guidance

What is PSPS, and how does it affect me/my business?

Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) is a program in which electrical power providers will turn off power in specified areas to reduce the risk of fires during high wind events. PSPS events are recognized by the District as an unplanned emergency event.

Am I allowed to have a backup generator?

Yes, but backup generators aren't necessary for every situation. Consider [safety](#), noise, and cost along with your emergency power needs. Should you decide to get a backup generator, it may need a San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (SLO County APCD) Permit to Operate or a California Air Resources Board (CARB) Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) registration prior to operation. **All backup generators are required to have federally-certified engines.**

What type of backup generator requires a permit/registration?

Backup generators powered by internal combustion engines greater than or equal to 50 horsepower are subject to permit/registration requirements.



Need more information?

See the [SLO County APCD's PSPS Events Page](#):
[SLOCleanAir.org/rules-regulations/PSPS](https://www.slocleanair.org/rules-regulations/PSPS)

How do I apply for a permit/registration?

Visit the [SLO County APCD's website](#) for application forms for a local permit. To apply for a PERP registration, visit [CARB's website](#) for application forms and instructions.

Can I stage a backup generator/have it on standby on my property?

It can be staged onsite in preparation for a PSPS event as long as it has a permit/registration before it is operated (this includes exercise/maintenance). If the backup generator does not have a permit/registration, it should not be operated outside of a PSPS event. A PERP Form 40 should be completed (see below) for operation during a PSPS event.

The rental company is all out of generators – can one be brought in from out of state?

Depends on compliance with current applicable state regulations.

Who is allowed to operate an unpermitted, unregistered engine?

Typically, no one. However, during an emergency, there are provisions to protect public health and safety. Providers of Essential Public Services (PEPS) may be eligible to operate an engine, during an emergency, without a permit, as long as a [CARB Form 40](#) is completed. PEPS include but are not limited to:

- electrical corporations
- electric service providers
- fire departments
- gas corporations
- hospitals that provide trauma services
- irrigation districts
- public water systems
- public agency joint powers authorities
- publicly owned treatment works
- municipal utility districts
- municipalities or municipal corporations operating as a "public utility"
- police departments
- prisons and detention facilities
- public utility districts
- public transportation and transit systems
- sewer system corporations
- telegraph corporations
- telephone corporations
- railroads and street railroads
- municipal solid waste landfills
- services for handling municipal solid waste
- transfer stations
- sewer system
- commercial air operators

For more information on what is considered a PEPS, see the [CARB PERP Regulation](#) or contact the SLO County APCD.