



**Cal OES**  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



March 30, 2020

**RE: Essential Wildfire and Public Safety Power Shutoff Mitigation Work**

Dear County Executive Officer:

We greatly appreciate your continued partnership as all of California's communities come together to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. During this uncertain and difficult time, we are writing because we cannot lose sight of the additional threat of catastrophic wildfires, which has the potential to significantly magnify the current emergency in the near future.

Despite the added challenges we are all facing, and the shelter-in-place mandate that impacts the daily lives of Californians, we must all continue to work together to prepare for the coming wildfire season. The past several years have shown the devastating impact fires and the use of Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) can have on communities. Based on this experience, significant actions to minimize risk are underway and must be completed prior to this year's fire season.

As the State of California responds to the COVID-19 pandemic, it continues to prioritize preparing for fire season as a critical function of state government and has made adjustments, where necessary, to ensure state resources and staff remain fully engaged in this effort.

The state's investor-owned utilities also cannot let up on efforts to reduce the significant risk of wildfire this season, including critical upgrades to their electrical transmission and distribution systems to minimize their potential use of PSPS. Given the current stay-at-home order, however, we have advised the investor-owned utilities that any work involving planned electrical outages must be done in close coordination with local jurisdictions and must include measures to minimize impacts on residents and businesses.

Specifically, we expect the investor-owned utilities to:

- Limit planned outage work to wildfire mitigation, PSPS reduction, immediately necessary reliability, and emergency/public safety projects;

- Reduce duration of outages and consider shifting work to night-time hours, wherever possible, to minimize impact on day-time household activities; and
- Communicate directly with affected customers, local jurisdictions and emergency management partners explaining the critical nature of the work to be performed and adjustments the utilities have made to minimize the impact.

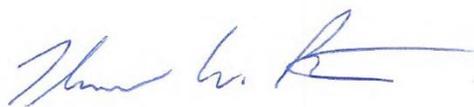
Provided these measures are used, the investor-owned utilities must continue to prioritize and expedite the following:

- Wildfire mitigation and wildfire risk reduction tasks, including system hardening, vegetation management, and enhancements to grid operations;
- PSPS mitigation and reduction tasks, including sectionalization projects, local outreach and coordination, establishing customer resource centers, and microgrid projects; and
- Any other critical work related to operating a safe and reliable grid and mitigating wildfire and/or public safety power shutoff risk.

It is critical we continue to plan for, and mitigate, the potential impacts of the interplay of the threat of wildfires and the potential spread of COVID-19. We appreciate your continued support of investor-owned utilities conducting essential work to help protect your communities from wildfire and PSPS events. Californians are relying on all of us to reduce the threat of wildfires and take all steps necessary to keep their communities safe this season. That is our joint mission.

We look forward to continuing to partner with you to support communities through this time while maintaining the pace and scale of preparations for the coming wildfire season.

Sincerely,



Thomas W Porter  
Director  
CAL FIRE

Sincerely,



Mark S. Ghilarducci  
Director  
Cal OES

Sincerely,



Marybel Batjer  
President  
CPUC