



**California Public Utilities Commission**  
505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **CPUC TO EXAMINE RECENT UTILITY PSPS EVENTS AND CONSIDER ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS**

SAN FRANCISCO, November 13, 2019 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today opened an investigation to examine recent Public Safety Power Shut-off (PSPS) events and ensure utilities are held accountable for their actions during these events.

The formal investigation (called an Order Instituting Investigation) will assess whether the state's investor-owned electric utilities properly balanced the need to provide safe and reliable service when planning and executing their recent PSPS events.

In the first phase of the proceeding, the CPUC's Safety and Enforcement Division will oversee an evaluation of the utilities' actions prior to, during, and after the PSPS events that occurred in late 2019. The evaluation will include the quality of the utilities' internal coordination, situational awareness, external communication, and pre-planning and execution for the PSPS events. The results of the Safety and Enforcement Division's investigation will be presented in a public report.

The proceeding will provide a comprehensive review of both the effectiveness and impacts of all phases of the recent PSPS events to determine whether further changes to existing de-energization regulations and requirements are necessary to ensure public safety. An enforcement phase may be opened to address finding of non-compliance with CPUC rules and regulations.

Initiating this investigation is one of several actions the CPUC is taking in response to recent PSPS events. This proceeding may inform but will not duplicate the CPUC's re-examination of current PSPS guidelines and protocols currently underway in [Rulemaking 18-12-005](#). In addition, on



November 12, 2019, President Batjer [ordered](#) PG&E to demonstrate why it shouldn't be sanctioned for its PSPS events implemented throughout October 2019.

“It is important for the CPUC to determine if the utilities complied with using Public Safety Power Shut-offs as a last resort, and to collect the knowledge gained towards any revisions needed for next year,” said Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma. “It is essential that our protocols and the utilities’ practices provide the best service and protections for customers in the face of wildfires.”

The electric utilities under investigation are Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE), San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), Liberty Utilities/CalPeco Electric, Bear Valley Electric Service, and Pacific Power, a division of PacifiCorp.

In September and October 2019, the state’s investor-owned electric utilities, notably PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E, proactively de-energized power lines during high wildfire danger weather conditions to reduce the risk of utility infrastructure starting wildfires.

The proposal voted on to open the investigation is available at:

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M319/K527/319527577.PDF>.

To learn about other actions the CPUC has taken regarding PSPS, please visit

[www.cpuc.ca.gov/PSPS](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PSPS).

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](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

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