



Susan Wengraf  
Berkeley City Council

CONSENT CALENDAR  
November 28, 2017

To: Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmembers Susan Wengraf & Sophie Hahn and Mayor Jesse Arreguin  
Subject: Letter to PG&E Regarding Maintenance

#### RECOMMENDATION

Approve a letter to PG&E urging them to maintain the foliage around their powerlines so that there is no conflict between lines and foliage. This request complies with existing standards and aides fire prevention.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None

#### CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Berkeley Hills have an abundance of utility poles overrun with foliage. In light of the recent North Bay fires, the City of Berkeley needs to strongly urge PG&E to step up their maintenance and comply with their foliage maintenance regulations.

#### BACKGROUND

Tree branches intersecting with powerlines can be a potential fire hazard, especially in areas designated as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, such as the Berkeley Hills. It is unconscionable for PG&E to postpone maintenance in light of recent catastrophic fires in Napa & Sonoma.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Proactive actions to prevent fire are in keeping with the goals of the climate action plan.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Fire Safety

#### CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Susan Wengraf, 510-981-7160

#### Attachments:

1: Proposed Letter to PG&E



Mayor &  
Berkeley City Council

November 28, 2017

**To:** PG&E  
**From:** Berkeley Mayor and City Council  
**Subject:** Maintenance of Power Lines so No Conflict between Lines and Foliage

The Berkeley Mayor and City Council urge you to maintain your power lines and poles so that there is no conflict between lines and foliage. According to the CPUC's General Order 95, Rule 35, Appendix E, the minimum clearance from utility line to foliage is 4ft.<sup>12</sup> PG&E's utility lines in the City of Berkeley, particularly in the Cal Fire designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, are far from meeting CPUC's General Order.

We urgently ask you to comply with mandated standards and maintain trees near your utility lines and poles.

We are all aware of the devastating human loss, as well as land and property destruction, from the North Bay Fires. We urge you to proactively help to prevent another catastrophe. The time for escalating the foliage maintenance of your utility lines is now.

We thank you for your action on this matter.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://cpuc.ca.gov/gos/GO95/go\\_95\\_appendix\\_e-guidlines.html](http://cpuc.ca.gov/gos/GO95/go_95_appendix_e-guidlines.html)

<sup>2</sup> [http://cpuc.ca.gov/gos/GO95/go\\_95\\_rule\\_35.html](http://cpuc.ca.gov/gos/GO95/go_95_rule_35.html)