



Susan Wengraf
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 16, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Wengraf, Mayor Arreguin and Councilmember Harrison
Subject: Presentation by PG&E to City Council

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council receive a presentation from representatives of Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) concerning their Community Wildfire Safety Program and specifically the Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) element of that program.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Minimal

BACKGROUND

The City Council needs to have a better understanding of the potential impacts of PG&E's PSPS program on Berkeley. My understanding is that PG&E's PSPS plans include the potential for cutting off power to both distribution and transmission lines after evaluating conditions of extreme fire danger including: red flag warnings, low humidity levels, conditions of dry fuel and forecasted sustained winds generally above 25 miles per hour. PG&E plans to provide notice prior to power shut-offs, if possible. They have indicated that any PG&E customer may be affected by these shut-offs and that customers should prepare for outages that could last longer than 48 hours.

A lengthy period without electricity could significantly impact not only vulnerable members of the community who rely on power for medical reasons, but also homebound seniors, families with children if schools are unable to operate, medical facilities, and public transportation, among others. From an infrastructure perspective, if battery back-up and generator capabilities are exhausted, a power shut off could impact street lights, traffic lights, sewer pumping stations and possibly the water supply. Private facilities such as grocery stores and restaurants could face food storage issues, and other private businesses could be impacted.

In addition, it is important for City Council to understand PG&E's outreach efforts about this program to Berkeley residents and Berkeley's business community so that we will have a sense of the information available to our constituents.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Support of this item is completely consistent with the City of Berkeley's environmental policy goals.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Wengraf

Council District 6

510-981-7160