



COUNTY OF VENTURA COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County advises residents to sign up for power outage alerts

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County's wildfire season is different this year. This year, in addition to the threat of wildfires, there is the possibility that Southern California Edison will apply Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). The County wants to help ensure its most vulnerable residents – those in SCE's Medical Baseline program and others with functional needs – receive the information and notice they need to stay safe in the event of a power outage.

The Medical Baseline program is designed for families that have at least one person in the household who requires powered medical equipment. SCE provides financial assistance for their power needs to families who qualify for the program, but SCE also gives participants special consideration when a PSPS is a possibility.

"People who rely on powered medical equipment are at extreme risk when the electricity is shut off," said Mike Powers, County Executive Officer. "For them, electricity can literally be a matter of life and death. We want to be sure that, if power is shut off, they have received adequate notice and that their health and safety will be factored into the decision-making process for restoring power."

If there is a weather forecast for high fire danger, SCE will begin preparing for PSPS. Ideally, SCE will provide customers with warnings starting 48 hours in advance. However, SCE could shut off the power at any time if they believe the fire danger is extreme. Customers can sign up for alerts from SCE at <https://www.sce.com/safety/wildfire/pmps>.

If SCE initiates a PSPS, power could be lost for 48 hours or longer. To date, power shutoffs in Ventura County have been much shorter, but people in the Medical Baseline program must be prepared for longer outages. Application and preparedness information can be found at www.sce.com/residential/assistance/medical-baseline.

Qualifying devices include, but are not limited to, respirators, motorized wheelchairs or scooters, dialysis machines and infusion pumps.

The County has an emergency notification system – VCAalert – to inform people of emergencies and provide information on evacuations, health concerns, school and road closures, and power outages. All residents are strongly encouraged to sign up for VCAalert at



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www.vcalert.org. During an emergency, critical information can be found at www.vcemergency.com/.

"We're very concerned about the effects a power shutoff might have on the part of our population with functional needs," said Powers. "A number of County agencies are closely monitoring the PSPS situation alongside SCE to help ensure the most vulnerable receive timely information."

The County's Public Health Department maintains a webpage dedicated to preparing for a multi-day power outage. You can find it at <http://www.vchca.org/our-purpose/49-health-care-agency/public-health/ems/vchcc/428-poweroutageprep>.

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