



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Board of Supervisors

1195 Third St.
Suite 310
Napa, CA 94559
www.countyofnapa.org

Main: (707) 253-4386
Fax: (707) 253-4176

Brad Wagenknecht
Chair

October 23, 2018

Richard C. Kelly, Chairman of the Board
Pacific Gas & Electric Company
245 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Subject: Fire danger power outages

Dear Chairman Kelly,

This letter is to voice Napa County's concern with respect to PG&E's new policy to cut utility supplied power to communities in Napa County during periods of high fire danger weather. While we can understand the utility's concern for its infrastructure being the potential source of ignition of wildfires, the cutting of power to large areas of the County for an extended period of time as evidenced last weekend was unacceptable. The entire City of Calistoga and large portions of non-Tier 3 areas of the unincorporated area of the County were without power for over 48 hours in some cases.

Further, there was insufficient communication with local government – County and Calistoga – before the shutoff, and almost zero substantive communication regarding restoration. It is critical that PG&E partner with local government agencies *as well as* your customers to ensure everyone's safety. While we appreciate your efforts to keep the community safe from wildfire, as local government, we are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all of our residents and visitors all the time, some of whom need electricity for life support types of equipment.

While PG&E provided some information in advance as to what would occur during the power shutdown, it was not in sufficient time nor did it provide the details necessary to assist those who lost power, especially the most vulnerable. We understand that, in making a decision whether to turn off power, PG&E considers a combination of criteria, including:

- A Red Flag Warning declared by the National Weather Service
- Low humidity levels, generally 20 percent and below
- Sustained winds above approximately 25 mph and wind gusts in excess of approximately 45 mph
- Site-specific conditions such as temperature, terrain and local climate
- Condition of dry fuel on the ground and live vegetation (moisture content)
- On-the-ground, real-time observations from PG&E field crews

These factors are broadly described. Before any future shut-off, we need to know what specific factors PG&E is applying as a trigger for deploying an outage. County representatives have been asking for this information for quite some time but it has not been provided to date.

It would also be very helpful to have PG&E provide the County's Public Health Official with as much

Brad Wagenknecht
District 1

Ryan Gregory
District 2

Diane Dillon
District 3

Alfredo Pedroza
District 4

Belia Ramos
District 5

Richard C. Kelly, Chairman – PG&E
October 23, 2018
Page 2 of 2

notice as possible to ensure the safety of our residents. Finally, it is very important that efforts to re-energize the system be timely to avoid economic losses and further traumatize our citizens.

We would appreciate being apprised of what changes are being made to PG&E's policy as a result of the power shutdown last weekend, and when. We want to work *with* you to keep Napa County's communities and residents safe.

Sincerely,

Brad Wagenknecht
Chair, Napa County Board of Supervisors

cc: Hon. Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, California State Assembly
Hon. Bill Dodd, California State Senate
Michael Picker, California Public Utilities Commission
Carla J. Peterman, California Public Utilities Commission
Liane M. Randolph, California Public Utilities Commission
Martha Guzman Aceves, California Public Utilities Commission
Clifford Rechtschaffen, California Public Utilities Commission
Graham Knaus, California State Association of Counties
Paul Smith, Rural County Representatives of California