



Monterey County

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

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Introduced: 10/31/2019

Current Status: Agenda Ready

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Matter Type: BoS Resolution

- a. Adopt a Resolution of Proclamation of a Local Emergency, dated October 30, 2019, in accordance with California Government Code Section 8630 et. al., due to Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), which are the intentional shutting-off of power to portions of Monterey County, which are expected to continue, to reduce the risk of igniting a fire caused by electrical company infrastructure during adverse weather, thereby causing conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property nearby. (4/5ths vote required)

RECOMMENDATION:

- a. Adopt a Resolution of Proclamation of a Local Emergency, dated October 30, 2019, in accordance with California Government Code Section 8630 et. al., due to Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), which are the intentional shutting-off of power to portions of Monterey County, which are expected to continue, to reduce the risk of igniting a fire caused by electrical company infrastructure during adverse weather, thereby causing conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property nearby. (4/5ths vote required)

SUMMARY:

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 8630(a) allows the County Administrative Officer, to proclaim the existence of a local emergency when the county is affected by or likely to be affected by a public calamity. The Government Code requires that emergency proclamations be reviewed at least once every 60 days until the emergency is terminated.

On October 26 - 29, 2019, Pacific Gas and Electric Company de-energized areas of incorporated and unincorporated Monterey County resulting in prolonged complete loss of electricity due to a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS). On October 30, 2019, the CAO for Monterey County proclaimed a local emergency due to a PGE initiated a Public Safety Power Shutoffs in Monterey County.

Conditions of extreme peril, created by the PSPS, warrant and necessitate the proclamation of the existence of a local emergency and immediate action is necessary to mitigate public calamity, and to protect life and property as affected by such emergency. This board report request adoption of a Resolution of Proclamation of a Local Emergency dated October 30, 2019, in accordance with California Government Code Section 8630 et. al., due to Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS).

DISCUSSION:

At approximately 2200 hours on October 26, 2019 through approximately 1700 hours on October 29, 2019, 10,607 Pacific Gas and Electric Company customers across incorporated and unincorporated Monterey County Operational Area experienced prolonged complete loss of electricity due to a Public Safety Power Shutoff. Based on the 2018 Census, Monterey County Office of Emergency Services estimates approximately 35,000 residents were impacted.

The Pacific Gas and Electric (PGE) Company provides natural gas and electric service to the Monterey County Operational Area. Given the continued and growing threat of extreme weather and wildfires, and as an additional precautionary measure following the 2017 and 2018 wildfires, to reduce the risk of wildfire conflagrations, PGE has implemented policies and procedures related to proactively turning off power for safety - and later restoring power - when gusty winds and dry conditions, combined with a heightened fire risk, threaten a portion of the electric system. This is often called proactive de-energization and restoration in the industry; PG&E is calling this a Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Efforts to mitigate, respond to, and recover from intentional de-energization of the electric systems and to assist the affected population with the provision of information, resources, commodities, and emergency services involved assets from Monterey County government, and other local governments in Monterey County; special districts; local and state fire, law, and emergency services; state prisons; American Red Cross, and other volunteer and private sector assets.

Power disruptions have significant impacts on public safety and can disrupt day-to-day and emergency communications, water, water systems, transportation, and fuel supplies. Many businesses in the Monterey County Operational Area closed retail businesses, grocery stores, gas stations, ATMs, banks, and other services. Monterey County households experiencing a power disruption incurred hardships and increased risk due to food spoilage and water contamination.

Public services and facilities were disrupted in the affected region, leading to temporary school, day care, and public service facility closures, disproportionately impacting those who depend on these facilities for assistance.

The agriculture industry faced issues powering automatic feeders, irrigation systems, food storage, and cooling facilities and fueling shipping facilities, mechanical equipment, and transportation for workers, limiting or halting operations.

People with disabilities and others with access and functional needs - include people who have physical, sensory, behavioral, or cognitive limitations, such as difficulty moving, walking, balancing, climbing, seeing, speaking, hearing, reading, understanding, and remembering - rely on life supporting devices that require uninterrupted access to power sources and those who use them may be at risk of immediate death for the duration of an outage; Medication that require temperature control; Mobility devices powered by electricity, thus impairing the ability to use the bathroom, prepare meals, seek help, and evacuate; and Temperature-controlled environments.

Power disruptions can exacerbate what are typically independent living environments and

well-controlled chronic health conditions, creating a need for additional assistance with power disruption notifications, transportation and shelter care; Welfare checks on impacted areas were warranted to help alleviate this need.

Conditions - listed above do not comprise the total damages and impacts to the Operational Area- of extreme peril created by the pro-longed and intentional de-energization of the electrical system, warrant and necessitate the proclamation of the existence of a local emergency and immediate action is necessary to mitigate public calamity, and to protect life and property as affected by such emergency; and

Action by the Board of Supervisors as recommended herein will document the extreme nature of the power shutoff and its effects on the incorporated and unincorporated communities of Monterey County.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The hazard abatement, mitigation, and recovery efforts involve the cooperation and assistance of local and state fire protection and law enforcement resources; City Government Agencies; County Public Works, Resource Management Agency, Public Health, Environmental Health, Department of Social Services, Information Technology, and Office of Emergency Services assets; American Red Cross.

FINANCING:

Financial impact to the General Fund at this time unknown. State of California also proclaimed a State emergency which may make the County eligible for California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) funds if they become available. If the State does not approve CDAA there is no financial impact to the County.

Prepared by:

Approved by:

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Attachments: Emergency Proclamation dated 10/30/19; draft Resolution