



Marin County Office of Education PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs Recommendations for Schools

In response to recent catastrophic wildfires in our region, PG&E has implemented a Public Safety Power Shutoff program aimed at preventing future wildfires and likely resulting in multi-day power outages affecting thousands of residents, business and public agencies.

With the majority of Marin County designated as Tier 2 (Elevated), or Tier 3 (Extreme) fire threat areas, Marin County public and private schools must prepare for a multi-day power outages. The Marin County Office of Education, in coordination with PG&E, the Marin County Fire Department, and the Marin County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services are recommending procedures and protocols based on the following assumptions:

- A Public Safety Power Shutoff will likely occur in Marin, if not during the current fire season, at some point in the future.
- Even those areas not designated as elevated or extreme fire danger may be impacted because the areas requiring shutoff may include power grids covering wide geographic areas.
- Public Safety Power Shutoffs will cause major disruption to the entire community and basic services particularly communications and transportation.
- Although conditions requiring the shutoffs may be relatively short in duration, outages may last 3 to 5 days, because of PG&E protocols for visual inspection of all power lines before restoration of power.
- There is potential for isolated or widespread school closures during multi-day power outages.

Here are some of the most important considerations to take into account in development of school procedures and protocols for Public Safety Power Shutoffs:

Communications – Communications may be the single most significant challenge before, during and after the PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs. Since communications will be particularly challenging and limited during the outages, it will be important to update and maintain redundant communication channels with parents, families and staff, including:

- cell phone
- texting
- Landlines
- Email
- local media outlets

PG&E will try to provide potentially impacted customers with notification and updates 48-hours, 24-hours, and just prior to the power shut off. They will also make an effort to provide additional notifications during the outage, and then once power is restored. In some cases, extreme weather events may not allow advance notice.

MCOE Emergency Operations Center Activation – When PG&E initiates a 48-hour notification the Marin County Office of Education will activate our Emergency Operations Center and work in close conjunction with PG&E and our emergency services partners to initiate conference calls and communications as advised by public safety officials. The MERA Radio system will be utilized as a back up for MCOE and School District communications if other communications channels are not available.

Recommendations for parents / guardians and school staff to assist in communications before, during, and after Public Safety Power Shutoffs:

- PG&E account holders / customers, register at [PG&E Alerts for Account Holders](#)
- Register at [PG&E Zip Code Alerts for non-account holders](#) for your school's zip code
- Check PG&E Power Shutoff forecasts at [PG&E 7-Day Power Shutoff Potential](#)
- Register at www.AlertMarin.org
- Register at <http://www.nixle.com/> (text zip codes to 888777)
- If possible, procure a solar charging unit for your cell phone

Transportation – When the power is turned off many if not all gas stations will not be able to pump gas and many traffic signals will only be operational for a short period of time. Significant traffic and gridlock should be anticipated on major transportation arteries, which will impact student transportation as well as the ability of staff to get to school.

School Operations and Closures - Because of impacts on communications and transportation most schools will likely have no other choice but to close for the duration of the outage. Some schools may be able to continue to operate with a modified instructional plan due to their geographic location, facility design, and the ability of students and key staff access the school site during an outage.

An Opportunity to Build Resilience and Increase Preparedness – In the end, we cannot be certain if a PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff will impact our community, and yet we know that we must do everything we can to be prepared. The efforts we take now to prepare will help to build resilience and preparedness in our community for earthquakes, floods, and other natural disasters as well as Public Safety Power Shutoffs. Thank you for all that you do to help us to be prepared!

Please see these links for more information:

- [PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff Community Wildfire Safety Program Information](#)
- [PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff Service Impact Map](#)
- [Preparing Your Facility for Potential Power Outages](#)

