

**Sierra County
Board of Supervisors'
Agenda Transmittal &
Record of Proceedings**

MEETING DATE:
6 November 2018

TYPE OF AGENDA ITEM:
X Regular Timed
Consent

DEPARTMENT: Board of Supervisors
APPROVING PARTY: Lee Adams, Supervisor – District One
PHONE NUMBER: 530.289.3506; hangman@sierracounty.ca.gov

Item: Discussion/action to approve letter to Pacific Gas & Electric Company regarding concerns of new policy to shut off commercial power during times of high fire danger conditions.

SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS ATTACHED: Memo Resolution Agreement Other
See attached letter.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

FUNDING SOURCE:
GENERAL FUND IMPACT: NA
OTHER FUND:
AMOUNT: NA

ARE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL REQUIRED?

Yes, -- --
 No

IS THIS ITEM ALLOCATED IN THE BUDGET? Yes X No

IS A BUDGET TRANSFER REQUIRED? Yes X No

SPACE BELOW FOR CLERK'S USE

BOARD ACTION:

- Approved
- Approved as amended
- Adopted
- Adopted as amended
- Denied
- Other
- No Action Taken

- Set public hearing
For: _____
- Direction to: _____
- Referred to: _____
- Continued to: _____
- Authorization given to:

Resolution 2018- _____
Agreement 2018- _____
Ordinance _____
Vote:
Ayes:
Noes:
Abstain:
Absent:
 By Consensus

COMMENTS:

CLERK TO THE BOARD

DATE

SIERRA COUNTY

Board of Supervisors
P.O. Drawer D
Downieville, California 95936
Telephone (530) 289-3295
Fax (530) 289-2830



6 November 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 our concern with respect to PG&E's new policy to cut utility supplied power to communities in Sierra 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 most residential customers in addition to the overall inconvenience of living without power, leaves the great majority of our citizens without telephone service or any other way to communicate with respect to any emergency.

All Sierra County communities lack any kind of cellular service, and most homes here now access residential telephone service via AT&T u-verse as that utility moves away from traditional copper wire service. In addition, few public coin telephones exist in any of Sierra County's rural communities. Without commercial power, most home telephones lose dial tone and the ability to make or receive calls.

Additionally, Sierra County operates a Code Red reverse 9-1-1 system by which to warn residents of emergency situations of any kind county wide. While this county operated system works with the benefit of an emergency generator at our county courthouse complex, the failure of telephones supported by AT&T u-verse during times of power outages makes this warning system worthless as warning calls will fail to be received. Such a scenario puts residents at risk county wide

should there be any emergencies during these times of deliberate power outages. And compared to our more urban counterparts, we have no cellular service as an alternative to ground based telephone service.

We would implore PG&E to rethink this policy that puts these rural communities and their residents at a greater risk should any emergency arise.

We would add that the manner in which this weekend's notice of impending outages be reconsidered. Many PG&E subscribers in western Sierra County received telephone calls that began at 11:30pm on Saturday evening that were annoying at best, and scary at worst. Few of us receive such residential telephone calls that late at night and many were frightened that such late night calls were family emergencies. A number of residents logged up to eight such calls over the weekend which then became annoying.

We would appreciate learning of any changes in PG&E's policy and look forward to working with you keep Sierra County's communities and residents safe.

Sincerely,

SIERRA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By:

Scott A. Schlefstein
Chair

Cc: Hon. Brian Dahle, California State Assembly
Hon. Ted Gaines, California State Senate
California State Association of Counties
Rural County Representatives of California
California Public Utilities Commission

Lee Adams
District No. 1
P.O. Box 1
Downieville, CA 95936

Peter W. Huebner
District No. 2
P.O. Box 349
Sierra City, CA 96125

Paul Roen
District No. 3
P.O. Box 43
Calpine, CA 96124

Jim Beard
District No. 4
P.O. Box 1140
Loyalton, CA 96118

Scott A. Schlefstein
District No. 5
P.O. Box 192
Loyalton, CA 96118