

## CUEA STAFF

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Jenny Regino, Editor

July 2017 to December 2017

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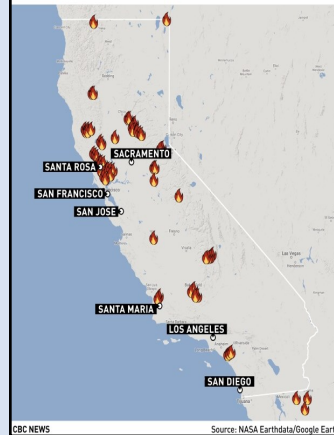
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## CUEA RESPONDS TO THE OCTOBER WILDFIRES

Contributed by Jordan Regino—CUEA

CALIFORNIA: ACTIVE WILDFIRES (LAST 24 HOURS)



On October 9th, 2017 the UOC was activated due to a fire that began in Santa Rosa, California. CUEA was first contacted at 12:54 a.m. to join a 1 a.m. conference call regarding the fires. Activation of the SOC/UOC lasted from October 9th at 7 a.m. until October 18th at 7 p.m. The counties in Northern California that were affected by these wildfires were: Napa, Sonoma, Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Yuba, Nevada, and Solano. In

Southern California, Orange county was affected by a separate fire. The fires spread rapidly, and multiple new fires broke out each day. Eventually, some of the fires merged with others and became complex fires.



Governor Brown made multiple declarations because of these fires. On October 9, Governor Brown declared a State of Emergency in Napa, Sonoma, Yuba, Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Nevada and Orange Counties due to fires. Lastly, the Governor declared a State of Emergency in Solano County due to the Atlas fire on October 10th.

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local fairgrounds were also set up as shelters. FEMA and other

The fires affected multiple residential areas, and thousands of people were forced to evacuate and even more did so as a precautionary measure. Some schools were closed due to the fires and the smoke and ash in the air and shelters were opened across the region for both people and animals who had to evacuate. Other schools were closed to be used as temporary shelters;

## CUEA RESPONDS TO THE OCTOBER WILDFIRES

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The National Guard flew Lowell Handy of Verizon Wireless, former Chair of CUEA, over the fire zone to assess the damage.

agencies had multiple task forces working out of the State Operations Center (SOC) to help aide the victims and evacuees of these wildfires.

Multiple CUEA member utilities were affected by these fires. On the Telecom side, Verizon Wireless, Frontier and AT&T services were impacted due to cell towers and fiberoptic lines being burnt. Due to the fires, PG&E customers lost power in the areas surrounding the fire zones. Through the efforts of the UOC and other responding members and outside sources, CUEA was

able to help restore power and cell service as quickly as possible. During the activation of the SOC and the UOC, responders worked through the UOC and remotely to aid the restoration efforts.



Vice President Pence greets CUEA Executive Director Don Boland during the SOC/UOC Thomas Fire activation.

Those who responded and staffed the UOC were: Lowell Handy (Verizon Wireless), Jim Cigler (Verizon Wireless), Cecile Pinto (PG&E), Major John Carreon (National Guard), Amy Cole (Army Corps of Engineers), Justin Cochran (CEC), Ryan Eggers (CEC), Tertia Speiser (DOE), Major Eric Outfleet (National Guard), Kristi Mercado (AT&T), Sumeet Singh (PG&E), and the CUEA staff. The UOC provided direct assistance to PG&E, AT&T, Verizon Wireless, and multiple water districts with escorts, permits, and highway access from Cal Trans, ARB, and CHP.



The Coffey Park subdivision in Santa Rosa, Calif., before, left, and after wildfires swept through the area on Oct. 9, 2017.



## RETHINK THE WAY YOU TEST CONTINGENCY PLANS, YOUR LEADERS WILL THANK YOU

Contributed by Lance L. LaBreck, CBCP, MBCI, MSM/IS—CAISO



California ISO

The cost of contingency planning, training, and testing can be pricey once you factor in all the identification of risks, mitigation, resources, expertise, and maintenance. So how do we do it with the best value? AKA on the cheap. Easy...it is all in the testing.

Here is an example to give you context...

It was agreed to by our Business Continuity Executive Steering Committee in further develop our Incident Command System (ICS) maturity through additional testing. Some of the leadership was skeptical because the entire ICS is made up of volunteers who all have day jobs in the company. I stated: "We will reduce impact to staff while increasing performance through a more dynamic testing schedule and scenario." Unlike math, in contingency planning, one plus one can equal three if you change your thinking of how to conduct an exercise.

In 2016, we implemented a holistic Business Continuity Management System, trained staff and contingency teams on roles and responsibilities during a disaster or disruption. We conducted team and enterprise testing, then ended with a multiple day large scale exercise. The goal was to validate a more robust Emergency Response, Incident Management, Disaster Recovery, Crisis Management, and Business Recovery Plan. Though successful, the feedback, like in corresponding years, was the time impact on the business units and volunteer ICS members was too much.

The focus in 2017 was to break down each plan and coordinating team to focus on one part of the overlapping whole. Our continuity team set up specific requirements throughout the year, when combined, composed a large scale exercise with less impact on the organization. My goal was to find a familiar large scale incident, cut into smaller parts, and add in additional stress indicators similar to a flight simulator with "red lights" going off to keep the teams on edge through the many short exercises.

An example was evacuation testing without a mass notification system (simulated outage) to test our email backup response on staff accountability. Or during the incident management phase of the exercise we tested internet and a smart phone outage (simulated) to validate backup strategies with satellite phones and contingency plans attached to encrypted thumb drives. Each of the fifty six tests took minutes, not hours, and was easier to schedule throughout the year. Practitioners like me broke down the plans into small testable parts totaling fifty six requirements throughout the year. Oh, and at the end of the year, one day encompassed three entire Incident Management Teams each taking only four hours of their day. We even added external observers and evaluators to verify we were meeting industry norms.

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## RETHINK THE WAY YOU TEST CONTINGENCY PLANS, YOUR LEADERS WILL THANK YOU

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What was the result? The entire year's contingency impact to the company encompassing planning, training, and testing was reduced by fifty percent. All staff members were impacted for three hours, contingency team members were impacted for six hours, and all was done in house (no consultant costs) with only two full time employees.

Depending on the funds available and size of your organization, you can tailor the testing to better accommodate the culture and internal or regulatory requirements. If needed and if the corporate belts are tightened, you can prioritize your testing needs so not everything is validated each year but meets the risk appetite directed by the executives. The takeaway from this article is to use smaller amounts of time specific to the right resources throughout the year to identify, test, and validate the planning in your organization. This will get you through the next real disaster or disruption.

## AS COLDER WEATHER APPROACHES, PG&E OFFERS TIPS TO HELP CUSTOMERS SAVE MONEY AND ENERGY



®

With the official start of winter today, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) offers ways to help customers conserve and save. More energy is used in the cooler months for heating and lighting which can mean an increase in energy bills. Fortunately, there are many ways to reduce the cost of keeping warm as temperatures dip this winter.

"We are here to help our customers with easy ways to manage cold weather energy costs. The first day of winter is the perfect time to follow some simple tips and take advantage of available programs that PG&E offers," said Vincent Davis, PG&E's senior director of energy efficiency.

### Ways to Save Energy this Winter

Try these ideas to help you stay warm and safe this winter.

- **Lower your thermostat when away:** Save one percent on heating costs per each degree lowered over an eight hour time frame.
- **Control water temperature:** Set water heater thermostat at 120 degrees or lower. Save 10 percent in water heating costs for every ten degrees lowered.
- **Microwave and save:** Reheating leftovers in a microwave takes less time and uses up to 80 percent less energy than a standard oven.
- **Upgrade Lighting:** Advanced LED's use at least 75 percent less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lighting.

For more tips on saving energy this winter, visit [pge.com/winter](http://pge.com/winter).

## SDG&E DONATES A TRUCK LOAD OF ANIMAL FEED TO EVACUATED HORSES AT DEL MAR FAIRGROUNDS

*Contributed by Kris Bourbois, SDG&E Emergency Services Program Specialist*



SAN DIEGO, Dec. 8, 2017 – Today, SDG&E delivered a to feed horses that have been evacuated to the facility due to the Lilac Fire in the Bonsall area.

SDG&E employees delivered 40 bales of animal feed--equivalent to two tons--to the stable at the fairgrounds Friday afternoon and plan to deliver another truck load tomorrow. The fairgrounds [opened as an evacuation center](#) for livestock on Thursday, and more than 800 horses were sheltered there.

At SDG&E, we have a long history of providing philanthropic support to fill community needs. In 2016, we invested \$7 million in shareholder dollars in local organizations that make it their mission to serve the community. In addition, SDG&E's employees volunteered more than 3,500 hours and contributed more than \$770,000 from their personal paychecks last year.

[SDG&E](#) is an innovative San Diego-based energy company that provides safe, reliable, clean energy to better the lives of the people it serves in San Diego and southern Orange counties. More than 4,000 employees work to provide the cleanest, safest and [most reliable](#) energy in the West. The company was the first to meet California's goal of delivering 33 percent of energy from renewable sources, has fueled the adoption of [electric vehicles](#) and [energy efficiency](#) through unique customer programs, and supports a number of [non-profit partners](#). SDG&E is a subsidiary of Sempra Energy (NYSE: SRE), a Fortune 500 energy services holding company based in San Diego. For more information, visit [SDGNews.com](#) or connect with SDG&E on [Twitter](#) (@SDGE), [Instagram](#) (@SDGE) and [Facebook](#).



## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON RESPONDS TO AREA FIRES

Reprinted from the SCE Website



ROSEMEAD, Calif., Dec. 11, 2017 — Multiple wind-driven wildfires moving through Southern California are affecting customers and electric service in Southern California Edison's service territory.

Prior to the fires, based on forecasted winds and red flag warnings, SCE mobilized a full emergency response team, pre-staged critical field personnel and implemented measures to mitigate impacts of high winds and potential fires. Driven by public safety concerns for customers in extremely high-wind areas, these measures included a preventative power shutoff to the Idyllwild area in Riverside County for portions of the period from December 7<sup>th</sup> through December 8<sup>th</sup>.

The Thomas fire has significantly affected customers in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties and is continuing to threaten the transmission lines in the area. The fire has intermittently interrupted service for the Santa Barbara area, at times leaving more than 85,000 customers without service. SCE is coordinating its emergency efforts with federal, state, county and local officials. SCE crews are continuing to monitor the situation and have developed contingency plans that include the use of temporary generators and re-routing of power.



SCE crews working hard  
in response to the Thomas Fire

Restoration of equipment is important in order to restore and maintain service for customers. Restoration of SCE equipment damaged by the Liberty fire is complete. Restoration of equipment damaged in the Rye and Creek fires is targeted for completion by December 12<sup>th</sup>, contingent on fire and weather conditions. Where safe, restoration is ongoing in the Thomas fire area, although this fire remains largely uncontained. All restoration work is being conducted in close coordination with fire agencies and other first responders to ensure public and employee safety. SCE teams will continue to assess damage and make repairs when safe to do so.

SCE personnel have completed damage assessments in a majority of the Thomas fire areas where access has been granted and in all of the areas impacted by the Creek and Rye fires. More than 600 SCE workers have been deployed on the wildfires, including those repairing fire-damaged equipment (including damaged poles, wires and insulators), setting poles, installing electrical equipment and stringing wire to restore power to customers as quickly and safely as possible. As of today, in the areas that have been inspected, crews have replaced over 300 of the more than 500 poles that were destroyed, while damage assessment continues in the Thomas fire area. The company continues conducting inspections on the ground and using aerial resources.

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## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON RESPONDS TO AREA FIRES

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Edison International is supporting customers impacted by the fires through a \$250,000 donation to the Southern California Wildfire Fund through the United Way of Greater Los Angeles. In addition, the company has provided a \$40,000 grant to United Way Ventura County for local support of its outreach to fire victims. SCE is working with known medically sensitive customers in the areas impacted by the fires, including providing temporary generators and other support for critical care customer without power. The company also continues to work with affected customers to offer flexible payment arrangements or bill forgiveness depending upon the situation.

The causes of the wildfires are being investigated by CAL FIRE, other fire agencies and the California Public Utilities Commission. The investigations now include locations beyond those identified last week as the apparent origin of these fires. SCE believes the investigations now include the possible role of its facilities. SCE continues to cooperate with the investigations. The wildfire investigations may take a considerable amount of time to complete. SCE will provide updated information as circumstances warrant.



### Safety around Power during Outages

- Stay away from downed wires. If you see a wire down, call 911.
- If you are using generators, do not run them inside your home. There is a danger of carbon monoxide poisoning from generators used indoors. Plug appliances directly into the generator, do not plug the generator into the 220v line, as this could cause backfeed which could electrocute crews working on the lines.

## PRESIDENT DECLARES MAJOR DISASTER FOR DECEMBER WILDFIRES

Reprinted from the Cal OES Website

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced that federal disaster assistance has been made available to the state of California to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by wildfires from December 4, 2017 and continuing.

Federal funding is available to state and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by wildfires in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

William Roche has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area. Roche said additional designations may be made at a later date if warranted by the results of damage assessments.

## SMUD SENDING EQUIPMENT, CREWS TO PUERTO RICO TO GET POWER BACK ON LINE

Reprinted By [Mark Anderson](#) – Staff Writer, Sacramento Business Journal

The [Sacramento Municipal Utility District](#) is shipping 15 of its utility trucks and crews to Puerto Rico to help rebuild and restore the island's hurricane-damaged power grid. Hurricane Maria hit the island on Sept. 20, knocking out power for months to many parts of Puerto Rico. Power was restored quickly to the capital, San Juan, but smaller cities in the south and the interior of the island have been without power for more than 100 days.

Workers from SMUD are expected to be on the island for at least two months, said [Chris Capra](#), spokesman with SMUD. The cost to SMUD in labor and materials for this mutual aid work is expected to be \$5 million, which will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said [Jeff Briggs](#), SMUD's emergency preparedness program manager.

The SMUD utility trucks were delivered by flatbed trailers to Lake Charles, Louisiana, and this week are being shipped from there to Ponce, Puerto Rico, in a trip that's expected to take 10 days.

About 15 utility line workers from Sacramento will fly to the island later this month, meet up with their equipment and then begin work to restore power to the rural areas of the U.S. territory.

Ponce is on the southeast side of the island, which is where it has taken the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority longer to restore power.

The Sacramento workers will be replaced by a fresh crew from Sacramento after 30 days.

Over the years, SMUD has done a lot of mutual aid work with agencies in California, but it has never done anything like this before, said Briggs, who has been with the utility for 30 years. SMUD was prepared to help New York after Superstorm Sandy, but getting equipment to New York proved to be a logistical nightmare and electricity was restored relatively quickly.

The problem in Puerto Rico has gone on for so long, however, that there was a concentrated effort put together by the electric industry to make a push to get electricity restored in the next 60 days, Briggs said.

The island now has about 55 percent electricity restored, and the goal of this effort by 1,500 personnel and 500 pieces of equipment from all over the country is to get the island to 95 percent power by the end of spring. All of SMUD's employees making the trip volunteered for the work, Briggs said.

"We got an overwhelming response from our employees. They know it's going to be pretty basic there right now with no power," Briggs said.

The crews know they won't be spending a lot of time visiting a Caribbean beach, he said. "They are going to be digging holes and setting poles 12 hours a day."

*Jeff Briggs represents SMUD on the CUEA Board of Directors*



SMUD utility trucks are being shipped from Lake Charles, Louisiana, to Ponce, Puerto Rico, in a trip that's expected to take 10 days.



## CUEA STANDING MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE'S

### ENERGY AND PIPELINE COMMITTEE

Committee members meet quarterly to assess current and potential issues, which could impact the dependability of energy supplies within the operational systems and vulnerabilities within the organizations continuity plans. As a result the committee has shared successes and experiences relating to emergency preparedness issues such as Employee Emergency Preparedness Programs, lessons learned and newly innovative programs such as Nationwide Security Identification for First Responders and Credentialing of First Responders. Through invaluable information sharing and implementation of updated notification protocols, the Energy Committee is dedicated to ensuring that California is able to meet energy demands and protect its most critical infrastructure. Rod Wheeler from CAISO is the Chair of the committee. If you are interested in being a part of the energy committee, please contact Jenny Regino at [jenny.regino@caloes.ca.gov](mailto:jenny.regino@caloes.ca.gov) or contact the CUEA office at (916) 845-8518.

### TRAINING & EXERCISE COMMITTEE

The Training and Exercise Committee was formed to research, review and develop courses to heighten awareness of and offer education relating to the emergency management field. Karla Tejada of Golden State Water has volunteered to Chair this committee. If you are interested in being a part of this committee, please contact Jenny Regino at [jenny.regino@caloes.ca.gov](mailto:jenny.regino@caloes.ca.gov) or contact the CUEA office at (916) 845-8518.

Also, if you have any upcoming exercises or training that you would like to have posted on the CUEA website, send them to [jenny.regino@caloes.ca.gov](mailto:jenny.regino@caloes.ca.gov).

### WATER & WASTEWATER COMMITTEE

This committee has been diligent in its efforts to strengthen the water/waste water emergency response community. The ongoing information sharing between member organizations has proved to be of great value. Exchanging best practices, lessons learned, and emergency related templates between organizations have led to improved processes within the water/waste water arena.

Steve Frew of East Bay Municipal Utility District serves as the Chair of this committee and holds quarterly conference calls to focus on Water security, preparedness, and response. Committee members exchange information on how their companies are dealing with theft, protection of sensitive information, as well as upgrades to security policies and technology. If you are interested in being a part of this committee, please contact Steve Frew at [steven.frew@ebmud.com](mailto:steven.frew@ebmud.com) or contact the CUEA office at (916) 845-8518.

**ALERT**



**REPRESENTING:  
POWER-GAS-TELECOM  
WATER/WASTEWATER**

**[WWW.CUEAINC.COM](http://WWW.CUEAINC.COM)**

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**PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES AND/OR PICTURES  
FOR OUR NEXT  
SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER BY 6/15/18:  
[JENNY.REGINO@CALOES.CA.GOV](mailto:JENNY.REGINO@CALOES.CA.GOV)**

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**CUEA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
JUNE 27TH, 2:00PM-4:00PM  
CUEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
JUNE 28TH, 8:30AM-4:00PM  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON, IRWINDALE**