

Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) program

What is the PSPS program?

To reduce wildfire risk, California's utilities may need to proactively turn off power, or "de-energize," electrical lines during extreme weather conditions. Under the [California Public Utilities Commission's Public Safety Power Shutoffs](#) (PSPS) program, the state's largest investor-owned utilities – PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E – monitor their territories for weather and environmental factors that contribute to wildfires. If the risk of fire is high, the utilities may decide to turn off power on electrical lines to prevent causing a fire to ignite.

Which electrical lines are at risk of de-energization under the PSPS programs?

Utilities may de-energize both distribution and high-voltage transmission lines as needed. Transmission lines are generally higher voltage and carry bulk electricity across the state over long distances. Distribution lines deliver electricity to specific communities and homes over a shorter distance.

What is the role of the California Independent System Operator (ISO)?

The utilities determine whether to de-energize electrical lines in the interest of public safety. As the power grid operator for much of the state, the ISO is notified by the utility of the decision to de-energize transmission lines, typically 72 to 48 hours in advance of the outage.

Once the transmission line outage has been submitted by the utility, the ISO grid operators will evaluate and manage system conditions to mitigate potential impacts to the grid.

The utilities with PSPS programs have plans for public notification and education. The ISO will communicate with market participants if there are operational impacts of a transmission outage, and use its current procedures to notify the public about transmission emergencies or Flex Alerts.

For more information on
the utilities' plans, visit
[PrepareForPowerDown.com](https://www.prepareforpowerdown.com)

