

# On The Alert!

**Date:** October 8, 2019  
**Attention:** ASCIP Members  
**Affected Department(s):** Risk Management, Admin, Faculty, & Staff  
**Applicability:** Community College & K-12 School Districts & Charter Schools

## PUBLIC SAFETY POWER SHUTOFFS

A **Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)** or **De-Energization** is a new measure designed to help keep communities in high-risk wildfire areas safe by proactively shutting off power during extreme and dangerous weather conditions that can result in catastrophic wildfires. This measure would only be taken as a last resort to help ensure community safety. During a PSPS, all electrical utility customers, including public schools, serviced by affected power lines will have their power shut off. A PSPS will occur when the most extreme fire danger conditions are forecast to help reduce the likelihood of an ignition. Several criteria will be considered to determine if power should be turned off including:

- Red Flag Warnings declared by the National Weather Service
- Low humidity levels, generally 20% or lower
- Forecasted sustained winds above 25 mph and wind gusts in excess of 45 mph
- The condition of dry fuel on the ground and live vegetation
- On-the-ground, real-time information



It is impossible to predict when your schools may be impacted. A PSPS could occur several times per year in any given area. In anticipation of potential PSPS occurrences, your district should plan as follows:

- Review your local electrical utility's Public Safety Power Shutoff or De-Energization plans.
- Include a PSPS Emergency Response in your district's **Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP)**.
- Update your Emergency Response plan to include the possible need for release of students and communicating with your community (parents, staff, etc.) for possible school closure if power outage too disruptive or deemed a safety concern.
- Consider the use of generators for power during outages (and in other emergency responses. Classes may need to be consolidated into libraries or cafeteria where a generator can supply power.
- Have flashlights and emergency lighting available, along with extra batteries.
- Create a list of critical equipment that must be turned off during an outage to prevent damage.
- For short-term power outages, educators should have emergency lesson plans, books, games and activities prepared that do not require electricity.

### RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PREPARE:

- [https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1510690314175-1e6c4874b251c3022ac4b57b0369e2da/Power\\_Outage\\_Ready\\_Business\\_Toolkit\\_Interactive\\_Final\\_508.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1510690314175-1e6c4874b251c3022ac4b57b0369e2da/Power_Outage_Ready_Business_Toolkit_Interactive_Final_508.pdf)
- <https://www.ready.gov/power-outages>
- <https://www.wikihow.com/Prepare-for-a-Power-Outage>
- <https://www.sce.com/safety/family/emergency-tips>

**Please contact your ASCIP risk services consultant at (562) 404-8029 to discuss further.**