



MEMORANDUM
COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
County of Placer

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors DATE: July 27, 2021

FROM: Todd Leopold, County Executive Officer
By: David Atkinson, PE, Assistant Director of Emergency Services

SUBJECT: Presentation from Liberty Utilities on their Wildfire Mitigation Program to include the Public Safety Power Shutoff.

ACTION REQUESTED

Receive a presentation by Liberty Utilities about their 2021 Community Wildfire Safety Program. This presentation will include updates on specific measures that Liberty Utilities is taking in Placer County to reduce wildfire potential, improve situational awareness, and reduce the impacts of Public Safety Power Shutoff events.

BACKGROUND

The fire season of 2020 was the most destructive in California history, underscoring the importance of continued diligence in wildfire mitigation efforts. Liberty Utilities provides electrical service to much of the Tahoe basin and areas east and south of Truckee, with the majority of their service area in located in High Fire Threat Areas (ia.cpuc.ca.gov/firemap/).

In 2012, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) ruled that California Public Utilities Code Sections 451 and 399.2(a) give electric utilities authority to shut off electric power in order to protect public safety. This allows the energy companies (SDG&E, PG&E, SCE, Liberty, Bear Valley and PacifiCorp) to shut off power for the prevention of fires where strong winds, heat events, and related conditions are present. In response to the 2017 wildfires and Senate Bill (SB) 901, the Commission revised earlier guidelines on the de-energization of powerlines. The CPUC adopted the most current set of Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) guidelines on June 5, 2020. As of July 1, 2021, oversight over PSPS transitioned from the CPUC Wildfire Safety Division to the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety under the California Natural Resource Agency.

Additional information can be found on Liberty’s website: california.libertyutilities.com/north-lake-tahoe/residential/safety/electrical/wildfire-mitigation.html

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact as a result of this action.

