

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
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October 3, 2025

Via Email Transmission Only

Steven Powell  
[Steve.Powell@sce.com](mailto:Steve.Powell@sce.com)  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Southern California Edison Company  
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue  
Rosemead, CA 91770

Re: **SCE's Public Safety Power Shutoff Program**

Dear Mr. Powell:

I write to express my serious concern regarding Southern California Edison Company's (SCE) public safety power shutoff (PSPS) program. While I appreciate that SCE's PSPS program has substantially improved since it began in 2018 — through, among other things, grid hardening enhancements, covered conductor installations, additional weather stations and cameras, and the creation of the Critical Care Battery Backup Program — the fact remains that over the last 18 months SCE's execution of its PSPS program has raised significant concerns.

At the outset, I emphasize PSPS events should only be initiated as a last resort — when the benefits of de-energization outweigh other public safety risks. While reducing the risk of utility-ignited wildfires is critical to public safety, the consequences arising from outages can be severe. State law reflects this balance: under Public Utilities Code Section 451 *all* electric utilities are required to furnish and maintain service necessary to promote the safety, health, comfort, and convenience of their customers, employees, and the public. Equally important are the actions taken leading up to, during, and after any PSPS event — especially timely and effective notifications.

With these principles in mind, my concerns with SCE's PSPS performance over the last 18 months fall into three main categories:

1. The scope and duration of de-energizations;
2. Recent changes to criteria used to initiate PSPS events, associated implementation, outreach, and mitigation activities; and
3. The adequacy of SCE's notification processes.

In 2024, SCE initiated 20 PSPS events, which represents the largest number of PSPS events ever initiated by SCE in a single year, and is notably higher than the 14 total combined PSPS events initiated by *all* other electric utilities last year.<sup>1</sup>

Following this, in January 2025, SCE initiated the largest PSPS event in its near seven-year history, and across just two PSPS events in January it de-energized a total of 515,589 customers and 10,174 critical facilities. The longest de-energization event lasted 15 days. There is no question that power outages — particularly those that are large scale and extended over many days — can cause significant hardship to customers, jeopardizing the safety of customers with medical needs who rely on electricity and disrupting businesses, critical facilities, and schools.

Furthermore, effective reporting depends, in part, on how and when utilities draw the line between distinct PSPS events. SCE must accurately report its distinct PSPS events so that the scope and duration of each of SCE's PSPS events can be fully recorded and tracked, and lessons learned can be identified and used to improve performance.

We have received numerous complaints regarding SCE's execution of these events, including several that allege SCE failed to provide required notifications prior to de-energization. These complaints come not only from customers, but also county and state officials, and they highlight the mounting public concern regarding SCE's PSPS program.

SCE must improve the quality of its PSPS program. I share this letter to clarify my expectations. Moving forward, I expect SCE to continue to work with CPUC staff to communicate and demonstrate where and how SCE's various PSPS modifications and updates fall within and impact SCE's overall wildfire mitigation strategy. I also expect SCE to take immediate action to ensure that all communities that may be impacted by the updated PSPS program are better informed and supported.

Accordingly, SCE must establish bi-weekly leadership meetings beginning in October 2025 with both the CPUC and the Office of Energy Infrastructure and Safety (Energy Safety). These meetings must cover, at the least, my concerns outlined above regarding de-energization scope and duration, as well as notification processes. I strongly encourage you to invite the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) to join and participate in these meetings.

Through these meetings, I expect SCE to demonstrate how it plans to create measurable improvements in the extent, scope, and duration of its PSPS events, as well as in the timeliness, accuracy, and effectiveness of its notifications.

I stress that notification shortcomings are not a mere customer service issue — they directly impact public safety personnel and the coordination of their actions.

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<sup>1</sup> *e.g.*, all other utilities had a total of 14 PSPS events combined

The safety, health, and well-being of Californians requires safe and reliable access to electricity, which remains the Commission's top priority. SCE leadership must fulfill its responsibility to safely implement the updated PSPS program with minimal customer impact. The Commission will continue to closely monitor SCE's implementation, and nothing in this letter precludes future enforcement action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alice Reynolds". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alice" and last name "Reynolds" clearly distinguishable.

Alice Reynolds, President  
California Public Utilities Commission

cc:

CPUC Commissioner John Reynolds

CPUC Commissioner Darcie L. Houck

CPUC Commissioner Karen Douglas

CPUC Commissioner Matthew Baker

CPUC Executive Director, Rachel Peterson

Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Director, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety

Daniel Berlant, State Fire Marshal, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Jill Anderson, Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, SCE

Michael Backstrom, Senior Vice President, Regulatory Affairs, SCE