

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



August 24, 2021

TRANSMITTAL BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

Sumeet Singh
Senior Vice President and Chief Risk Officer
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
77 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Management and removal of burned and felled wood following wildfires

Dear Mr. Singh:

I write to express the urgency of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) taking action regarding the management and removal of trees felled during PG&E's 2020 post-wildfire utility restoration work. I also write to request that PG&E take reasonable, well-executed actions to manage, fell, appropriately cut, and remove trees felled for any post-wildfire restoration efforts for 2021.

I am aware that PG&E has recently initiated a program to remove trees it felled as part of its 2020 post-wildfire restoration. However, it is not clear the extent to which this program is scaled and the extent of the assistance the program would provide. I am specifically requesting that for trees felled as part of PG&E's 2020 post-wildfire restoration, PG&E:

- Immediately and without delay establish a felled tree removal plan for the customers impacted by wildfires in 2020,
- Communicate the plan clearly to impacted county and local governments, tribes, customers, and landowners,
- Ensure close coordination with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' (Cal OES) debris management program,
- Consider every possible commercial use for the felled tree once removed, and
- Execute the plan safely, in keeping with local permits and rules, and with high priority.

With regard to the 2021 wildfire season, I expect PG&E to act in a similarly responsible fashion when it begins felling trees for any post-wildfire restoration work it conducts. I expect PG&E to:

- Prepare and train its workforce, including any contractors and subcontractors, for best practices and appropriate actions in felling and removing trees following wildfires,

- Use the established process of notifying the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) of the activation of its Catastrophic Event Memorandum Account for wildfires following which this restoration work will occur, with the understanding that PG&E must file a formal application if it elects to seek recovery of the costs from ratepayers for the felling, cutting, and removal work.

Nothing in this letter states any position on whether PG&E will be authorized to collect the costs of removing felled trees in rates from ratepayers. That question will be resolved during formal proceedings before the CPUC. At present, for the safety of Californians, it is urgent that PG&E remove felled trees from the areas affected by the 2020 wildfires in its service territory.

I request that you provide a response to this letter within 14 days providing a description of your plan for addressing the handling of trees felled as part of post-wildfire restoration work for 2020 and 2021.

Sincerely,



Rachel Peterson
Executive Director

CC: President Marybel Batjer, CPUC
Commissioner Martha Guzman Aceves, CPUC
Commissioner Clifford Rechtschaffen, CPUC
Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma, CPUC
Commissioner Darcie L. Houck, CPUC

Service list of Rulemaking 18-10-007, Order Instituting Rulemaking to Implement Electric Utility Wildfire Mitigation Plans Pursuant to Senate Bill 901 (2018).

Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Director
Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety

Thom Porter, Director and Fire Chief
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Mark Ghilarducci, Director
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services