Agenda Item Number: 9

Agenda Report Reviewed by:
City Manager: _____

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date:	September 4, 2018
To:	Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From:	City Administration
Subject:	Informational Presentation by PG&E, Herman G. Hernandez, Public Affairs Representative, and Brian Bottari, Public Affairs Manager for the North Bay on the PG&E Community Wildfire Safety Program
Recommendation :	This item is to request that the City Council Receive the Informational Presentation
Funding:	Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes _____ No __XX__ N/A Net General Fund Cost: Amount: $

This item is to provide an informational presentation to the Council on the PG&E Community Wildfire Safety Program, which implements additional precautionary measures intended to reduce wildfire risks.

Community Wildfire Safety Program

SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

September 4, 2018

Together, Building
a Better California

Community Wildfire Safety Program

Nothing is more important to us than keeping our customers and communities safe. Extreme weather events driven by climate change are causing unprecedented and unanticipated wildfires. Our Community Wildfire Safety Program will help reduce wildfire threats and strengthen our communities for the future.



WHAT'S HAPPENING. We are bolstering wildfire prevention and emergency response efforts, putting in place new and enhanced safety measures, and doing more over the long term to harden our electric system to help reduce wildfire risks and keep our customers safe.

WHY IT'S HAPPENING. Years of drought, extreme heat and 129 million dead trees have created a "new normal" for our state, and we must continue to adapt to meet these challenges.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR CUSTOMERS. We want to work together to share information, provide resources and help our customers and communities prepare for and stay safe during extreme weather events.

** Some of the changes and updates included in this presentation are contemplated as precautionary measures intended to reduce future wildfire risk.*

We Are Taking Action

Bolstering wildfire prevention and emergency response efforts

- Monitoring wildfire risks in real time from our new **Wildfire Safety Operations Center**
- **Expanding our network of PG&E weather stations** to enhance weather forecasting and modeling

Working with our communities on new and enhanced safety measures

- **Executing enhanced vegetation management** in high fire-threat areas
- **Disabling automatic reclosing of circuit breakers and reclosers**
- **Refining and executing protocols to proactively turn off electric power** for safety when extreme fire danger conditions are occurring

Longer term, hardening our electric system and integrating new technologies

- Investing in **stronger, coated power lines**
- **Replacing wood poles** with non-wood poles in some areas in the coming years
- Working with communities to **develop resilience zones**

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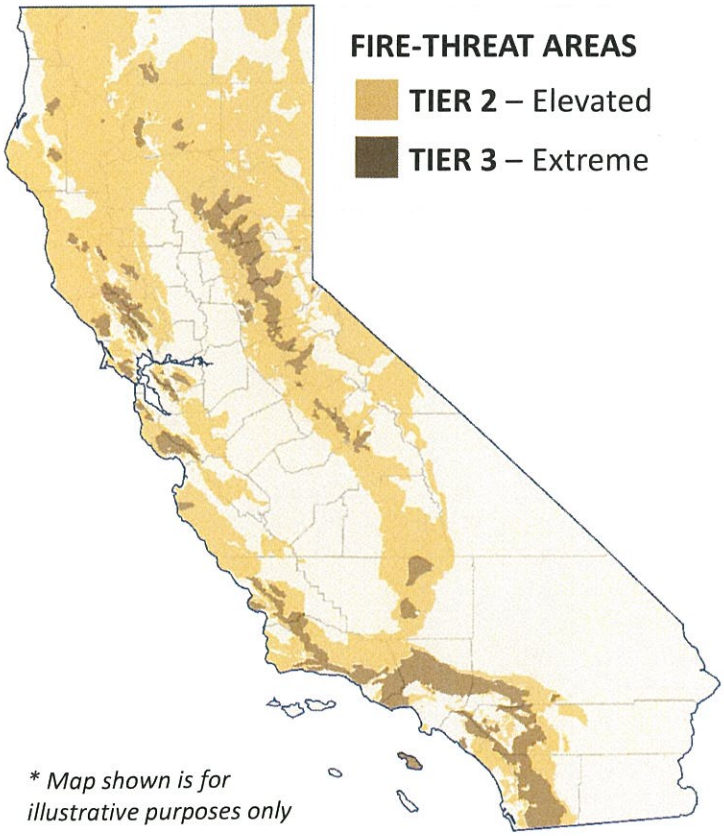
CPUC High Fire-Threat District (HFTD) Map



** Map shown is for illustrative purposes only*

- In January 2018, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) adopted a map designating the areas that are most at risk for wildfire.
  - Tier 3 areas are at extreme risk
  - Tier 2 areas are at elevated risk
- This map was developed in coordination with CAL FIRE and based on input from electric utilities, communications infrastructure providers, and local public safety agencies.
- The map can be accessed at cpuc.ca.gov/FireThreatMaps

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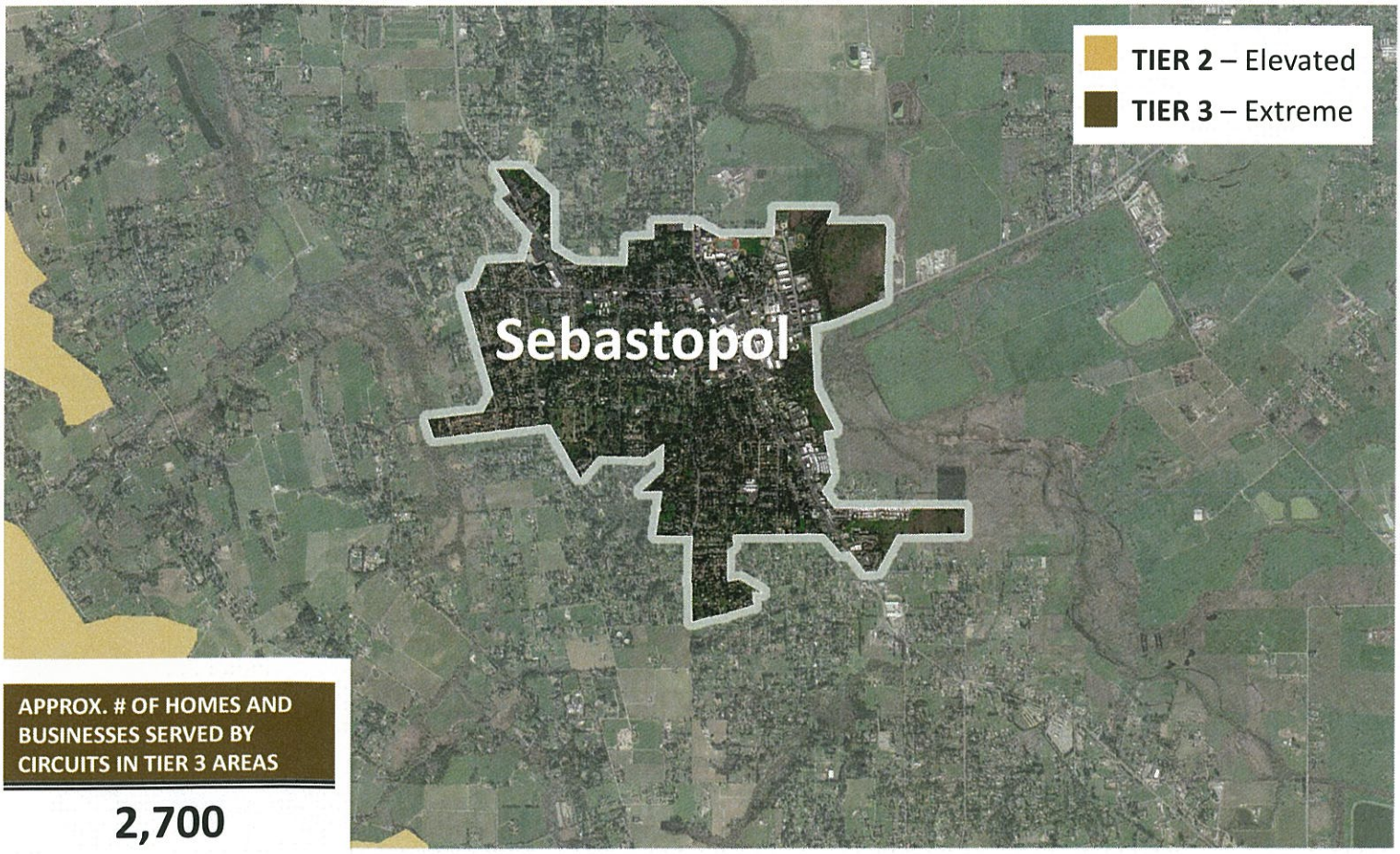
Sebastopol CPUC HFTD Map



APPROX. # OF HOMES AND BUSINESSES SERVED BY CIRCUITS IN TIER 3 AREAS

2,700

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Wildfire Safety Operations Center

- Our new, dedicated Wildfire Safety Operations Center will **monitor wildfire risks in real time** and coordinate **prevention and response efforts**.
- The team will **communicate with field teams, and monitor information** from PG&E weather stations, databases, social media and emergency alert systems **from public safety authorities and other agencies.**



KEY FACTS

- ☑ It is **located at the General Office** at our San Francisco headquarters.
- ☑ It will be **staffed 24 hours a day,** primarily during wildfire season.
- ☑ **Staffed with highly qualified individuals** knowledgeable in electric operations, fire safety, meteorology and other areas.

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Public Safety Power Shutoff

We are reaching out to our customers who live in or near high fire-threat areas to let them know that, if extreme fire danger conditions occur, it may be necessary for us to temporarily turn off power to their neighorhood or community for safety.

1 MONITOR

PG&E continually monitors for extreme weather threats and high fire danger. We will consider several factors before shutting off power.

- **WEATHER FORECAST** is monitored to identify periods of increased risk (wind speed + humidity + temperature)
- **FUEL CONDITIONS** such as dry vegetation are factored in
- **OBSERVE** on-the-ground, real-time info
- **REACH OUT** to CAL FIRE, Cal OES and local agencies

2 INFORM

If we need to turn off power, we will attempt to contact customers in advance to give time to prepare. We will use a multi-faceted effort to inform communities.

- **CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS** through automated calls, texts and emails, when and where possible
- **CONTACT** local and state agencies
- **COORDINATE** with first responders, as needed

3 SHUT OFF / RESTORE

We know how much people rely on electric service and would only temporarily turn off lines for safety and as a last resort.

- **SHUT OFF POWER** line(s) for safety due to extreme fire danger conditions
- **NOTIFICATIONS** to provide customers with updates until power is restored
- **SAFELY RESTORE POWER** as soon as extreme fire danger conditions have passed and safety inspections can be completed

HAVE A PLAN FOR EXTREME WEATHER

PG&E has a plan to deal with the growing threat of extreme weather and wildfires. All customers living in high fire-threat areas should also have a personal or family emergency plan. Visit pge.com/wildfiresafety to learn more about how to prepare your home or business.

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Public Safety Power Shutoff

FREQUENCY

For planning purposes, customers served by lines in high fire-threat areas should consider this could happen **1-2 times during wildfire season,** although it is impossible to predict future weather conditions in this "new normal."

DURATION

After the extreme weather has passed, in most cases, we would expect to be able to restore power within **24 hours**.

However, depending on conditions or if any repairs are needed, outages (weather event + restoration time) could last between **2 to 5 days**.

NOTIFICATIONS

Extreme weather threats can change quickly. When and where possible, we would provide notice between **one hour to 48 hours** in advance through automated phone calls, texts and emails.

We are also conducting **direct outreach** to medical baseline/life support customers.

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Helping Our Customers Prepare

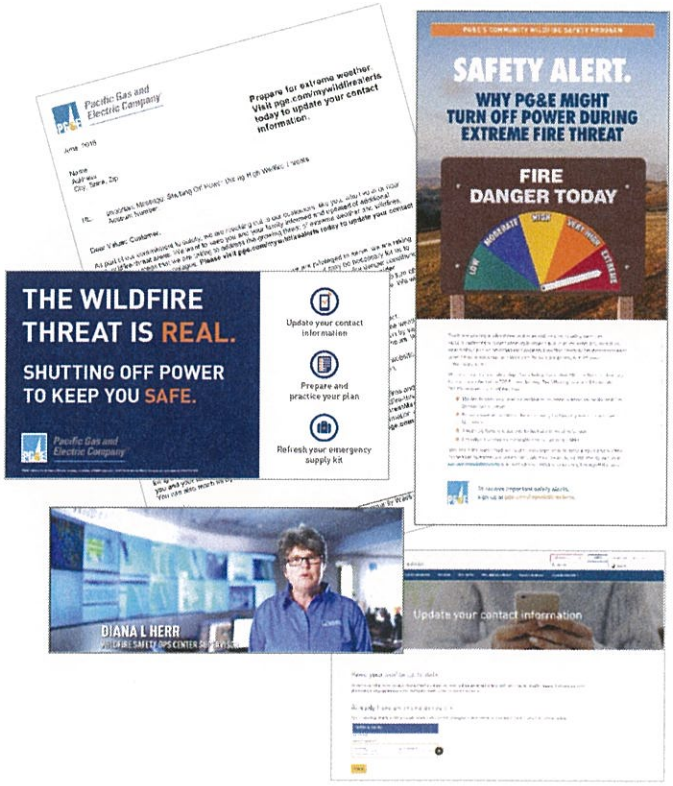
- **PG&E has a plan to deal with the growing threat of extreme weather and wildfires. We want our customers to have plans, too.**
- We are asking our customers to:

Update their contact info
By visiting pge.com/mywildfirealerts so we can keep them informed.

Prepare and practice a plan
Make sure everyone in their home knows what to do by practicing an emergency plan.

Evaluate their home
Know how to manually open garage doors, install and replace batteries in smoke alarms, and locate and operate fire extinguishers.

Create an emergency supply kit
Stock supplies to last a week in waterproof containers that are easy to reach. Refresh emergency kits yearly.



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Enhanced Vegetation Management

- **We are enhancing our routine vegetation work to meet new state vegetation and fire safety standards that require greater clearances** to increase safety in high fire-threat areas.
- We will also be working with our customers to **create fire defense zones around power lines by removing vegetation that could act as fuel** in the event of a wildfire.

ROUTINE	4 FEET	• New CPUC requirement of 4 feet minimum clearance year-round in high fire-threat areas • For some communities, it's increased from the previous minimum requirement of 1.5 feet
	12 FEET OR MORE	• Meeting the CPUC minimum clearance requirement of 4 feet requires creating clearances up to 12 feet or more to ensure compliance until the next inspection • This work may involve some tree removal to help ensure safety
FIRE DEFENSE ZONES	15 FEET	• As an added layer of protection, we are partnering with customers to look at the area 15 feet on either side of the pole line to create fire defense zones in extreme fire-threat areas (Tier 3)

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Fire Defense Zones

- Fire defense zones near or under power lines can help reduce wildfire risks, improve access for first responders and protect public safety by:
  - **Creating safe space** between power lines and trees and brush that can act as fuel for wildfires
  - **Helping slow the spread of fires** and improve access for first responders in the event of a wildfire
  - **Enhancing defensible space** around homes, businesses and properties, improving safety





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Recloser Procedures

- We are **disabling automatic reclosing of circuit breakers and reclosers on lines in high fire-threat areas** during fire season and during periods of high fire-risk.
- Reclosers help maintain the safety of our system by **avoiding sustained power outages**.
- Disabling of reclosing technology **may reduce the probability of fire ignition** associated with a power line.
    - Where reclosers and circuit breakers **do not have remote control capability** (SCADA), we have **disabled reclosing for the 2018 fire season.**
    - Where we **have remote control capability**, we will **disable reclosing based on a daily decision-making process** during times of elevated risk as determined by our Wildfire Safety Operations Center.



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Electric System Hardening

- In the last five years, PG&E has invested **$15 billion to enhance and harden its electric transmission and distribution system assets**.
- Over the longer term, PG&E is working to **strengthen the overall construction of our electric system to reflect the changing environmental conditions** of our service area and improve system resiliency. We are:
  - **Installing stronger, coated power lines**
  - **Replacing wood poles** with non-wood material in some areas in the coming years



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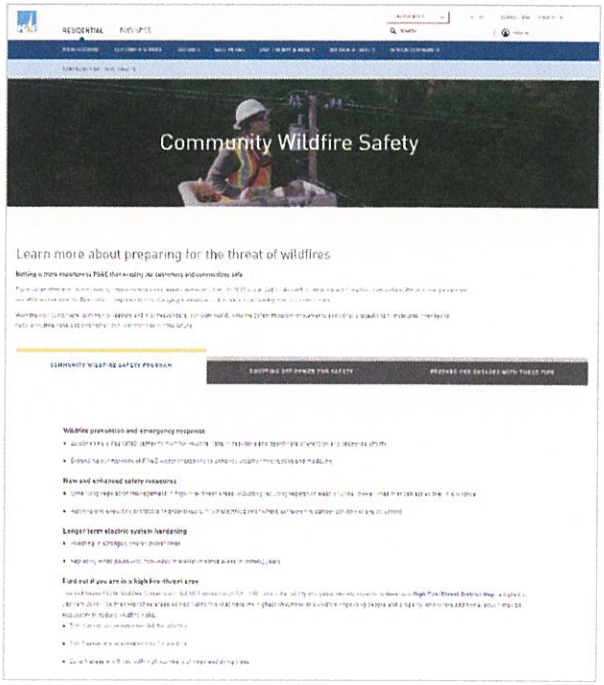
Learn More

For questions regarding PG&E's Community Wildfire Safety Program, please contact:

- Call us at **1-866-743-6589**
- Email us at **wildfiresafety@pge.com**
- Visit **pge.com/wildfiresafety**



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