

Microgrids

NARRATOR: High winds can cause tree branches and debris to contact energized electric lines, damage our equipment and cause a wildfire. To help prevent wildfires, we may need to turn off power during severe weather. This is known as a public safety power shutoff. We know losing power disrupts lives, which is why we are listening to our customers and finding ways to reduce the impact of public safety power shutoffs, without compromising safety. To improve power shutoffs for customers and communities, we are installing and preparing distribution and substation microgrids to reduce the number of people affected by power shutoffs. A microgrid is a local energy source that can operate independently from the larger electric grid. To support our customers, we prepare microgrids in the areas most likely to experience a public safety power shutoff. Microgrids, when safe to energize, use temporary generation to help keep the power on for critical services and some communities in fire-prone areas during a power shutoff. When determining locations that might need a microgrid, we take a look at a couple factors. We look to see how many power shutoffs a location experienced in the past. At the same time, we also evaluate whether a wildfire safety project, such as system hardening or sectionalizing might reduce the need for a microgrid in those areas. If we determine we need to turn off power during severe weather, customers near a microgrid will receive information about whether we can safely energize the nearby microgrid. Customers could experience a brief outage, up to four hours, during a public safety power shutoff, while they are disconnected from the larger grid, and connected to the microgrid. Customers will receive ongoing notifications about the event and the microgrid serving their community. Please note, you may hear noise from the generator or see additional activity, if you live in an area served by a microgrid. PG&E's most important responsibility is the safety of our customers and communities. Because of this, power shutoffs continue to be a necessary tool as a last resort. As we continue our work to quickly improve the safety of our system, we are evolving and improving to reduce the impact of public safety power shutoff outages on our customers. For more information, visit pge.com/microgrids.