

CYSHCN Wildfire & Public Safety Power Shut Off Preparedness with COVID-19 Guidance

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FAMILY  VOICES of California

UCSF

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Wildfires



Why is California Always on Fire?



Pam (Mother) | April (Minor)

- April has a mitochondrial condition and lives with chronic pain, muscle spasms, and has dealt with recurring sepsis infections for multiple years.
- April uses a wheelchair chair full-time and has a full-time caregiver.
- April has specialized dietary needs and restrictions.

- Lost their home, all medical equipment and medications in the Camp fire.
- Barely escaped with only their pets and April's wheelchair. (April's chair cushion actually had burn marks, the fires were so close.)
- Took several hours to learn where the closest shelter was located, and find transportation to the shelter. Upon arrival, learned they could not stay.
- Unable to obtain prescription refills for five days.
- Contacted several health agencies for support services with no response.
- Didn't receive a check from their homeowner's insurance company to replace medical equipment for six weeks. It took an additional two weeks to replace the medical equipment.



- What can we take away from the fact that Pam and April “barely” escaped?
- Why might Pam and April have been unable to obtain prescription refills for five days?
- Why might Pam and April have not received a call back from any health agencies?
- Why might Pam and April have not received a check from their homeowner’s insurance company to replace medical equipment for six weeks?
- Why might Pam and April have been unable to stay at the closest shelter?

Sheltering Considerations - Access & Functional Needs



Sheltering Considerations - COVID-19

- Is the shelter or location setup for proper social distancing?
- Are shelter or location staff trained on COVID-19 safety practices?
- Are COVID-19 safety procedures recommended or required?
- Are individuals screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entry?
- Is there a process for separating individuals who test positive for COVID-19 while at the shelter or location?





Public Safety Power Shutoffs

Public Safety Power Shutoff

For public safety, it may be necessary for energy providers to turn off electricity during extreme weather or wildfire conditions. This is called a Public Safety Power Shutoff or PSPS.

As a safety precaution, energy providers are constantly monitoring extreme weather and fire conditions and evaluating whether to turn off electric power.

- The decision and action to turn off power is made by individual energy providers and is based on a combination of factors.
 - Wind, Fire Threat, Low Humidity, On-Ground Observations, Dry Vegetation, Public Safety Risk



Public Safety Power Shut Off - What to Expect

- **Early Warning Notification** – Energy providers will aim to send customer alerts before shutting off power.
- **Ongoing Updates** – Energy providers will provide ongoing updates through social media, local news outlets and their websites.
- **Safety Inspections** – Energy companies will inspect the lines in affected areas before power is restored.
- **Power Restoration** – Power outages could last multiple days or weeks, depending on the severity of the disaster and other factors.



Sharon (Mother) | Debbie and Michael (Minors)

- Debbie is medically fragile and requires multiple medical devices.
- Michael uses a communication device and takes medication that must be refrigerated.



Sharon, Debbie and Michael

- Sharon took an inventory of all essential items that required electricity. She looked into purchasing a generator, but options in her price range did not provide enough power for their medical equipment and family needs.
- Sharon hasn't reached out to her insurance company to determine what would be covered, or how the emergency claims filing process works.
- Sharon has established a buddy network of two neighbors who will assist if available, but these individuals have not been trained on how to safely operate the medical equipment, or evacuate Debbie or Michael.
- The family is familiar with local firemen and have contacted them in the past for emergency breathing treatments. But, during last fire season a fireman they did not have a relationship with answered and denied the request, forcing them to go elsewhere.



- Who is responsible for making sure preparedness plans are in place for families with medically fragile children?
- What unique needs should Sharon plan for?
- What additional actions should Sharon take while creating a disaster and emergency plan?
- What actions should Sharon take to improve her “buddy network”?
- What should Sharon do to ensure access to emergency breathing treatments?



PG&E Preparedness Checklist



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Medical Baseline Program

The **Medical Baseline Program**, also known as **Medical Baseline Allowance**, is an assistance program for **residential** customers who have special energy needs due to qualifying medical conditions. The program includes two different kinds of help:

- A lower rate on your monthly energy bill.
- Extra notifications in advance of a Public Safety Power Shutoff.



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Medical Baseline

American Red Cross First Aid App

The official **American Red Cross First Aid app** puts expert advice for everyday emergencies in your hand. With videos, interactive quizzes and simple step-by-step advice **it's never been easier to know first aid.**



The FEMA mobile app for phones and tablets contains disaster safety tips, an interactive emergency kit list, storable emergency meeting locations, and a map with open shelters and open FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs).

The app also has a Disaster Reporter feature, allowing you to take and submit GPS photo reports of disasters so they can be displayed on a public map for others to view.



Receive alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations.



Get safety reminders, read tips to survive natural disasters, and customize your emergency checklist.



Locate open shelters and where to talk to FEMA in person (or on the phone).



Upload and share your disaster photos to help first responders.

Questions?

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