

# EnergyUpdate

## Working together to protect community safety in case of fire

California's fourth year of drought has brought a heightened risk of fire. It also highlights the value of cooperative, ongoing efforts such as our **Community Fire Safety Program**. To help protect people, property and power lines, we:

- **Work closely in the field** with incident commanders and first responders for coordinated responses to emergencies.
- **Replace wood poles with steel** – 2,300 transmission and 5,100 distribution poles so far – in fire-prone areas to make the electric grid more resistant to wind and fire.
- **Use laser technology** to detect potential problems early on power lines.
- **Run the nation's largest utility weather network**, with 170 weather stations to track constantly changing conditions that may affect operational decisions.
- **Have three meteorologists** to analyze weather data and provide

microclimate forecasts to electric system operators. Our weather team also helped develop a new web-based tool, the **Santa Ana Wildfire Threat Index**, so fire agencies, first responders and the public can better gauge the fire threat potential of hot, dry Santa Ana winds.

- **Make our helitanker available** to drop water on wildfires.
- **Keep up to eight fire engines and crews** on standby for rapid response during fire season.
- **Maintain clearances for 462,000 trees** growing near power lines throughout our 4,100-square-mile service area.

### Community support

Over the years, we've also partnered with the American Red Cross, Burn Institute, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), San Diego County, several local cities, the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation, and many other nonprofit groups to invest in the community's

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## Give your business a head start on disaster recovery

Disasters such as fires or earthquakes can disrupt your business with no warning. In fact, an estimated 25% of businesses never reopen after a major disaster, according to the Insurance Information Institute. Your best bet for recovery is to be prepared.

**You'll find an overview of the basics** in our four-minute video, "Emergency Preparedness for Businesses," at [sdge.com/business/emergency](http://sdge.com/business/emergency).

**Use the online tools and step-by-step information** at [ready.gov/business](http://ready.gov/business) to create a disaster preparedness plan that helps restore operations and minimize losses. You should put your plan in writing, train staff, back up key information for off-site or remote access, stock emergency supplies, periodically test equipment such as fire alarms and back-up generators, and practice emergency procedures, including safe evacuation of staff and visitors.

*As part of our Community Fire Safety Program, we're replacing wood power poles with steel ones in areas at high risk of fire. These wood-to-steel power pole conversions to date total 2,300 transmission and 5,100 distribution poles. Steel power poles help strengthen the electric grid's resistance to wind and fire.*

▶▶▶ For more info, visit us anytime at [sdge.com/business](http://sdge.com/business).



## Generator safety tips help you produce power, not problems

To keep essential equipment running during a power outage, a portable electric generator or a permanent standby generator may be a good investment for your business. Look for tips on choosing and using a generator safely at [sdge.com/chooseagenerator](http://sdge.com/chooseagenerator). Before running a generator for the first time, remember that state law requires you to notify SDG&E in advance and to make sure your generator's electricity can't feed back into nearby power lines. ■



*Before using a generator such as this portable unit, check the manufacturer's safety instructions and visit [sdge.com/chooseagenerator](http://sdge.com/chooseagenerator).*

## App, map, tool or Twitter: Outage updates four ways

For information on planned and unplanned power outages, download our app for your mobile device at [sdge.com/mobileapp](http://sdge.com/mobileapp) or view our outage map at [sdge.com/outages](http://sdge.com/outages). To check the status of state-ordered rotating outages called during regional power emergencies, enter your service address in the look-up tool at [sdge.com/outagestatus](http://sdge.com/outagestatus). You can also tweet us or follow us on Twitter @SDGE or [twitter.com/sdge](http://twitter.com/sdge) for news and alerts. ■

## Training for first responders helps raise awareness to save lives

In the midst of a fire, earthquake or other emergency, energy safety is serious business, yet the dangers aren't always obvious. To help raise awareness and save lives, SDG&E fire coordinators conduct year-round gas and electric safety training designed specifically for firefighters, police officers and other first responders.

"We train first responders to be aware of the dangers of incidents that involve or could involve gas and electric facilities," explained Mike Rottenberg, one of SDG&E's four fire coordinators, along with Randy Lyle, Bill Molumby and manager Hal Mortier. "Even when responding to an incident as common as a vehicle versus a power pole, police and firefighters need to be aware that the car could be energized. They also need to treat all wires as energized until SDG&E confirms that it's safe to proceed."

During a wildfire, an SDG&E fire coordinator often serves as the single point of contact representing the utility to the incident commander,



**GEARED UP FOR SAFETY:** Mike Rottenberg conducts a recent energy safety training session for first responders at an SDG&E electric substation. Before joining SDG&E as a fire coordinator in 2011, he served as fire chief of the City of Santee.

who marshals the resources of multiple agencies on the scene. The fire coordinators – each with more than 30 years of professional fire service experience – also train SDG&E field crews in fire prevention and response, and participate in local, state and border fire safety groups.

"I feel fortunate," commented Rottenberg, "to be able to share practical, important and potentially life-saving information with first responders – my brothers and sisters in fire and police service." ■

## Working together to protect community *continued*

ability to respond to wildfires and other emergencies. Recent support includes:

- **Funding for automatic vehicle locators** on fire-fighting vehicles so regional dispatchers can easily pinpoint and send the closest unit when responding to an emergency call.
- **Expanding ASAPnet**, the Area Situational Awareness for Public Safety Network, to bring high-speed, wireless digital communications and new emergency response capabilities to more than 60 backcountry fire stations.

- **Funding a state-of-the-art, infrared camera system** for a Cal Fire tactical aircraft to spot wildfires, see through smoke, stream live video and relay real-time information to firefighters on the ground.
- **Collaborating on the local rollout** of the Next Generation Incident Command System to provide first responders with joint access to real-time disaster response data. ■

