

energynotes

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015

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, using real-time disaster data 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.
- **Manage the nation's largest utility-owned weather network**, with 173 weather stations to track constantly changing conditions that may affect operational decisions. View the data at sdgweather.com.
- **Have three meteorologists** to analyze weather data and provide microclimate forecasts to electric system operators.
- **Keep a helitanker and up to eight fire engines** and crews on standby for rapid response during fire season.

► Plan and practice for emergencies

Make sure your family knows what to do in case of an emergency. Have a family meeting at least once a year to update your family emergency plan, refresh your emergency supply kit and practice your plan. Our emergency checklists can help you get started. Visit sdge.com/checklists.

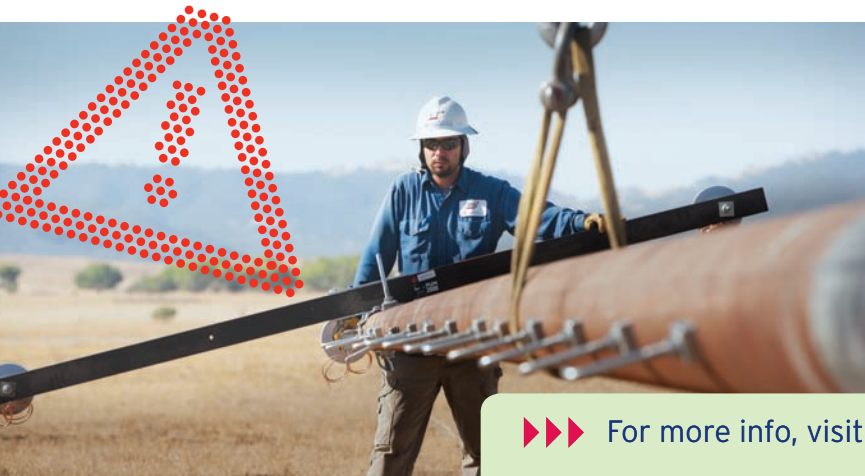
- **Work to maintain clearances** for 462,000 trees growing near power lines.

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 ability to respond to wildfires and other emergencies. To learn more, visit sdge.com/community.

As part of our Community Fire Safety Program, we're replacing wood power poles with steel ones in areas at high risk of fire. Steel power poles help strengthen the electric grid's resistance to wind and fire.

►►► For more info, visit us anytime at sdge.com.



Training for first responders helps raise awareness to save lives

Is your home wired for a fire? Heed the signs

Make sure your home isn't wired for a fire. Heed the warning signs of electric hazards, such as:

- **A shock** (tingling sensation) when you touch an electric appliance, wire or other metal object.
- **A burning or rubbery smell** coming from an appliance.
- **Wall outlets or switch plates** that are discolored, feel warm or emit sparks.
- **Flickering or dimming lights**, which could mean a short in the wiring, an arc fault or an overloaded electric system.
- **Blown fuses** that need to be replaced frequently.
- **Circuit breakers** that need frequent resetting.



Avoid hazards.

If you notice such signs, schedule an inspection by a licensed, qualified electrician. For more electric safety tips, visit sdge.com/electricsafety. Get more fire safety tips from the National Fire Protection Association at nfpa.org/fpw and Cal Fire at ReadyforWildfire.org.

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 hitting 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, who marshals the resources of multiple agencies on the scene.



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.

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."

