



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



August 18, 2020

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY: SEVERE WEATHER

Background

Since Friday, the National Weather Service has issued multiple weather advisories, including excessive heat warnings, heat advisories, and red flag warnings. In response to these weather conditions, the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) has called for rotating outages statewide to protect the stability of the grid. Marin County residents should be prepared for power outages that last between 1 to 2 hours. This weather is a reminder of the urgency in planning for extended power outages and wildfire evacuations.

Recommendations

Marin County healthcare facilities should take immediate action to assess and improve the resilience of its standby power operations and prepare for power outages.

Marin County health care providers should contact medically vulnerable patients (especially those dependent on electric-powered durable medical equipment). Providers should review patients' power outage plans for medical devices powered by electricity, including back up batteries, and refrigerated medicines.

Provide patients with the following information and guidance:

- Questions regarding timing and location of power outages should be directed to PG&E via their website (<http://critweb-outage.pgealerts.com/>) or (866) 743-6589. Instruct patients to only call 9-1-1 if they are experiencing a medical or life-threatening emergency.
- Older and vulnerable adults can visit Marin County Health & Human Services' online resource guide at <https://www.marinhhs.org/community-resource-guide> or call (415) 473-INFO (4636) between 8:30 am. and 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday.
- Instruct patients to:

Step 1: Conserve Energy and Stay Cool

- Marin County Health and Human Services (HHS) has opened a cooling center Saturday, August 15 through Tuesday, August 18, from 3:00pm to 7:00pm, at the Marin Center Exhibit Hall (10 Avenue of the Flags).
- Stay indoors (on the lowest floor) as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun. Raise the thermostat to 78 degrees when at home (turn off when not at home).
- Use a ceiling fan; turn off fans and lights; and cover windows
- Avoid using the oven and limit opening refrigerator.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the warmest part of the day.
- Drink plenty of fluids and replace salts and minerals

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- NEVER leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
- Additional tips for staying cool is available at HHS' "Stay Safe and Cool During Warm Weather" webpage. For more information on how to stay safe during the heat wave and to avoid heat-related illness, review Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Extreme Heat guidelines.

Step 2: Stay Informed

- Sign up to receive safety information on Nixle by texting your ZIP code to 888-777.
- Sign up for AlertMarin notifications to receive information on immediate threats to personal safety or property
- Watch for wireless emergency alerts if evacuations are ordered, intended to reach all cell phones in the area.
- Sign-up for PG&E Power Shutoff Zip Code Alerts by texting ENROLL to 97633 or by calling 1-877-9000-PGE.
- Update contact information with PG&E at <http://www.pge.com/mywildfirealerts%20>.

Step 3: Review emergency plans

- Consider relocating for a few days with a friend or family member in an area with power when an extended power outage is announced.
- Identify several evacuation routes for your location and tell someone out of the area which route you plan to use.
- Keep vehicles fueled and ready in case of an evacuation.
- Make a list of what you'll want to take with you if you leave your home quickly. Consider the Five P's of Evacuation: People/Pets; Prescriptions; Papers; Personal Needs; Priceless Items.
- Have some cash available in case retailers are unable to accept credit cards during an outage.
- Check thermometers in refrigerators and freezers during an outage. Dispose of perishable food if the temperature reaches 40 degrees or higher for an extended period.
- Keep mobile phones charged.
- Know how to manually open electric garage doors and gates.
- For more information, including what to do during a power outage, visit www.readymarin.org and www.ready.gov, <https://www.marinhhs.org/preparing-extended-power-outages>