

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

MARCH 15, 2022

AMENDMENT TO ITEM #14

Southern California continues to experience intensifying frequency and scale of wildfires. These fires have resulted in a devastating loss of life, property, and infrastructure. With the continuing threat of wildfires, Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) events have been utilized by utility companies, such as Southern California Edison, to preemptively cut power to electrical lines that may fail in certain weather conditions. However, PSPS can leave communities and essential facilities without power for days at a time, which create significant risks and hardships, particularly for vulnerable communities and individuals.

In the County of Los Angeles (County), PSPS primarily impacts the incorporated cities and unincorporated communities of the Fifth District. On average, PSPS outages last one to two days and are projected to continue at that length for the foreseeable future. These outages lead to businesses being unable to operate, residents suffering through extreme temperatures without heating or cooling, and residents who rely on electrically powered medical devices scrambling for emergency solutions.

Power shutoffs leave residents without cell service, internet service, and telephone land lines effectively cutting off all communications. Other utility providers, including telecommunication companies, have limited back-up battery power, leaving residents with no ability to receive updates or emergency notifications from emergency responders and even SCE. In addition, many of the Fifth District's rural communities subject to PSPS events have a significant percentage of residents that receive potable water from water wells, and power shut-offs leave residents without access to drinking water and limits first responders the ability to defend these communities during wildfires.

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MOTION

SOLIS	_____
KUEHL	_____
HAHN	_____
BARGER	_____
MITCHELL	_____

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Public Works, in consultation with the County's Chief Sustainability Office, the Department of Regional Planning, the Los Angeles County Fire Department, and other relevant departments to report back within 120 days with recommendations for an ordinance or building code changes that would phase out the use of natural gas equipment and appliances in all new residential and commercial construction and substantial renovations, where feasible and in consideration of the varying climate, geography, and infrastructure challenges that rural communities face, starting in 2023.

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KB:aso