



Public Advocates Office

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY WILL IMPROVE DURING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS WITH TODAY'S CPUC DECISION, PUBLIC ADVOCATES OFFICE URGES TIMELY IMPLEMENTATION TO PROTECT CUSTOMERS NOW

SAN FRANCISCO, July 16, 2020 – The Public Advocates Office, the independent consumer advocate at the California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC”), commends today’s CPUC decision to require back up power to customers of wireless service in high fire threat areas. Californians cannot lose their ability to call 911 or their loved ones during wildfires, power shutoffs and other life-changing events.

The Commission voted to require wireless service providers to establish 72-hour backup power for its customers and regularly submit plans that outline how they will maintain services during emergency situations. In its decision, the CPUC incorporated the Public Advocates Offices’ data analysis and recommendations, including that these companies install backup power at wireless facilities in areas with high fire threats to reduce outages. We also recommended that backup power requirements apply to wireline service providers in the future and implementation be accelerated so that customers receive these critical protections before next fire season.

“Californians must be able to call 911 and loved ones during emergency situations, especially now that fire season is upon us,” said Elizabeth Echols, Director of the Public Advocates Office. “We will continue to advocate for holding wireless and wireline communications providers accountable so that all Californians’ are safe and protected during emergencies.”

The Public Advocates Office recommendations can be found [here](#).

For more information on the Public Advocates Office, please visit www.publicadvocates.cpuc.ca.gov.

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