

Public Safety Power Shutoff Q&A

June 2021

1. What is Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)?

The PSPS is another preventative measure layered on top of our use of world-class vegetation management, strategic asset management and risk-based planning as laid out in our [Wildfire Mitigation Plan](#) published last year. BPA is committed to taking appropriate actions available to us to prevent, mitigate and quickly recover from the devastation wildfires bring to the people and communities we serve. Under certain high fire danger situations, PSPS may de-energize transmission lines to prevent the lines from igniting a wildfire. It is important to note that not all PSPS events will result in the loss of load.

2. How much advance notice will BPA provide before a PSPS event begins? (See below for [communication matrix](#).)

BPA is committed to providing notification of a potential PSPS implementation to customers as soon as it possibly can. Because these events are partially weather-driven, committing to a precise and uniform timeline for communication of potential PSPS consideration and implementation will be difficult. BPA should know well in advance when dry vegetation and trees, low humidity and other weather conditions other than high winds exist near our lines. In most cases, BPA should have at least 24 hours' notice that the potential for winds of 60 miles per hour or more could materialize.

When BPA stands up a PSPS team, it will include a public information officer who provides routine updates to all external communicators (e.g., Transmission account executives, constituent account executives, etc.) to pass along updates to utility and/or generator general manager(s) and other key staff they have identified. We will provide that information only to the impacted utility and rely on utility staff to share that information with retail customers at their discretion.

3. How will BPA communicate during a PSPS event? (See below for [communication matrix](#).)

- **Operational communication:** BPA Operations and Dispatch personnel will discuss PSPS plans with operations personnel of adjacent utilities through normal utility-to-utility operations channels. BPA's operations staff will also be in close coordination with the reliability coordinator, emergency responders and other operational stakeholders.
- **Non-operational communication:** BPA's Transmission customer account executives will reach out to impacted utility customers and regional stakeholders through calls and emails. BPA Communications staff, in cooperation with local utilities and generators, will reach out to local media to provide the details of the shutoff. Constituent account executives will provide those details to federal, state and local elected officials and possibly emergency operations officials.



- **Emergency Support Function 12 communication:** BPA continuity staff will be in close communication with ESF-12 staff.

4. How will BPA communicate after a PSPS event? (See below for [communication matrix](#).)

As BPA monitors conditions and prepares to re-energize facilities involved in the PSPS, BPA will continue to communicate through the same channels as it did throughout the event.

5. How will BPA transfer customers be notified if another transmission provider implements PSPS on its system?

BPA has been in close communication with our neighboring utilities to coordinate PSPS efforts across the region. If BPA becomes aware of a PSPS event that affects a transfer customer, either initiated by BPA or others, it will contact the transfer customer to discuss the event.

6. How will BPA work with other regional utility operators to identify key decision factors?

BPA has reached out to a number of other partner utilities for benchmarking and coordination. During the PSPS analysis, BPA will coordinate with neighboring utilities to assess the impacts of potential PSPS outages with actions the utility may be taking. When BPA determines PSPS outages are required, it will coordinate with neighboring utilities to ensure safe and reliable operation of the transmission system.

7. How will BPA notify utilities affected by lines at higher risk of PSPS?

BPA has informed all of its utility customers about whether or not they are impacted by one or more of the high-risk lines. For those utilities that are affected by high-risk lines, BPA has met with them in small groups to discuss the operational impacts should an outage be required.

Note: BPA is actively working to make upgrades in the field to reduce the number of high-risk lines and will notify affected utilities as the lines transition from high to normal risk.

8. How can utilities contact BPA for questions regarding the PSPS and its implementation?

All non-operational questions should be directed to the utility's Transmission account executive.

For real-time operational questions, utilities should use existing communication channels.

9. How can utilities aid BPA in the patrols prior to re-energization?

During a PSPS event, BPA will use all tools at its disposal to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the transmission system. This can potentially involve leveraging existing mutual assistance or other agreements with neighboring utilities to provide BPA with the aid and support needed to bring the lines back in service as quickly and safely as possible. These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

10. How is BPA testing the process (dry runs)?

BPA has conducted multiple internal walk-throughs of the PSPS process and plans to continue refining the process throughout the summer.

11. Will BPA create an automated notification system?

BPA is using an automated communication to inform internal staff of the status of PSPS. This will provide 24x7 text and email capability that will trigger BPA’s outreach to affected utilities.

12. Will BPA implement PSPS on lines operated by BPA but owned by others?

While BPA can take an outage on any line to protect safety and reliability, it does not intend to implement PSPS on transmission lines owned by others. If the transmission owner would like to de-energize a line that BPA operates, BPA will honor that request.

13. Will BPA conduct a workshop and policy review at the close of wildfire season?

Yes. To continuously improve the PSPS program, and in conjunction with the Wildfire Mitigation Plan, BPA will conduct a thorough review of the program outcomes and look for areas of improvement for 2022.

Communication Matrix

Contacts and Key Messages	Upon triggering PSPS Analysis (Red Flag and > 60mph Wind)	Upon Decision to implement a PSPS	During PSPS	Upon Restoration	After the fact
Impacted Customer – Operations Operations Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific Conditions Discuss impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal outage coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal outage updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal outage coordination 	
Impacted Customer – Non-Operations Transmission AEs to GMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General conditions General area Potential load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision made Actual load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated time of restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSPS ended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss lessons learned
Emergency Management BPA Continuity to ESF12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General conditions General area Potential load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision made Actual load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated time of restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSPS ended 	
Key Stakeholders Constituent AEs to key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General area Potential load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision made Actual load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated time of restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSPS ended 	
General Public BPA Public Affairs to website and/or media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision made General area Load impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated time of restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSPS ended 	