



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **October 18, 2019**

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### **PROTECT YOUR HEALTH AND BE PREPARED FOR A POWER SAFETY POWER SHUTOFF (PSPS) *Health Considerations for Persons Dependent on Electricity and Food Safety Guidelines***

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** – The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department reminds residents to take the necessary precautions and check on neighbors, friends, and family who may need assistance before, during, and after a Power Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) to ensure health and safety. A PSPS could lead to multi-day outages in areas of Santa Barbara County, and residents need to be prepared to endure 3-5 days without power. See below for health considerations for persons dependent on electricity, and general food safety guidelines before, during, and after a PSPS.

#### **What if I depend on electricity for a medical device?**

During a PSPS, all customers serviced by an affected power line will have their power shut off. If you rely on electric or battery dependent devices, such as an oxygen concentrator, ventilator, electric wheelchair, home dialysis machine, or use refrigerated medications, it is critical that you have a plan in place for a multi-day power outage. You may need to move to a location with electricity during the outage. If you rely on electricity to maintain your health, we encourage you to get ready using [Preparing for Power Outage: Persons Dependent on Electricity](#) (see attachment).

#### **Can I consume refrigerated foods during and after a power outage?**

Your refrigerator will keep food safe for up to 4 hours during a power outage. Keep the door closed as much as possible. Eat food from fridge first, freezer second and non-perishable items last.

After 4 hours without power, dispose of refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers. Other items will have to be evaluated individually. Find general guidelines about individual items at [Refrigerated Food and Power Outages](#) (see attachment). **When in doubt, throw it out!**

#### **How long will frozen foods be safe during and after a power outage?**

Your full freezer will hold a safe temperature for about 48 hours and a half full freezer will remain safe for 24 hours *if the door remains closed*. Never taste food to determine its safety. Find general guidelines about individual items at [Frozen Food and Power Outages](#) (see attachment). **When in doubt, throw it out!**

For more information on preparing for PSPS and to sign up for up for Aware and Prepare Alerts, visit [www.readysbc.org](http://www.readysbc.org).