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June 9, 2020

PIN 20-13-CCLD

TO: ALL COMMUNITY CARE LICENSED PROVIDERS

FROM: *Original signed by Pamela Dickfoss*  
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SUBJECT: **PREPARATION FOR EXTREME HEAT, PUBLIC SAFETY POWER SHUTOFFS, AND WILDFIRE EMERGENCIES**

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary**

PIN 20-13-CCLD provides information to providers to help prepare for extreme heat, public safety power shutoffs, and wildfire emergencies.

Living in California brings the potential of extreme heat, public safety power shutoffs (PSPS), and wildfire emergencies. Licensed community care providers have an added responsibility to ensure the health and safety of persons in care should any of these events occur. The following information is to help providers prepare for potential events of extreme heat, public safety power shutoffs, or wildfire emergencies.

**Heat Preparedness**

Summer months in California can bring high temperatures posing a substantial risk to vulnerable populations including children, the elderly, and those with disabilities or chronic diseases. Providers should monitor weather predictions for fluctuations in extreme temperatures and take extra precautions to ensure persons in care are protected from adverse conditions that may cause heat-related illness. Some of the warning signs of heat-related illness include, but are not limited to, heavy sweating, muscle cramps, weakness, headache, and nausea. Vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness, and

dizziness can also be indications of heat-related illness. Providers should monitor for these symptoms daily in individuals who have exhibited symptoms of heat-related illness as the effects can last up to seven days.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#) offer the following tips to stay safe during periods of excessive heat:

- Never leave infants, children, dependent adults, the elderly, or pets in a parked car. It can take as little as 10 minutes for the temperature inside a car to rise to levels that can kill, even if windows are cracked open.
- Drink plenty of water, even if not thirsty. Avoid really cold drinks or drinks with caffeine, alcohol, or high sugar content.
- Avoid hot food and heavy meals. Encourage frozen treats such as popsicles between meals.
- Stay in an air-conditioned area as much as possible. Call your [local health department](#) to see if there are any heat-relief shelters in your area. Electric fans may provide comfort, but will not prevent heat-related illness.

**Note:** CDPH has [released guidance for heat-relief shelters](#) to help support a safe and clean environment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Limit outdoor activity to when it is coolest, for example during morning and evening hours. Rest often in shady areas.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat to cover the face and neck, wear light weight and loose-fitting clothing to keep cool, and apply sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher 30 minutes prior to going out to protect skin from the sun.
- Monitor those on medications. Many medications increase the likelihood of dehydration.
- To prevent overheating, use cool compresses, misting, showers, and baths. Seek medical attention if the following symptoms are observed: throbbing headache, unconsciousness, red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating), rapid, strong pulse, feeling delirious, or a body temperature above 103 degrees.
- Check the local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips.

While implementing these measures, all providers shall continue to follow the latest Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) guidance in the [California Department of Social Services \(CDSS\) PINs](#) (as applicable to facility type) in addition to guidance or instructions from health care providers, the [CDC](#), [CDPH](#), and local health departments.

### *Other Precautions*

Hot weather brings mosquitoes and the risk of contracting West Nile Virus. If mosquitoes are abundant, persons in care should remain indoors in the early morning and at twilight, when mosquitoes are most active. Use repellents cautiously, especially on children and the elderly. For additional information on the use of chemical repellents, providers should consult the [CDC website for Natural Disasters and Severe Weather](#).

### **Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS)**

California fire authorities anticipate a large fire potential during the summer months in areas that may experience critical weather such as high winds and dry conditions. California energy companies may initiate public safety power shutoffs, as a preemptive firefighting strategy, in locations experiencing critical weather. However, because energy systems rely on power lines working together to provide electricity across cities, counties, and regions, the power may be shut off in areas not experiencing high winds or other extreme weather conditions.

If a public safety power shutoff is needed, expect the following:

- Early Warning Notification – The energy company will aim to send customer alerts before shutting off power.
- Ongoing Updates – The energy company will provide ongoing updates through social media, local news outlets, and their website.
- Safety Inspections – After extreme weather has passed, the energy company will inspect the lines in affected areas before power is safely restored.
- Power Restoration – Power outages could last multiple days depending on the severity of the weather and other factors. **In a worst-case scenario, power could be off for up to five days to allow time to safely restart the system.**

In anticipation of public safety power shutoffs, the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) reminds providers to update their energy company with contact information to ensure prompt notification when electricity must be turned off for public safety.

Please visit [The Power of Being Prepared](#) to learn more about public safety power shutoffs and how to sign up for alerts from your specific utility company. In addition, providers should be mindful that downed power lines may be energized and extremely dangerous. Do not touch or try to move them, keep people and animals away, leave the area immediately, and call 911.

## **Wildfire Emergencies**

Wildfires are a natural part of California's landscape. The fire season in California is starting earlier and ending later each year. Because of this, California may no longer have a wildfire "season" but rather a year-round risk of wildfires. Being prepared has never been more important especially with potential events of critical weather. To prepare for wildfire emergencies, providers are encouraged to:

- Create a [Wildfire Action Plan](#) including identifying several alternative escape routes from the facility and community.
- Make sure that smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers are always in place and working.
- Have a portable radio or scanner to stay updated on the fire, as cell phone service may not be available.
- Create a defensible space around the facility by trimming trees and other vegetation, clearing away dead branches, wood piles, and vegetation from the roof, patio furniture, and play equipment, and keep rain gutters free of debris.

## **Emergency Plan Updates, Reporting Requirements and CCLD Assistance**

CCLD reminds providers to review their facility's emergency/disaster plan to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and regulations. CCLD also reminds providers to update the local regional office with any changes to their contact information including any changes to their telephone number or email address.

Contact the local licensing office for questions or other assistance:

- [CCLD Child Care Regional Offices](#)
- [CCLD Children's Residential Regional Offices](#)
- [CCLD Adult and Senior Care Regional Offices](#)

Incidents/occurrences such as injuries, illnesses, or deaths related to the topics in this PIN shall be reported to the local licensing office. Providers are encouraged to review their facility's applicable reporting requirements.

## **Additional Resources**

The following additional links are resources to assist providers in being prepared for extreme heat, public safety power shutoffs, and wildfire emergencies:

- CDPH:
  - [All-Facilities Letter 20-54 Hot Summer Weather Advisory](#)
  - [Tips for Treating Heat-Related Illness](#)

- National Weather Service: [Watches, Warnings or Advisories for California](#)
- [California Office of Emergency Services](#): for the latest news on emergencies.

**Note:** CCLD will issue a separate PIN regarding communicating facility operational status during emergencies.

If you have any questions regarding this PIN, please contact your local CCLD Regional Office.