

SCOTTS VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT		
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES	ARTICLE: II	SOP: 2708
	SECTION: 2700	INCIDENT COMMAND FIREGROUND OPERATIONS
	SUBJECT: WIRES DOWN INCIDENTS	


Purpose: To provide a uniform response to wires down and related calls.

Scope: To guide all personnel in the response to electrical wires down during normal day-to-day operations and during times of significant storm or disaster activity.

Procedure:

1. Level of Response
 - A. *Code 2* - Single engine is the normal response to a report of *wires down*.
 - B. *Code 3* - An upgrade to *Code 3* is recommended for any wires down report that indicates the presence of a life-safety threat. *Wires down* with a corresponding "fire involvement" that offers a potential threat to the wildland or structures should be upgraded to a full 1st alarm assignment.

2. Actions
 - A. Arriving unit will perform size-up and report conditions to dispatch and request resources as needed.
 - B. Fire personnel will isolate the area and deny entry due to the potential life-safety issues.
 - C. Fire personnel should not move, touch, or cut *wires down*. Electrocution hazard is present at all wires down incidents.

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D. Traffic control measures may be performed in the event a roadway is impacted. Personnel performing traffic control should do so in an acceptable safe manner and be in appropriate safety clothing. Full road closures shall be done when necessary and appropriate signing/signaling measures shall be employed. The replacement of fire personnel in traffic control efforts with either law enforcement and/or public works personnel should be expedited as soon as possible.

3. Rescue

Attempted rescue for person or persons in contact of a high voltage line prior to PG&E removing threat is not recommended and may endanger personnel.

4. Fire Attack

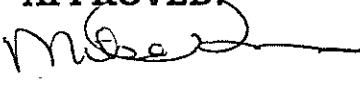
A. A fire involving *wires down* carries a significant potential of electrocution to firefighters if an attack is initiated. The incident commander or dispatch should transmit a safety alert message of the *wires down* danger to all incoming units on the command net.

B. Suppression efforts should not be initiated near the area of downed wires. This protocol also applies to any communication or power distribution vault involved in fire.

C. Fire suppression efforts may be directed at threatened exposures which are at a safe distance from the hot zone. A hot zone being that area that presents an electrocution hazard to personnel and citizens.

5. Stand-by Procedures for *Wires Down*

A. Personnel responding to primary *wires down* incidents should not leave the scene until relieved by qualified personnel from either fire department, law enforcement, or utility company personnel. Primary wire (lines) are those lines that traditionally span from pole to pole and transmit high voltage electricity (in excess of domestic levels 220 volts).

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B. House drops (service drops) are those lines that normally extend from a residence or business to a power pole and, in times of severe storm activity, can be left prior to relief **if it is safe to do so**. Prior to leaving, personnel should flag the area and or residence with hazard tape and advise the property owner if present.

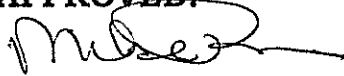
6. Significant Storm or Disaster Operations

During times of significant storm activity or a disaster such as an earthquake, it is normal for the district to receive numerous reports of multiple lines down. In those instances, the following guidelines should be followed:

- A. Standard operations should be followed when possible.
- B. All reports of *wires down* need to be investigated and priority of the incident (relative to the area activity) should be relayed to the dispatch center.
- C. Permissible units for the response to a *wires down* incident may be expanded to include administrative and utility vehicles. Staffing of units shall be a minimum of two (2) personnel. The vehicles should be equipped with a mobile radio, flares and flagging materials.
- D. Protocols remain the same with the exception that in those instances where a particular segment of power line is down in multiple areas, it is permissible to flag the area with danger hazard tape and leave the site after reporting conditions and completing flagging operations.

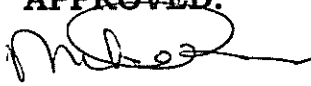
7. PG&E Operations

- A. PG&E, during times of high activity, will attempt to relieve emergency crews standing-by at the scene of *wires down* incidents as quickly as possible.

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- B. PG&E crews on arrival will de-energize all lines down and cut the wires away at a height so as to limit the danger to citizens. They will also coil the downed wires and flag both the wire and the involved pole with yellow PG&E danger tape. This PG&E flagging protocol will indicate to fire personnel that PG&E has been to the scene and the danger has been mitigated.
- C. PG&E representatives may establish a public liaison/information office at our station one during times of significant activity. Personnel will assist in setting up an area for PG&E representatives to work in to accommodate reasonable needs.

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