

Southern California Edison
2025-WMPs – 2025-WMPs

DATA REQUEST SET Cal Advocates - SCE - 2025 WMP - 08

To: Cal Advocates
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Received Date: 4/16/2024

Response Date: 4/19/2024

Question 04:

Your Base WMP at p. 201, Table SCE 7-02 (Mitigation Effectiveness) shows that Covered Conductor (with Fire Resistant Poles) provides a “Medium” PSPS mitigation effectiveness.

Please explain whether, in SCE’s analysis, installation of covered conductor reduces PSPS risk to zero.

Response to Question 04:

The implementation of covered conductor serves to mitigate wildfire risks and the risk of Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), but it doesn’t eliminate the potential need for PSPS entirely. For fully covered circuits or circuit segments, the PSPS threshold for de-energization is elevated in comparison to the same circuits or circuit segments that had bare conductors.

As detailed in SCE’s “Quantitative And Qualitative Factors For PSPS Decision-Making” white paper¹, the de-energization threshold for segments with covered conductor is 40 mph sustained winds or 58 mph wind gusts (as compared to an average threshold of roughly 31 mph sustained winds or 46 mph wind gusts for bare conductor circuits). This aligns with the National Weather Service high wind warning level for windspeeds at which infrastructure damage may occur. Other factors, such as maintenance issues, could lower the thresholds for specific events.

In the face of extreme weather circumstances, particularly when wind or gust speeds surpass the 40/58 mph threshold, PSPS may be necessary to mitigate potential ignition risks. This is particularly pronounced for circuits situated in high wind regions within SCE's high fire risk areas (HFRA). Consequently, installing covered conductor does not necessarily reduce PSPS risk to zero.

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