

Marcio Jose Sanchez/AP Photo

A firefighter battles the Maria Fire in Somis, California, Oct. 31.

PG&E boss faces lawmakers as new California blackouts loom

By ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The CEO of the nation's largest utility faced angry California lawmakers Monday over the company's decision to turn off power for millions of people to prevent its outdated equipment from starting wildfires.

The hearing comes as Pacific Gas & Electric plans another deliberate blackout this week to prevent strong winds from toppling its power lines and igniting blazes.

Lawmakers have repeatedly criticized the bankrupt company for leaving millions of people in the dark for days at a time during dry, windy weather last month.

Pacific Gas & Electric Corp. CEO Bill Johnson was set to testify during the legislative oversight hearing at the state Capitol. Johnson has defended the company's actions as "well planned and executed," arguing the power shutoffs have saved lives during the lengthy wildfire season.

In a statement, Johnson said that the shutoffs were "the right call in terms of safety and reduction of fire risk. I also believe that there were elements of the process that did not work well, and the criticism is deserved." He said the company wants to improve the process and welcomes outside review.

Public officials have criticized the shutoffs for being too broad and poorly executed. Last week, state regulators launched a formal investigation.

Lawmakers were very critical of PG&E in opening statements Monday, with Sen. Scott Wiener saying, "We are in a state of emergency."

"This company, in my mind, has forfeited its right to operate as an investor-owned utility," the San Francisco Democrat said.

Meanwhile, people in Northern California were bracing for more outages. PG&E has started notifying customers in parts of 22 counties that it may turn off electricity Wednesday because of strong winds that could spark wildfires.

The latest planned blackout is expected to affect 660,000 people throughout Northern California, including the San Francisco

suburbs, Sierra Nevada foothills and wine country.

PG&E is trying to emerge from bankruptcy after its equipment sparked the most devastating wildfire in California history last year, destroying roughly 19,000 buildings and killing 85 people. The company filed for bankruptcy in January after facing potential damages of up to \$30 billion.

Preemptive power shutoffs are not new to California, but the scope of those by PG&E this year have been unprecedented. The company has more than 5 million customers in Northern California, including the San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley. It operates about 125,000 miles of power lines, including many in dry, dense forests that act as fuel for fires.

Lawmakers have set a June 30 deadline for PG&E to emerge from bankruptcy or else forfeit participation in a fund designed to help cover damages from future wildfires. But negotiations have bogged down as shareholders and creditors battle in bankruptcy court over the future of the company.

A federal bankruptcy judge has appointed a mediator to try to resolve the case. But Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has threatened to intervene if the company can't reach an agreement by June 30, including a potential state takeover.

California's other large investor-owned utilities — San Diego Gas & Electric and Southern California Edison — also preemptively shut off power this year to prevent wildfires. But their shutoffs affected far fewer people and did not last as long.

Sen. Henry Stern questioned an Edison executive, saying his grandmother had her power shut off without warning and has medications that need to stay refrigerated.

Lawmakers also are scheduled to question several top officials from the Newsom administration, including Ana Matosantos, Newsom's newly appointed "energy czar," and Mark Ghilarducci, director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

Others scheduled to testify include public school superintendents, local government leaders, business owners and advocates for the elderly and medically vulnerable.

OBITUARIES

Carol A. Isbell

Astoria

April 17, 1933 — July 19, 2019

Missoula, Montana, resident Carol Ann Isbell, 86, passed away on July 19, 2019.

Born on April 17, 1933, in Astoria, Oregon, to Fred and Rachel Hansen, Carol graduated from Astoria High School and attended Oregon State University, receiving both a bachelor's and master's degree in business education. There she met her future husband and made lifelong friends with Margaret, Ann, Grace and Billie. Carol was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority and continued close relationships with her sisters.

giving unsolicited advice and most of all laughing.

Carol was preceded in death by her parents; her husband Iz; cousin Dennis Soderman and niece Lila Isbell and cousin Judy Bay Granstrom (David) of Mt. Vernon, Washington. Carol is survived by cousins Sally Bay Goodman (Gary) of Powell Butte, Oregon, Catherine Bay Vaughan (Todd) of San Francisco, California, Marilyn Smith Turnbull (Dave) of Hillsboro, Oregon, Ronald Smith (Katie) of Albany, Oregon, Gail Soderman Nickerson of Redmond, Washington, Paul Soderman (Amy) of Boonville, California, and lifelong best friend Margaret Walton of Corvallis, Oregon. Although Carol never had children of her own, there were ten graduates of Carol Ann's finishing school, including Shannon Scanlan, Teresa Sopher and Leslie Womack.



Carol Isbell

Carol married Richard A. Isbell (Iz) on Dec. 14, 1956. Iz joined the Army 10 days later and together they enjoyed 30 years traveling the world. Upon retirement, they chose Missoula as their home, and Carol reentered the workforce as a part-time teller at Missoula Federal Credit Union. Known as the "woman with the bun," Carol decorated the credit union and coordinated events during the 80s and 90s.

Carol loved gardening, cooking, entertaining, golf and wine as well as teaching the value of thank you notes, freely

involved with the parish community at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Astoria, and later in life, her adopted faith community at St. Francis De Sales Mission in Hammond.

There will be a graveside service in Astoria at a later date. No services are planned in Missoula, but memorial donations can be made to the International Heart Institute.

Patricia Ann Ewald

Astoria

Dec. 21, 1921 — Nov. 14, 2019

Patricia Ann Ewald, 97, passed away on Nov. 14, 2019, in Astoria, Oregon.

She was born in Ontario, Oregon, on Dec. 21, 1921, to Joseph A. Deters and Eloise M. Breesee Deters. Pat lived in various places around Oregon during her childhood in the depression era.

She attended many schools and graduated high school from St. Mary's Academy in Portland. She was a licensed registered nurse after graduating from the St. Mary's Hospital nursing program.

During her nursing career she cared for newborn babies and mothers and also nursed the elderly in care facilities.

She met Joseph F. Ewald when she was in nursing school and he was in the Army, stationed at Fort Stevens. They married in 1945 and were married for 47 years before his death in 1993.

She is survived by her children Paul (Mala), Mark (Jean), Dan (Martha-Ann), Margaret Mary "Peggy" and Tim; 14 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren; and good friends, the Moran family. She was preceded in death by a son-in-law, Michael Wood.

Pat was a devout Roman Catholic, involved with the parish community at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Astoria, and later in life, her adopted faith community at St. Francis De Sales Mission in Hammond.

She had a clever sense of humor. Her hobbies included creating beautiful ceramics, sewing and knitting. She also had a green thumb with plants. A gentle and loving wife and mother, she also supported a foster son for many years in Africa, James Kithinje.

The family wishes to thank her son Tim, St. Anne's Adult Foster Home and Lower Columbia Hospice for loving care at the end of her life.

Suggested memorial contributions can be made to St. Vincent de Paul, StandUp-girl.com or Lower Columbia Hospice.

A funeral Mass will be offered at 11 a.m. Thursday at St. Mary, Star of the Sea in Astoria, preceded by a rosary at 10:30 a.m.

Funeral arrangements have been made by Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary. Please sign our online guest book at caldwellsmortuary.com



Patricia Ewald

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SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
54 36	54 35	54 35	52 36	52 40	52 40	50 38
Clouds and sun	Plenty of sunshine	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Mostly cloudy	Rain	Rain possible

ALMANAC

Astoria through Sunday

Temperatures

High/low	57/50
Normal high/low	53/40
Record high	64 in 1908
Record low	28 in 1994

Precipitation

Sunday	0.13"
Month to date	1.22"
Normal month to date	5.94"
Year to date	39.97"
Normal year to date	52.16"

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2019

UNDER THE SKY

Tonight's Sky: The Waning gibbous moon and M44 Beehive pass within 1.1 degree of each other.

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:21 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:40 p.m.
Moonrise today	11:46 p.m.
Moonset today	1:33 p.m.

	Last	New	First	Full
	Nov 19	Nov 26	Dec 3	Dec 11

TODAY'S TIDES

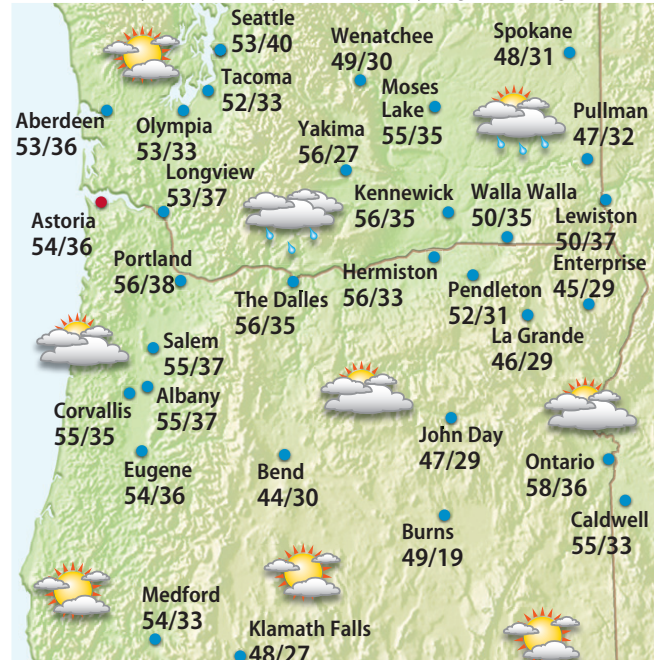
Astoria / Port Docks	Time	High (ft.)	Time	Low (ft.)
	6:44 a.m.	6.8	12:20 p.m.	3.5
	5:48 p.m.	7.3	none	
Cape Disappointment	6:24 a.m.	6.6	11:36 a.m.	3.8
	5:29 p.m.	6.7	none	
Hammond	6:34 a.m.	7.1	11:56 a.m.	3.7
	5:41 p.m.	7.4	none	
Warrenton	6:39 a.m.	7.3	12:04 p.m.	3.7
	5:43 p.m.	7.7	none	
Knappa	7:21 a.m.	7.1	12:55 a.m.	0.2
	6:25 p.m.	7.5	1:21 p.m.	3.0
Depoe Bay	5:42 a.m.	7.0	11:05 a.m.	4.1
	4:37 p.m.	7.2	11:41 p.m.	0.3

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Wed.
Atlanta	61/44/pc	65/45/pc
Boston	48/35/sh	44/35/pc
Chicago	44/34/sf	50/39/pc
Dallas	75/56/s	74/63/c
Denver	68/37/pc	44/24/sh
Honolulu	85/74/pc	86/74/pc
Houston	76/58/s	78/65/c
Los Angeles	73/57/pc	66/54/r
Miami	80/59/pc	78/65/s
New York City	51/40/pc	49/38/pc
Phoenix	78/62/c	67/55/r
San Francisco	61/50/s	64/50/s
Wash., DC	55/42/pc	54/38/pc

REGIONAL FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



City	Today	Wed.	City	Today	Wed.
Baker City	49/30/sh	45/16/pc	North Bend	55/39/pc	55/37/s
Brookings	54/42/c	57/45/s	Roseburg	52/39/sh	52/30/s
Ilwaco	54/40/pc	54/38/s	Seaside	54/37/pc	55/36/s
Newberg	55/36/sh	54/34/s	Springfield	54/37/sh	53/27/s
Newport	53/39/c	55/39/s	Vancouver	54/35/sh	54/33/s