



# OFFICE OF ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY

## SAFETY CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

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# I. INTRODUCTION

This document is the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety) Safety Certification Guidelines (Guidelines). These Guidelines set forth requirements for an electrical corporation to prepare and submit a request for a Safety Certification, as identified in Public Utilities Code section 8389(e).

Additionally, process requirements, including but not limited to formatting, accessibility requirements, naming conventions, confidential submissions, errata, public participation, and data requests, are outlined in the Energy Safety Policy Division Process Guidelines (ESPD Process Guidelines).<sup>1</sup> The ESPD Process Guidelines complement these Safety Certification Guidelines.

These Guidelines apply to all California electrical corporations submitting a Safety Certification request.

## 1. Background

Pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 8389(e), Energy Safety issues a Safety Certification to an electrical corporation if it provides documentation demonstrating that it has an approved Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP), is implementing its WMP, is in good standing by having agreed to implement findings from its most recent safety culture assessment, and has established a safety committee on its board with relevant experience.

Additionally, an electrical corporation must have an executive compensation structure approved by Energy Safety, which prioritizes safety and includes measurable performance metrics with incentives tied to safety and penalties for catastrophic wildfires causing fatalities.

Finally, an electrical corporation must have board-level reporting to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and Energy Safety on safety issues.<sup>2</sup> A Safety Certification is valid for the 12 consecutive months following the issuance of the certification.<sup>3</sup> Each year, Energy Safety will issue a schedule for Safety Certification request submittals. Electrical corporations

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<sup>1</sup> Energy Safety Policy Division Process Guidelines

(<https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=58024&shareable=true>, accessed Feb. 24, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Pub. Util. Code § 8389(e).

<sup>3</sup> Pub. Util. Code § 8389(f)(1).

must submit their requests according to this schedule.<sup>4</sup> Energy Safety will issue a Safety Certification within 90 days of a request if an electrical corporation has provided documentation demonstrating that it has satisfied the requirements outlined in 8389(e).<sup>5</sup>

## II. PROCESS AND EVALUATION

### 1. Safety Certification Request Submissions

An electrical corporation seeking a Safety Certification must submit a request to the appropriate year's Safety Certification docket in accordance with the schedule established by Energy Safety, and in adherence to the requirements in these Guidelines.

#### 1.1 Submission Instructions

Requests for Safety Certifications must be submitted to the respective year's Safety Certification docket included in the schedule notification published by Energy Safety and must follow the naming convention outlined in the ESPD Process Guidelines.<sup>6</sup>

If any element required for a Safety Certification request is missing at the time of the request (e.g., Energy Safety has not yet issued a decision on the electrical corporation's most recent WMP), an electrical corporation may submit the missing element subsequent to the initial Safety Certification request. Missing elements must be submitted at least ten days prior to the scheduled publication date of Energy Safety's decision on the electrical corporation's Safety Certification request.

If the electrical corporation is submitting supplemental material following its initial Safety Certification request, it must submit the supplemental material to the respective year's Safety Certification docket included in the schedule notification published by Energy Safety. Each element submitted subsequent to the initial request date must be marked as "Addendum 1," "Addendum 2," and so forth. The file name for each element must be "[abbreviated name of electrical corporation] \_ [Document year]\_Safety Certification Request\_Addendum[#]." For example, a first filing of supplemental material for PG&E's Safety Certification request submitted in 2025, would have the file name "PG&E\_2025\_Safety

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<sup>4</sup> Pub. Util. Code § 8389(f)(2); California Government Code § 15475.6.

<sup>5</sup> Pub. Util. Code § 8389(f)(2).

<sup>6</sup> Energy Safety Policy Division Process Guidelines (<https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=58024&shareable=true>, accessed Feb. 24, 2025).

Certification Request\_Addendum1.” These naming conventions align with Section 8.1 of the ESPD Process Guidelines, with the primary difference being the use of "Addendum" followed by the appropriate number to distinguish supplemental materials specific to Safety Certification requests.

## 2. Request Requirements

An electrical corporation seeking a Safety Certification must provide the following documentation in its request:

### 2.1 An Approved Wildfire Mitigation Plan

Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(1) requires that the electrical corporation provide documentation that “the electrical corporation has an approved wildfire mitigation plan.”

In its Safety Certification request, an electrical corporation must document the date of its most recently approved wildfire mitigation plan (WMP) or WMP Update and the date it was approved by Energy Safety. An electrical corporation is ineligible for a Safety Certification if it received a denial of its most recently submitted WMP or WMP Update.

### 2.2 Good Standing

Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(2) requires that the electrical corporation provide documentation that “the electrical corporation is in good standing, which can be satisfied by the electrical corporation having agreed to implement the findings of its most recent safety culture assessment performed pursuant to Section 8386.2 and paragraph (4) of subdivision (d), if applicable.”

In its Safety Certification request, an electrical corporation must document its agreement to implement the findings of its most recent safety culture assessment undertaken by Energy Safety or its contractors. If a safety culture assessment has been carried out pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 8386.2, the electrical corporation must also document in its request an agreement to implement the findings of that safety culture assessment.

### 2.3 Board Safety Committee and Safety Reporting

Public Utilities Code sections 8389(e)(3) and 8389(e)(5) require that the electrical corporation provide documentation that it meets two requirements related to its board of directors. Each is discussed below.

Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(3) requires that the electrical corporation’s board of directors have a safety committee comprised of members with appropriate and relevant

experience. To ensure that this requirement is satisfied, the electrical corporation must include the following in its Safety Certification request:

1. A resume for each safety committee member that clearly indicates the member's relevant experience.
2. A summary of safety-related education and experience for each safety committee member that is relevant to their role at the electrical corporation.
3. A description of how the safety committee functions within the company's governance structure and its role with respect to company decision making and accountability.
4. A report on significant topics covered by the safety committee since issuance of the last Safety Certification.<sup>7</sup>
5. A description of any safety committee recommendations and an indication whether the electrical corporation has implemented these recommendations since issuance of the last Safety Certification. If the safety committee made no recommendations, or the electrical corporation has not implemented all recommendations made by the safety committee, then the electrical corporation must indicate this and provide an explanation.

Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(5) requires that the electrical corporation has established board-level reporting to the CPUC and Energy Safety on safety issues. Energy Safety and the CPUC will aim to jointly coordinate at least one public meeting prior to the submission of Safety Certification requests to ensure that each electrical corporation seeking a Safety Certification has the opportunity to meet this requirement in a transparent manner. For each electrical corporation, a board member, along with the chief safety/risk officer (or equivalent), must brief the CPUC and Energy Safety on safety performance during the public meeting. Details regarding the public meeting, including the agenda of topics to be covered, will be provided in a public notice.

In its Safety Certification request, an electrical corporation must provide all materials used and/or referenced in the public meeting to document that it has met this requirement.

## **2.4 Executive Compensation Structure**

Public Utilities Code sections 8389(e)(4) and 8389(e)(6) require that the electrical corporation has established an executive compensation structure that meets the statutory requirements of these code sections and has been approved by Energy Safety.

In its Safety Certification request, an electrical corporation must cite Energy Safety's decision on its most recent executive compensation structure.

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<sup>7</sup> Or, in the case of a request for an initial Safety Certification, over the previous 12 months.

## 2.5 Wildfire Mitigation Plan Implementation

Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(7) requires that the electrical corporation provide documentation that “the electrical corporation is implementing its approved wildfire mitigation plan [WMP]....”.

In its Safety Certification request, the electrical corporation must detail the progress it has made toward completing its WMP targets, explain any delayed or off-track efforts, include the recommendations from its latest Energy Safety and CPUC safety culture assessment(s), and show progress in the implementation of the findings of its most recent safety culture assessment(s). The request must also include a statement on the board of directors’ safety committee recommendations and a description of the implementation of those recommendations.

### 2.5.1 Quarterly Notification Requirements

Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(7) requires the electrical corporation to submit a notification of implementation to Energy Safety on a quarterly basis detailing progress on its WMP and the recommendations of its most recent Energy Safety and CPUC safety culture assessment(s) performed pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 8386(d)(4) and section 8386.2, and a statement of the recommendations of the board of directors’ safety committee meetings and a description of the implementation of those recommendations.

The below sections detail the documentation required to satisfy these requirements.

#### 2.5.1.1 Quarterly Notification Content

To meet the requirements of section 8389(e)(7), the electrical corporation must submit quarterly notifications. These notifications must be submitted in the form of letters to Energy Safety including (but not limited to) the following subject line and sections:

**Subject line:** [Electrical corporation name]'s Quarterly Notification Pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(7)

**Background:** In this section, the electrical corporation must briefly describe the reason for the quarterly notification submission.

**Discussion:** In this section, the electrical corporation must provide the information required by Public Utilities Code section 8389(e)(7) using the structure that follows.

#### 1. Quarterly Information-Only Submittal to the CPUC

In this section, the electrical corporation must state that the electrical corporation is providing its information-only submittal of the present quarterly notification to the CPUC.

For example: "[Electrical corporation name] is simultaneously submitting this quarterly notification to the California Public Utilities Commission as an information-only submittal."

## **2. Quarterly Progress Report on WMP Implementation**

In this section, the electrical corporation must provide a brief description of its progress towards meeting the electrical corporation's WMP annual targets (quantitative targets) and objectives (qualitative targets) in the most recent quarter. The electrical corporation must note any delays or problems that have arisen, specifying which initiatives are affected and providing an explanation for each delay and problem, including any catch-back plans, if available. The electrical corporation must also include quantitative target reports at the end of the Quarterly Notification submission.

## **3. Quarterly Progress Report on Implementing Safety Culture Assessment Recommendations**

In this section, the electrical corporation must provide a brief description of its progress towards implementing the recommendations from the electrical corporation's most recent safety culture assessment(s).

## **4. Board of Directors Safety Committee Recommendations**

In this section, the electrical corporation must provide the recommendations made by the Board of Directors Safety Committee and progress towards implementing these recommendations, as further detailed below.

### **4.1. Recommendations from the Most Recent Quarter**

In this sub-section, the electrical corporation must provide a list of Safety Committee meetings that have taken place (indicating the date of each) in the most recent quarter and the recommendations made by the committee in each meeting. If the Board of Directors Safety Committee made no new recommendations in a meeting, the electrical corporation must state this in the list.

If the electrical corporation made progress on any of the new recommendations in the most recent quarter, the electrical corporation must provide a brief description of the progress made.

### **4.2 Progress on Previous Recommendations**

In this sub-section, the electrical corporation must provide a list of recommendations made by the Safety Committee in the previous quarter, along with the associated meeting date for each recommendation. The electrical corporation must describe the progress it made in the most recent quarter towards implementing each recommendation. If no new progress was made on a previous recommendation, the electrical corporation must state this.

Additionally, the electrical corporation must describe progress made on any outstanding prior Safety Committee recommendations (e.g., ones that are unresolved or incomplete), including listing any prior recommendations that were completed or implemented in the most recent quarter. The electrical corporation must also list any



prior recommendations that the electrical corporation decided not to implement and explain why it decided not to implement that recommendation.

### 2.5.1.2 Quarterly Notification Submission Requirements

Following the completion of a calendar quarter, the electrical corporation must submit its quarterly notification. The table below lists the notification submission deadline for each quarter.

*Table 1: Quarterly Notification Submission Deadlines*

Notification Period	Submission Date
Q1	May 1
Q2	August 1
Q3	November 1
Q4	February 1

If the submission date falls on a weekend or a holiday, the quarterly notification must be submitted on the next business day. All quarterly notifications must be submitted to the relevant year's Safety Certification docket on Energy Safety's e-filing system. The electrical corporation must follow the naming convention outlined in the ESPD Process Guidelines.<sup>8</sup>

## 3. Safety Certification Schedule

The schedule for the submission of each year's Safety Certification requests is published on the respective year's Safety Certification docket published through Energy Safety's e-filing system. Information for each year's Safety Certification request submission is included in the schedule notification published to the respective year's Safety Certification docket.

An electrical corporation seeking a Safety Certification must submit its Safety Certification request according to the schedule issued by Energy Safety each year.

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<sup>8</sup> Energy Safety Policy Division Process Guidelines

(<https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=58024&shareable=true>, accessed Feb. 24, 2025).

## 4. Review Process

Energy Safety will review an electrical corporation's Safety Certification request for compliance with Public Utilities Code section 8389(e) and the requirements and principles set forth herein. Energy Safety may require an electrical corporation to provide missing information and/or respond to requests for additional information in advance of its decision regarding a Safety Certification request.

# DATA DRIVEN FORWARD-THINKING INNOVATIVE SAFETY FOCUSED



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