

energynotes

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017

Training, tools and teamwork improve emergency response

With the heightened threat of wildfires this year, everyone has a stake in emergency preparedness and response. We're doing our part to strengthen emergency services through ongoing training, high-tech tools and community alliances.

"We conduct regular training exercises involving virtually every group in the company to test and improve our response to various emergency scenarios," said Dan Rice, director of emergency management and aviation services for SDG&E®.

Whenever energy service is affected by a serious or widespread event, we activate our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to coordinate restoration

of service. Each emergency is unique, but in general:

- **EOC responders** work closely with public officials, law enforcement, fire departments and others to manage the incident, protect the public and keep people informed.
- **During a wildfire**, one of our fire coordinators typically serves as the single point of contact representing the utility to the on-site incident commander responsible for marshaling the resources of multiple agencies.
- **A weather team** using state-of-the-art meteorological tools helps improve awareness of – and planning for – changing conditions such as high winds (see sdge.com/weather-team).

▶ Grants help build community safety

More than 80 nonprofit groups recently received grants totaling more than \$700,000 at our annual **SAFE San Diego Initiative** awards presentation. These organizations support disaster preparedness, emergency response, education and assistance in the communities we serve. Learn more at sdge.com/safety-grants-2017.

- **Our helitanker is available** as a regional firefighting asset for the eighth year due to continued collaboration with the County of San Diego.
- **Quicker, safer damage assessments** of electric and gas facilities may be conducted with the help of small unmanned aircraft systems in remote or difficult-to-reach areas.

For news about energy safety, visit sdgenews.com/safe.

Dan Rice directs emergency management and aviation services for SDG&E, including the Emergency Operations Center. He joined the utility after a 25-year career as a pilot in the U.S. Army and a decade of federal law enforcement experience.



▶▶▶ For more info, visit us anytime at sdge.com.



Fire safety gains ground

Plan for safety with tips, videos and checklists

If you suddenly had to deal with an emergency such as a fire or earthquake, would you know what to do?

Your safety may depend on how well prepared you are. Here are some resources to help you get started.

Learn the basics in our video, “Emergency Preparedness: Make a Kit and a Plan,” at [sdge.com/plan](https://www.sdge.com/plan).

Use our emergency checklists to put your plans in writing. Visit [sdge.com/checklists](https://www.sdge.com/checklists) for checklists on a family emergency plan, evacuation plan, training and drills, and emergency supply kits for home and vehicles.

Protect your home in case of wildfire. Get Cal Fire tips and videos on creating defensible space and hardening your home at [ReadyforWildfire.org](https://www.ReadyforWildfire.org).

For more tips on emergency preparedness, visit [sdge.com/emergency](https://www.sdge.com/emergency).

For regional safety and energy reliability, we take steps throughout the year to be prepared for wildfires. Here are some of the ways we protect people, property and power lines as part of our **Community Fire Safety Program**.

- **Five fire coordinators** train firefighters, police and other first responders in energy safety; train SDG&E field crews in fire prevention and response; and are active in local, state and border fire safety groups.
- **The helitanker** kept on call is used by fire agencies to drop water on wildfires. It can carry up to 2,650 gallons of water or fire suppressant – more than seven times the capacity of a typical firefighting helicopter – and get airborne in just 15 minutes.
- **The largest utility-owned weather network** in the U.S. supplies data from 170 weather stations. Microclimate forecasts by three meteorologists help guide operational decisions.
- **Replacing wood power poles with steel** builds the electric grid’s resistance to wind and fire. To date, 2,300 transmission and



Wood-to-steel power pole conversions strengthen resistance to wind and fire. These “weathered steel” poles look like wood.

6,000 distribution poles have been replaced in higher-risk, fire-prone areas.

- **Five contract fire engines with crews** follow electric line workers in the back country to immediately put out any fires sparked by work on live wires.
- **New fire behavior modeling software** allows for better insight into potential fires and real-time hazards.
- **Maintaining clearances for 460,000 trees** growing near power lines helps prevent power outages and fires.

See a short video on the program at [sdge.com/CFSP-video](https://www.sdge.com/CFSP-video).

