

Week of October 12, 2026

Dear CUEA Members,

This week's digest covers the close of the 2026 Early October Tropical Storms, the 2026 Mid-October PSPS and Fire Weather Event from first notice through its final report, four new Southern and Northern California fires, new El Niño and storm proclamations, the Governor's emergency actions, CUEA's member coordination with Cal OES, and the outlook for a cooler, wetter week ahead. It draws on Cal OES reporting and partner emails from October 12 through October 18, 2026, including the Situation Cell's final Incident Report issued the afternoon of October 18.

This digest is a CUEA member courtesy summary for situational awareness, not an official Cal OES publication — continue to rely on your own agency's direct Cal OES contacts for operational decisions.

This Week at a Glance

- **A statewide PSPS came and went.** Two utility PSPS events, one that began 10/10 and one that began 10/14, grew to **29–30 de-energized counties** at their peak on 10/15–10/16. Both concluded by 10/18, and Cal OES reports all customers restored.
- **State activation rose and stood down.** The State Operations Center (SOC) and Business Operations Center (BOC) activated at Level 3 on 10/15. The SOC returned to Normal Operations on 10/17, and the Situation Cell issued its **final Incident Report on 10/18**.
- **Santa Ana winds drove new fires.** The Norte Fire (Orange County) destroyed seven homes and put 13,522 people under evacuation orders; the Bryson Fire (Los Angeles County) threatened more than 7,000 structures; the Henderson Fire (San Diego County) closed I-5. All evacuations were lifted by 10/18.
- **Tropical Storm Rachel closed out with utility damage.** Cal OES issued Tropical Storms Report #5 – FINAL on 10/13. The Imperial Irrigation District reported **26 downed poles** in Niland and a canal breach, and Caltrans estimated **\$12.4 million** in highway damage. The Governor proclaimed a state of emergency on 10/15.
- **The pattern turns wet.** Rain reaches the whole state by midweek, with Sierra snow 10/20–10/22, and NWS strongly favors above-normal precipitation through 10/31. The Advance Planning Unit flags a possible first atmospheric river around 11/01.

Grid and Statewide Outage Conditions

Statewide grid and energy supply conditions stayed normal all week. Cal ISO reported normal grid conditions through the PSPS, and in its 10/14 input for the State Agency Coordination Call it reported no anticipated grid impacts over its seven-day outlook, no extension of its restricted maintenance order, and no expected Flex Alerts or Energy Emergency Alerts. The California Energy Commission reported no energy supply impacts and no unmet needs in every event report. PSPS scope by Cal OES report is shown below.

Report (Date)	PSPS Stage	Counties	Cal OES Posture
#1 (10/14)	Potential to de-energize	31 in scope; none de-energized	Situation Cell, Enhanced Watch
#2 (10/15)	De-energization initiated	30 de-energized	SOC and BOC at Level 3
#3 (10/16)	De-energization initiated	29 de-energized	SOC and BOC at Level 3
#4 (10/17)	Restoration underway	5 de-energized; Mono in potential scope	SOC to Normal; Situation Cell and BOC at Enhanced Watch
#5 – Final (10/18)	Both events concluded	None	Final Incident Report; Enhanced Watch

Rows use CUEA's report numbers; Cal OES numbered its documents differently (Incident Report #1, Situation Status Reports #1–#3, and Incident Report No. 4 – FINAL). Cal ISO's outlook covers wholesale balancing only; members served by SMUD, LADWP, IID, or other balancing authorities should follow those entities' messaging.

2026 Mid–October PSPS and Fire Weather Event (Final)

Utility PSPS notices began 10/12 for a 10/14–10/17 window and expanded as the forecast firmed up. Offshore winds peaked in the northern and central Sierra on 10/15, and a moderate to strong Santa Ana event ran from the afternoon of 10/15 into 10/17, with gusts of 50–70 mph on ridgetops and single-digit humidity. Red Flag Warnings covered 21 counties at the peak, and major HeatRisk affected the Los Angeles area 10/16–10/17. Periods of concern ended on 10/17, and the last event was reported concluded late on the morning of 10/18.

- **Critical facilities on backup power:** the Caldecott Tunnel (SR-24) ran on generators; 11 Caltrans maintenance stations and 40 Caltrans District 7 signals went to generator power; and CDPH tracked healthcare facilities on generators, all fully operational. All were back on grid power by 10/18.
- **Water systems:** Ventura County asked water purveyors to fill reservoirs, check backup power, and stage generators at critical pumping sites. San Luis Obispo County Public Works checked water and wastewater facilities for power status. South Coast Water District activated its EOC (virtual) for the Norte Fire.
- **Telecommunications:** state communications resources were pre-positioned in eight cities. As of 10/18, two PSPS-related AT&T sites were still down with no restoration estimate because of access issues.
- **Tribal communities:** six tribal communities were de-energized during the event, and power was restored to all six by 10/17.
- **Schools and campuses:** CDE reported up to 54 schools in 28 districts across 17 counties affected on 10/16. Part of the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo campus lost power from 10/15, and some viticulture research may have been lost.
- **Access and functional needs:** independent living centers in Northern California sought generators and larger batteries for consumers, and the Department of Rehabilitation found people in Malibu who did not know they were under an evacuation warning, possibly because of the PSPS.
- **Community resource centers** opened in more than a dozen counties; most had closed or demobilized by 10/17.

2026 Early October Tropical Storms (Final)

Cal OES issued Tropical Storms Reports #4 (10/12) and #5 – FINAL (10/13). NWS said the worst had passed, and Coastal Flood Advisories were lifted everywhere except San Pablo Bay (Marin, Napa, and Sonoma) through 10/14.

- **Utility damage in Imperial County:** IID reported significant damage to its electrical distribution system, including 26 downed poles in Niland, and a breach of about 100 feet on the West Side Main Canal, contained the night of 10/11. Brawley requested New River flood modeling, and Cal OES asked DWR for technical help.
- **Highways:** Caltrans estimated \$12.4 million in damage on nine state routes in Imperial, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties. US 95, SR 62, and SR 78 remained closed in the final report, and a southbound lane of SR 1 at Crystal Cove closed after bluff failures.
- **Coast:** Orange County reported damage at the San Clemente Pier and drainage facilities, Laguna Beach stairways, and homes; State Parks reported a threatened sewer line and damaged electrical conduit at San Onofre and Crystal Cove.
- **Emergency actions:** the Governor proclaimed a state of emergency for Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties on 10/15, making California Disaster Assistance Act aid available and directing Caltrans to seek federal highway repair help. Newport Beach and IID ratified local proclamations on 10/16.

Fires Threatening Utility Infrastructure or Access

- **Norte Fire (Orange County, San Clemente / San Juan Capistrano):** started 10/16 at 11:33 and reached 570 acres; 25% contained as of 10/18. Seven residential structures were destroyed and 13,522 people were under evacuation orders at the peak. FEMA approved a Fire Management Assistance Grant on 10/16, and San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano proclaimed local emergencies on 10/17. Orders were lifted on 10/17; a soft closure remains on La Mirada.
- **Bryson Fire (Los Angeles County, near Malibu):** started 10/15; 147 acres and 68% contained as of 10/18. It threatened 7,221 structures and closed SR-23 between PCH and Encinal Canyon Road, which has since reopened. No structures were damaged.
- **Henderson Fire (San Diego County):** grew from 2,079 acres (20%) on 10/16 to 3,160 acres (65%) on 10/18 and closed I-5 in both directions near the Orange County line on 10/16.
- **Cooley Fire (Mendocino County):** new on 10/18 at 731 acres and 5% contained, about 8 miles from the Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians, which reports no impacts.
- **Closing out:** the Timber Fire (Monterey) reached 97% and the Cyrus Fire (Kern) 80% on 10/12; the Dome Fire (Mariposa) reached 95% by 10/14. Forward progress was stopped on the Peak Fire in Azusa (10/16).
- **Preparedness levels** eased nationally to Level 1; Northern California held at 2 and Southern California at 3.

Non-Fire Incidents Relevant to Members

- **El Niño proclamations:** Tulare County (10/14) and the City of Ukiah (10/15) proclaimed local emergencies, and the City of Solvang declared one (10/16). Sonoma County's EOC remains at Level 3 (virtual).
- **Governor's emergency actions (10/15):** in addition to Tropical Storm Rachel, a state of emergency for the Dove Fire (Tuolumne County) and an executive order to speed Gann Fire recovery (Calaveras County). The BOC shared these with private and nonprofit partners on 10/16.

- **International deployment:** the Los Angeles County Fire Department sent a ten-member US&R technical assistance team to Panama after an M 7.6 earthquake, and its heavy international team is on alert.
- **Golden Mussel:** Sacramento County's EOC remains at Level 3 with minimal staffing.
- **Security notes (State Threat Assessment Center, unclassified):** a cyberattack on more than 400 French supermarkets used a flaw in outdated industrial software to disable refrigeration systems; DOJ announced actions against North Korean remote IT workers placed at U.S. companies; and the Sonoma County Sheriff arrested a suspect in copper thefts, recovering hundreds of pounds of copper components.

CUEA Coordination This Week

- **State Agency Coordination Calls:** the Situation Cell held calls on 10/12 (Tropical Storm Rachel) and 10/14 (PSPS and fire weather). For the 10/14 call, CUEA gathered member input on monitoring, preparedness, and needs. Comcast, AT&T, and Cal ISO reported no anticipated needs, and other members sent updates as well.
- **How utility updates flow:** the Situation Cell told CUEA that, at the current activation levels, the California Energy Commission handles utility updates unless the SOC moves to Level 1. Members can continue to send event input to CUEA for state coordination calls.
- **Member updates:** CUEA issued Tropical Storms Reports #4 and #5 (Final) and PSPS and Fire Weather Reports #1 through #5 (Final) this week.

Road/Access Closures Affecting Utility Crews

As of 10/18, the Daily Situation Report lists no Emergency Transportation Route closures. SR-23 (Bryson Fire) has reopened in both directions, and Topanga Canyon Road (SR-27) restrictions were removed on 10/17, though the Cal OES closure table still lists SR-23 and an I-5 closure in San Diego County. Tropical storm closures on US 95, SR 62, and SR 78 were still listed in the 10/13 final storm report. Crews should check [Caltrans QuickMap](#) before dispatch, especially near the new burn areas once rain arrives.

Weather Outlook for the Week Ahead

- **Southern Region:** a significant cooldown through midweek. Widespread rain is likely Wednesday and Thursday (0.25–1.00 inch common), with a slight chance of thunderstorms in Los Angeles and elevated southwest winds over San Diego County's mountains and deserts. The large-fire threat is low, with little or no fire activity from 10/21.
- **Inland Region:** south to southwest winds increase Monday afternoon, with Sierra ridge-top gusts of 50–70 mph Monday into Tuesday. High-elevation Sierra snow Tuesday through Thursday, rain in the valleys by midweek, temperatures well below average, and chilly nights. Low chance of Sierra thunderstorms south of I-80 on 10/21–10/22.
- **Coastal Region:** hazardous beach conditions through tonight, then a cooling trend all week with a chance of light rain by midweek. Low pressure stalling off the North Coast brings unsettled weather.
- **Risk outlook:** the Sector Operations Center flags flash flooding and debris flow for all regions on two days later this week, strong wind in the south on two days, and three days of Sierra snow.
- **6–14 day outlook (10/23–10/31):** below-normal temperatures mostly statewide and above-normal precipitation, strongly favored for 10/25–10/31. Cal OES notes a slight risk of heavy precipitation

10/26–11/01, a possible first atmospheric river around 11/01, and possible offshore wind and fire weather episodes into November.

Upcoming Meetings and Exercises

- **Wednesday 10/21, 9:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.:** Cal OES Region II Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committee (MARAC), virtual.
- **10/21–10/28:** Cal OES Tactical Communications will display a mobile command trailer at the 2026 Cal APCO State Conference in San Diego.
- **10/26–10/29:** the next round of high tides, ahead of king tides 11/24–11/26 (per the 10/13 tropical storm summary).
- **Wednesday 11/4, 10:00–11:00 a.m.:** Cal OES Tribal Assistance Coordination Group call, where CUEA will present on connecting utility operators with agency information and resources.
- **Wednesday 12/2:** Marathon Petroleum Risk Management Plan deployment and EOC exercise, shared through the Cal OES Region I Local Emergency Planning Committee.

Member Actions This Week

- After the PSPS: return generators to standby, refuel, and capture impacts and lessons learned for after-action reviews.
- Facilities near the Norte, Bryson, and Henderson burn areas: check drainage and access routes before the Wednesday–Thursday rain and watch for runoff and debris.
- Sierra and high-elevation sites: prepare for strong ridge-top winds Monday–Tuesday, snow Tuesday–Thursday, and colder nights.
- Coastal facilities: note the 10/26–10/29 high tides, especially if heavy rain arrives at the same time.
- IT and OT teams: review exposure to outdated industrial control software in light of the French refrigeration attack, and keep vetting remote IT hires.

Source notes: Cal OES numbered its event documents differently from CUEA (Incident Report #1, then Situation Status Reports #1–#3, then Incident Report No. 4 – FINAL). In the final report, the Fire & Rescue table repeats the 10/17 containment figures (Bryson 52%, Norte 5%), while the 10/18 Daily Situation Report lists 68% and 25%; this digest uses the newer figures. The final report's closure table still lists SR-23 and I-5 even though Caltrans District 7 says SR-23 has reopened. The final report's NWS entry puts Sierra thunderstorm odds at 10–20%, while the Daily Situation Report gives 10% or less. The Norte Fire table lists 7 residential structures destroyed but 0 total structures destroyed. Figures are reported here as they appear in the sources.

Compiled from Cal OES Internal Statewide Incident Briefings and Daily Situation Reports (October 12–18, 2026), Cal OES Weather Threat Briefings and 7-Day Threat Outlooks, 2026 Early October Tropical Storms Incident Reports #4–#5 (Final), 2026 Mid-October PSPS and Fire Weather Event Incident Report #1, Situation Status Reports #1–#3, and Incident Report No. 4 – FINAL, Business Operations Center incident reports and partner notices, the SOC Incident Action Plan No. 1, Cal OES PSPS notifications, CalWatch fire alerts and EEL updates, State Threat Assessment Center reports, State Agency Coordination Call notices and member input, and Cal OES Region I LEPC, Region II MARAC, and Office of Tribal Coordination correspondence. This is a member courtesy digest, not an official Cal OES publication. It is derived from Cal OES reports containing For Official Use Only information; please handle and share it accordingly. Always refer to your own agency's direct Cal OES contacts for operational decisions.

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