



City of Malibu News

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PUBLIC STATEMENT FROM CITY OF MALIBU

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Southern California Edison Setting Up Staging Yard at Civic Center Way and Stuart Ranch Road for Emergency Utility Inspections and Work in Malibu for Wildfire Mitigation

Recently Southern California Edison announced that a plan to conduct emergency equipment inspections and work in Malibu as part of its Wildfire Mitigation Plan:

"SCE is currently conducting additional inspections of its equipment in "High Fire Risk Areas" which may require access to SCE's electrical equipment on your property in the City of Malibu. Additionally, for the next few months, Malibu residents may see increased activity by SCE and their contract crews. Some of the work being conducted in your area includes: - Enhanced inspections of its overhead infrastructure - Maintenance of its equipment to further strengthen the local grid. You will be notified in advance if a power outage for scheduled maintenance is required - Increased Vegetation Management including tree pruning or removal Maintenance activities will require SCE to hold a temporary equipment staging area at Stuart Ranch Road and Webb Way. This staging area will be used as a reporting location for personnel, vehicle and equipment parking, and material storage."

<https://www.malibucity.org/DocumentCenter/View/23737/SCE-activities-in-High-Fire-Risk-Areas>

To facilitate these inspections, upgrades and increased vegetation management SCE applied for and received two permits for this activity on the privately owned lot located at 23833 Stuart Ranch Road: one Over-the-Counter (OC) permit for site preparation involving the removal of grass, firming the damp soil and laying down gravel in preparation for staging of trucks and equipment onsite and one Emergency Coastal Development Permit (ECDP) for the use of the lot for truck and equipment staging.

SCE requested approval of this work on an emergency basis because it needs to complete this work in "High Fire Risk Areas" before the summer when fire danger grows higher. The situation is especially urgent in Malibu considering the increased vegetation that is anticipated citywide due to the heavy rains, which increases potential for dangerously high fuel loads in the upcoming dry months. The nature of this work is urgent due to the City's vulnerability to additional wildfire; delay in initiating the project could result in work in the City being significantly postponed which would increase this vulnerability—SCE needs to complete this work in many cities and if it is unable to stage its equipment in the City SCE will move forward with other cities before coming back to Malibu.

The OC permit was issued the same day so the site preparation work could begin right away. The site preparation work to remove the grass, firm the soil and lay down gravel is exempt from a Coastal Development Permit (CDP). The property is zoned Community Commercial. The site has been historically used for commercial nursery and agricultural purposes, and the soil regularly "disked" by the owner to manage weed growth multiple times a year. The site was screened and cleared for environmentally sensitive habitat area and sensitive cultural resources based on information on file with the City.

After work began, a wetland on the adjacent property to the west was identified. Staff alerted SCE that a 100-foot buffer from the wetland must be provided. As the ECDP was processed, conditions were included into the ECDP to ensure the required 100-foot buffer was respected.

The use approved under the ECDP will last for 90 to 120 days, and the site is required to be restored to its previous condition, including removal of the gravel, at the conclusion of the work. A regular CDP will be processed concurrently over the next few weeks.

Additional conditions have been placed on the ECDP in order to protect the surrounding environment and minimize the impacts to the surrounding community, including the following:

- (1) SCE is required to work with the City Public Works Department to schedule work and vehicle movement activity in such a way to minimize traffic disruptions on the surrounding streets.
- (2) SCE must adhere to noise ordinance requirements for work hours to minimize noise impact on the neighboring residents.
- (3) The site must be monitored to ensure its activity will not cause excessive dust, or mud and water runoff off of the property.
- (4) SCE must maintain a 100-foot buffer to protect the neighboring wetland parcel from environmental damage as well conduct an inspection performed by the City Biologist before use of the site as a staging area commences. The description of this wetland area can be found in an attachment to the ECDP Notice of Decision.
- (5) SCE must return the site to the condition in which it was found prior to project completion. This is also a requirement of the agreement between the property owner and SCE.
- (6) SCE must place and direct their temporary lighting in such a way that it will not disrupt the residential neighbors or motorists on adjacent streets.

The application materials for both permits including the stamped (approved) plans can be found on the City's public records portal, OnBase: <https://www.malibucity.org/794/OnBase-Portal>. (The Over the Counter Permit number is OC 19-024, and the ECDP is ECDP 19-005.

SCE did not apply to use the City-owned lot across the street on Civic Center Way, that it had used for staging and emergency utility repair work immediately following the Woolsey Fire, because that lot is already reserved for parking for the Chumash Day Powwow and will be used for City Hall parking when work begins on the City Hall solar project in the near future.

The City's Code Enforcement Office has been alerted to this project given the proximity of the wetland and the nearby residences to the west, has inspected the site, and will continue to monitor its use to ensure compliance and that any violations are promptly addressed.

For additional questions or concerns, please contact the Planning Department 310-456-2489, ext. 485 or email mplanning@malibucity.org.

For more information on post-wildfire issues related to utilities, visit <https://www.malibucity.org/913/Utilities>.

For more information about SCE's Wildfire Mitigation Plan, visit <https://www.sce.com/safety/wildfire>.

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