



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

October 3, 2025

TO: Malibu School Community
FROM: Carey Upton, Chief Operations Officer
RE: Malibu Alternative Power Update

Malibu Alternative Power Update

As promised, the first phase of the Malibu schools alternative power systems was completed by the end of [September 2025](#). All Malibu schools now have generators installed to provide backup power in the event of an outage.

Malibu Elementary School (MES): On Sept. 27., Southern California Edison (SCE), under District oversight, completed the installation of a temporary generator and an automatic transfer switch. The generator is designed to activate within 30 seconds of a power outage, ensuring continued power to the site.

Webster Elementary School: A rental generator was delivered on Sept. 24. and installed to a quick-connect system. This system requires a trained electrician to activate during an outage rather than automatically switching to power from the generator. Eight District staff members received training on Sept. 26 on how to operate the quick-connect system. These technicians are on call and will respond, within an hour, when an outage occurs at the school.

Malibu Middle/High School Main Panel: SCE provided the District with a generator and installed an automatic transfer switch on Sept. 20. The generator should automatically turn on within 30 seconds of a power outage to provide backup power to the site.

Malibu Middle/High School Field Circuit: This field circuit only powers the coach's office bungalow, field lights and restrooms. A rental generator was delivered on Sept. 24. It was installed with a quick-connect system that requires a trained electrician to connect it when the power goes out. Eight District staff members were trained on Sept. 26.

Next steps:

- The District purchased permanent generators for all four circuits (Webster, MES, two at MMS/MHS). The generators are currently in production and are scheduled for delivery in mid-November.
- Schneider Electric will order automatic transfer switches for each circuit. Delivery dates are pending.

- The District will retain the SCE loaner generators at MES and Malibu High School (MHS) until the new automatic transfer switches are delivered.
- Once the permanent generators are delivered, the rented generators will be removed, and the automatic transfer switches will be installed.

Malibu Middle/High School Solar Farm and Battery Backup: The design for the solar farm and the battery backup system is being developed and will be included in the Phase 2 Coastal Development Permit, which is scheduled to be approved by City of Malibu Planning Commission by the end of the year. Construction is scheduled to begin in late summer/early fall 2026 after receiving approval by the Division of the State Architect and materials have been procured.

Disclaimer: These systems are designed to provide alternative power during emergencies and public safety power shutoffs. The District will work with staff to ensure that the generator systems function properly during an emergency. However, due to the unpredictable nature of emergencies, there is no guarantee that these systems will function as intended.

For more information, please contact Carey Upton, Chief Operations Officer, at 310-450-8338 ext. 79383 or email cupton@smmusd.org.

Warmly,

Carey Upton, Chief Operations Officer



Please see memo from SCE attached.



Power Preparedness Collaboration from Southern California Edison

Keeping Our School Powered During Emergency Outages

No one likes losing power for any amount of time. However, the heightened risk of wildfires this year, due to lack of rain and extreme weather, means that our community – and school – may experience extended outages, known as Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). During times of low humidity, dry vegetation and high winds, Southern California Edison (SCE) may use PSPS to proactively and temporarily shut off power to keep us safe from wildfire ignitions caused by utility equipment.

SCE is proud to collaborate with SMMUSD to keep the power on during PSPS using a temporary backup generator that's now on campus.

Please note that even if you receive a PSPS notification from SCE regarding power at your home, the school will be open during school hours.

Generator Safety Tips for Students

We've worked with SCE to place the generator in a secure area and minimize any potential noise impacts if it needs to run during school hours. While the generator is on campus, it's important that students follow basic safety tips. Please review these safety precautions:

Stay Away from Generators

- Don't play near or touch the generator.
- Always respect barriers and signs around the generator area. Never attempt to climb the fencing or walls surrounding the generator.
- Never touch any cords or fuel containers.

Report Hazards

If you see, hear or smell anything that seems wrong, leave the area and tell a teacher or the front office immediately.

Preparing for PSPS

SCE recommends the following to help you stay informed and prepared:

- PSPS alerts are available for anyone. Sign up for alerts via email, text or phone message.
- Visit the SCE Marketplace to find portable power station and generator rebates for eligible customers.

If you or someone in your household relies on electricity for medical devices or equipment, you may be eligible for SCE's Medical Baseline Allowance Program.

Please contact the school office if you have any questions.