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# Health Matters Newsletter

[www.sbcphd.org](http://www.sbcphd.org)

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## Providers Urged to Prepare Electrical Dependent Patients for Power Outages

Southern California Edison and Pacific Gas & Electric have implemented programs called Public Safety Power Shutdown (PSPS) to turn off electrical circuits during high wind Red Flag weather events that pose high fire risk. The locations of circuits affected will vary by the weather event, though southern Santa Barbara will likely be at higher risk. There will be advance warning, from 2 -48 hours, and the power companies are asking the public to be prepared for an outage of at least 24 and up to 72 hours.



Additional PSPS program info: [Southern California Edison- PSPS](#) or [Pacific, Gas & Electric- PSPS](#)

Healthcare providers are urged to prepare their patients for electrical outages. It is critical to prepare patients who use equipment like oxygen concentrators or electrical wheelchairs, or take medications that require refrigeration. Ask your patients what their plan is for power outages. In past power outages, individuals using oxygen concentrators have been unable to locate or connect tubing to their back-up or travel oxygen cylinders. Hospitals and dispatch agencies have been overwhelmed with calls from individuals seeking help for access to oxygen.

Patients should have a plan and battery-operated lights, back-up batteries for electrical equipment, and generators if they plan to stay in their residence during any outage. Patients should also have a plan on where to access electricity outside of their home, such as a hotel, family member or shelter.

All residents are encouraged to sign up for alerts from the County by going to [www.ReadySBC.org](http://www.ReadySBC.org) or texting their zip code to 888777.

For the PSPS program all customers will be contacted in advance with as much notice as possible. Patients with life-sustaining electricity needs can sign up to be a Medical Baseline customer with SCE or PGE. By signing up, the individuals will be automatically contacted during or prior to emergency or rotating power outages that will affect their location. For more information of the Medical Baseline Program see the following links: [Southern California Edison](#) [Pacific, Gas & Electric](#)

For resource sheets on power outages please go to <https://www.ready.gov/power-outages>.

## August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month

Celebrated globally to encourage breastfeeding and improve the health of babies around the world, [Breastfeeding Awareness Month's](#) 2018 theme is: Breastfeeding: Foundation of Life. In a world filled with inequality and poverty, breastfeeding is the foundation of lifelong good health for babies and mothers.



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The primary focuses are:

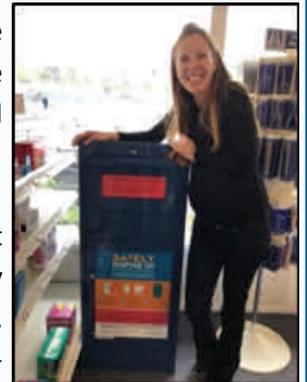
- Preventing malnutrition in all its forms
- Ensuring food security even in times of crisis
- Breaking the cycle of poverty

Breastmilk is a natural and optimal way of feeding children and meets all the child's nutritional and immunological needs. Healthy People 2020 target is 81.9% of infants to have ever been breastfed and 60.6% of infants to be breastfed at 6 months. In Santa Barbara County (SBC), the most current information from 2015 indicate that 94% of infants received any breastmilk while in-hospital and currently in the [WIC](#) program only 45.6% of 6 month olds are breastfed. With continual effort we can work together to help our breastfeeding families succeed from the initial start in the hospital and beyond. To learn more about breastfeeding support in SBC, visit the Public Health Nutrition and Breastfeeding Program [here](#).

### Extended Producer Responsibility Program (Expired Unwanted Medication Disposal)

In June of 2016, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Ordinance was passed by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. This program assures that any unwanted (expired or excess) medications can be disposed of in a safe and efficient manner in our county. This new program will be operated by the Santa Barbara County Med-Project, paid for by the pharmaceutical companies that sell product here in Santa Barbara County, and not tax payers.

Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Services (EHS) oversees this program which helps in the devastating opioid epidemic by getting these medications collected and destroyed responsibly. The program also ensures protection of the environment with the elimination of flushing unwanted medicines down the drain, or having them exposed to theft in the trash.



March 2018 saw the implementation of this EPR ordinance, with 6 kiosk drop boxes installed at county pharmacies and healthcare centers. The week of June 20th, 13 of the 15 CVS Pharmacy stores had kiosks installed. As of August, 31 drop off kiosk locations are in Santa Barbara County. This exceeds the "convenience standard" set in the Ordinance of 5 kiosks per each of the 5 supervisory districts – or 25 total in the county.

- For more information on the program, check out our webpage: <https://countyofsb.org/phd/ehs/safe-drug-disposal.sbc#Expand04>
- For more information on the MED-Project, check out their website: <http://med-project.org/locations/santa-barbara>
- For a map of drop off kiosk locations, click [here](#).

### Epidemiology Program Updates

- 2018 Second Quarter Reportable Communicable Diseases Counts for the County: <https://countyofsb.org/phd/epidemiology/cd.sbc>
- Updated reports available on the Epidemiology Reports webpage: <https://countyofsb.org/phd/epidemiology/data.sbc>

