

# Proposed bill would block utilities from passing wildfire costs to customers

By David R. Baker, San Francisco Chronicle

Four California legislators on Monday said they plan to introduce a bill that would bar electric utilities from passing on to their customers the costs of wildfires caused by the companies' negligence.

The move comes as investigators are exploring whether Pacific Gas and Electric Co. power lines played a role in starting last month's Wine Country wildfires, which killed at least 43 people. And San Diego Gas and Electric Co. has asked state regulators for permission to make its customers pay some of the costs of settling lawsuits triggered by a deadly series of fires in 2007.

In response, PG&E issued a statement that did not directly address the proposed legislation itself but called dealing with wildfires a statewide safety issue.

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