



Power Outage

June 2023

Santa Clara, California

- September 2022 – Santa Clara Valley, CA; Santa Clara Valley Medical Center
- Power outage that lasted approximately four hours – over the hours of 6:30 pm – 1:40 am
- Caused by a substation failure
- Backup generators were immediately started, however, failed two hours later
- Emergency plans went into place immediately
- ED closed to stroke, heart attack, trauma and ambulance arrivals
- Seven patients were transferred to other facilities, while nine others were shifted to a different location of the medical center
- Temperatures were record-breaking; reached 109 degrees
- Patients on ventilators using batteries that lasted only about 30 minutes – they had about 30 minutes to evacuate the entire ICU to another part of the hospital
- Some elective procedures the following day had to be cancelled due to uncertainty of power

Impacts:

- Current patients
- Incoming patients
- Where generator power exists within facility
- Potential evacuation

Preparedness:

- Conduct a vulnerability assessment of your standby power systems
- Assure generator maintenance is regularly conducted
- Establish relationships with vendors for generator repairs and fuel
- Identify and understand what portions of the hospital and equipment will receive generator power

Sources:

- <https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/providers/backup-generators-fail-northern-california-hospital-during-record-breaking-heatwave>
- <https://www.mercurynews.com/2022/09/07/backup-generators-failed-at-san-jose-hospital-during-blackouts/>

Resources:

- [Planning for Power Outages: A Guide for Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities](#)
- [Healthcare Facilities and Power Outages: A Guide for State, Local, Tribal, Territorial, and Private Sector Partners \(FEMA\)](#)
- [Resilience to Power Outages in Healthcare Facilities](#)