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State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

January 26, 2009

AFL 08-43

TO: Acute Psychiatric Hospitals
General Acute Care Hospitals
Intermediate Care Facilities
Intermediate Care Facilities/Developmentally Disabled
Skilled Nursing Facilities
Special Hospitals

SUBJECT: Diesel Generators: Health Facilities

AUTHORITY: Assembly Bill (AB) 2216 (Gaines, Chapter 232, Statutes of 2008)

This letter is being sent to notify you of new legislation that has passed which is effective January 1, 2009. AB 2216 impacts specific health facilities (Acute Psychiatric Hospitals, General Acute Care Hospitals, Intermediate Care Facilities, Intermediate Care Facilities - Developmentally Disabled, Skilled Nursing Facilities and Special Hospitals) and continues the requirement that health facilities start a backup diesel generator at least 12 times per year, as set by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO's) standards.

AB 2216 codifies specific JCAHO standards under which a health facility is to test each of its diesel backup generators. These standards require testing to occur 12 times a year with testing intervals of not less than 20 days and not more than 40 days. The tests shall be conducted for at least 30 continuous minutes pursuant to the following:

- A dynamic load that is at least 30 percent of the nameplate rating of the generator.
- A test conducted at less than 30 percent of the nameplate rating of the generator, if the health facility revises its existing documented management plan to conform with the National Fire Protection Association 110: Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems, 2005 edition, testing and maintenance activities. These activities shall include inspection procedures for assessing the prime mover's exhaust gas temperature against the minimum temperature recommended by the manufacturer.
- If a diesel backup generator cannot be tested pursuant to the requirements of either of the above, then it shall be tested for 30 continuous minutes at intervals

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with available Emergency Power Supply Systems load and tested annually with supplemental loads of all of the following in the following order for a total of two continuous hours: (1) Twenty-five percent of nameplate rating for 30 minutes. (2) Fifty percent of nameplate rating for 30 minutes. (3) Seventy-five percent of nameplate rating for 60 minutes.

This bill eliminates the requirement to start the backup generator, with or without a load, when the generator is not tested during the week.

This bill also extends the sunset date to January 1, 2011 and requires health facilities to submit all data collected under this section to the Department of Public Health when requested.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact your local district office.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by Kathleen Billingsley, R.N.

Kathleen Billingsley, R.N.
Deputy Director
Center for Health Care Quality