



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

Docket #: Res M-4833

CPUC ORDERS UTILITIES TO IMPLEMENT PROTECTIONS TO CONSUMERS IMPACTED BY WILDFIRES

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 9, 2017 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today approved an emergency resolution ordering energy, water, and telecommunication utilities to take multiple actions to help protect consumers who are impacted by the October 2017 wildfires.

The state's utilities provide essential services that are critical to rebuilding the affected communities. In order to help wildfire-impacted communities, the CPUC took the following actions:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas Company, San Diego Gas & Electric, and Liberty Utilities:

- **Disconnections:** Wildfire-impacted consumers cannot be disconnected for nonpayment and associated fees through November 9, 2018.
- **Discontinue Billing:** Utilities must discontinue billing customers whose homes are not capable of receiving utility services, and utilities cannot assess a disconnection charge.
- **Waive Deposits:** Utilities must waive deposit requirements for affected residents seeking to re-establish service for one year, and must expedite move-in and move-out service requests.
- **Estimated Billing:** Utilities must stop energy usage estimates for billing for the time the home/unit was unoccupied as a result of the wildfires.
- **Payment Plans:** Affected customers who have prior arrearages and have lost their homes or have been displaced and are seeking to establish service in a new residence, must be offered a payment plan with an initial payment of no greater than 20 percent of the amount due, and with equal installments for the remainder of not less than 12 billing cycles. For affected customers who currently have service but go into arrearage after Oct. 17, 2017, the utilities



must offer a payment plan with an initial payment of no greater than 20 percent of the amount due, and with equal installments for the remainder of not less than eight billing cycles.

- **Minimum Bills:** Utilities must prorate any monthly access charge or minimum charges for affected customers typically assessed so that no customer will bear any of these costs for the time period after the customer’s home was rendered unserviceable by a fire.
- **CARE:** For customers enrolled in the low income program CARE, utilities must freeze eligibility standards and high-usage post-enrollment verification requests until at least Dec. 31, 2017. PG&E will also conduct outreach to provide this information.

Further, the CPUC has authorized PG&E to waive the costs that would normally be incurred to customers for establishing temporary service.

Communication companies in fire-impacted areas must refund their customers for the periods that the customers were without service due to the October 2017 fires. Carriers of Last Resort must waive connection charges for affected customers. Further, for customers of the low income California LifeLine program, communication companies must suspend the de-enrollment for non-usage rules and delay the renewal process for the affected consumers.

California-American Water Company, Golden State Water Company, Kenwood Village Water Company, and Mayacama Golf Course Sewer Utility must work cooperatively with affected customers to resolve unpaid bills, and minimize disconnections for non-payment. They must also waive reconnection or facilities fees and suspend deposits for affected customers who must reconnect to the system, and provide reasonable payment options to affected customers. Bills must be waived for October for those customers who lost their homes in the fires.

Said Commissioner Martha Guzman Aceves, “It is important that all utility service providers continue to work cooperatively and creatively to ensure residents and businesses impacted by the fires are assisted in their difficult path to recovery. Today’s action requires that utilities offer a more seamless reconnection of services.”

The CPUC’s orders made today consolidate recommendations from stakeholders and utilities with



other protections that were being developed by CPUC staff to address the needs of fire victims.

The proposal voted on is available at

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M198/K780/198780035.PDF>.

The proposal related to PG&E's waiver of cost for temporary service is available at

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M198/K466/198466552.PDF>.

Follow the CPUC's actions related to the wildfires at www.cpuc.ca.gov/October2017Fires.

For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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