

**DRAFT**

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
**ENERGY DIVISION**  
**I.D. #6569**  
**RESOLUTION E-4080**  
**May 3, 2007**

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**Resolution E- 4080. Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) requests approval of its Cooling Centers Pilot Program Proposal.**

**Request Granted as Modified.**

**By Advice Letter 2990-E-A Filed on March 15, 2007.**

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**SUMMARY**

This Resolution approves the Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E) request for funding of its Cool Center Program (CC Program) as a pilot program for the year 2007 under the California Alternate Rate for Energy (CARE) Program, as an outreach expense, to the extent that the Cool Centers would provide CARE information materials on its sites. This request is pursuant to Ordering Paragraph 13 in the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) Decision D.06-12-038.

**BACKGROUND**

Cooling centers are air-conditioned gathering places that are open to the public and are operated during hot summer months in order to provide the elderly and other low income citizens with a shelter from heat. In its decision D.06-12-038 Ordering Paragraph 13 of December 14, 2006, the Commission ordered PG&E to submit a plan and proposed budget via advice letter, for working with local governments to establish cooling centers.<sup>1</sup>

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1. <sup>1</sup> D.06-12-038 Ordering Paragraph states, "PG&E shall no later than February 15, 2007, submit an advice letter to the Energy Division with a plan and proposed budget for working with local governments to establish cool centers and shall open some cool centers by summer of 2007."

In response to the decision above, PG&E submitted its advice letter 2990-E on February 15, 2007. On March 13, 2007 PG&E submitted its supplemental advice letter 2990-E-A superseding its advice letter 2990-E in its entirety. PG&E has provided its plans and budget to operate the Cooling Center program as a pilot project for 2007 and proposes to work with local governments to support existing cooling center programs, to educate targeted customers on heat preparedness, publicize the location and accessibility of all cooling center locations within PG&E service territory. In addition PG&E will provide material, financial and logistical support to selected local government-operated cooling centers for the purpose of increasing participation among low- and fixed-income customers. Cooling centers can reduce the risk of experiencing heat-induced ailments and the higher electricity bills for the targeted population of elderly and low-income citizens. PG&E proposes to fund the 2007 Cooling Center Pilot Program under CARE outreach program.

### **NOTICE**

Notice of this advice letter was made by publication in the Commission's Daily Calendar. Pacific Gas & Electric states that a copy of the Advice Letter was mailed and distributed in accordance with Section III-G of General Order 96-A.

### **PROTESTS**

No protests were filed to this Advice Letter.

### **DISCUSSION**

In its decision D06-12-038 the Commission stated: "PG&E should be setting up cool centers where customers are most likely to take advantage of them on the basis of their financial needs and proclivity to use them, not because one location is slightly warmer than another. We will direct PG&E to present Energy Division and interested parties with a plan for working with local governments to establish cool centers, some of which should be open by summer 2007. These centers should be accessible to disabled customers."

PG&E conducted a market research (Based on Interviews) for cooling centers in its service territory and interviewed several agencies including local governments with already existing cooling center programs, Parks and Recreation Departments, Red Cross agencies which currently run local cooling

center programs in various counties, and other utilities with similar programs such as Southern California Edison Company (SCE) and San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) with already established cooling centers. In addition PG&E researched California Density Map identifying persons/sq. Mile, Maximum and Minimum temperatures over last 48 years of its service territory, Population per County over 65 years old, Target County CARE population for all of PG&E service territory, and other concerns expressed in LIOB meetings. Based on its research PG&E plans to implement its Cool Center program with a two Tiers approach. For Tier 1, it would operate the program as a pilot project for 2007 and assist local governments in five counties namely Fresno, Kern, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa. PG&E selected these counties due to their high proportion of CARE-eligible customers and seniors as well as high average temperatures relative to the other counties in PG&E service territory. PG&E used the following criteria for selections of these counties for the Pilot program:

- **Population:** High CARE and/or medical baseline eligible population that are PG&E's electric customers.(greater than 1,000 CARE eligible per zip code)
- **Climate:** Located climate zones 11-16 <sup>2</sup>
- **Current Structure:** Counties have existing cooling center programs or are planning cooling center programs for 2007

For Tier 2, PG&E intends to initiate discussions on developing partnerships with other counties that have been identified. The following counties have been identified as regions to target: Butte, Merced, Yolo, Solano, Shasta, Placer, Madera, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba. PG&E believes that establishing the program in 2007 as a pilot and on a limited basis will allow PG&E to identify best practices associated with implementing the program. Based on input from the Cooling Center Network and associated workshops PG&E will file a proposal for a cooling center plan covering its entire service territory for summer 2008.

PG&E's research indicates that the most significant barriers preventing greater attendance by low and fixed-income customers in existing cooling center

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2. <sup>2</sup> Climate Zones refer to California Energy Commission Building Climate Zones

programs in its service territory were lack of transportation options and awareness of the existence of cooling centers. For example Kern County's program included no transportation options for customers, which could be a cause of the low attendance.

In order for any existing cool center in PG&E service territory to receive direct financial support, it must meet the following criteria:

- Free entrance for all customers
- No discrimination among attendees
- Be accessible via public transportation or shuttle service
- Provide a save and comfortable atmosphere and seating areas
- Provide complimentary water to cooling center customers
- Disability access is required to be listed
- Work with PG&E to develop trigger criteria to open cooling centers
- Distribute brochures advertising other PG&E services like CARE, FERA, and Energy Efficiency
- Have customer satisfaction surveys available onsite
- Provide a sign-in sheet for cooling center attendees

In order to increase awareness of the Cooling Centers and the serious risks of extended heat exposure PG&E plans to establish a Cooling Center website, distribute a bill insert during the May billing cycle that will provide information on the PG&E Cooling Center Pilot Program, undertake a heat awareness education campaign, provide Cooling Center brochures at PG&E events, distribute Cooling Center stickers to all interested local governments and create a Cooling Center Network to foster communication among all interested local governments in its service territory regarding cooling center programs.

Energy Division supports the Cool Center program as proposed by PG&E and recommends that this 2007 pilot program be funded under the CARE Program as an outreach expense, and appropriate CARE information and educational materials be provided on these sites.

## **COMMENTS**

This is an uncontested matter in which the resolution grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to PU Code 311 (g)(2), the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is being waived.

## **FINDINGS**

1. Energy Division finds it reasonable that this program be funded under the CARE Program as outreach to the extent the Cool Centers would provide CARE information and educational materials at these sites.
2. The Cooling Center Program as proposed by PG&E is a Pilot program for 2007, and is similar to Cooling Center Programs for SDG&E and SCE which were approved as pilot programs under CARE Outreach programs.
3. The costs associated with the 2007 Cooling Center Pilot Program will be recorded in the electric California Alternate Rates for Energy Account (CAREA). These costs will be recovered in the next Annual Electric True-Up process or other proceeding as authorized by the Commission.
4. PG&E's Cool Center Pilot Program for 2007 may assist vulnerable residential customers in lowering their energy costs and may provide other benefits such as comfort and educational materials.
5. PG&E's Cool Center 2007 Program will provide us with information to assist in the Program Year 2008 planning process.
6. PG&E's proposal to use up to \$287,500 of public purpose funds to assist in funding the Cool Centers in PG&E's service territory during the summer of 2007 in order to provide a safe, cool place where residents with limited income living in extreme climate areas can gather during the hot summer months is reasonable, as a pilot program, and should provide us with valuable information for evaluating future cool center proposals.

## **THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED THAT:**

1. The Commission orders that these Cool Centers be funded from the CARE Program. The request of the PG&E to fund the Cool Centers program from CARE funding as an outreach expense is approved. This funding shall not exceed \$287,500.
2. In addition to the annual report and the customer surveys included in its advice letter, PG&E shall make a condition of providing this funding to the counties of Fresno, Kern, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa that the CARE applications and outreach Materials shall be provided at each of the Cooling Center sites.

3. PG&E shall code these CARE applications and track successful new CARE enrollees resulting from this process and report such enrollment to the Energy Division.
4. The reasonableness of Cool Center-related costs incurred in 2007 and its recovery shall be determined pursuant to the findings in the commission's Annual True-Up process.
5. This approval is granted on a one-time basis only.

This Resolution is effective today.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, passed and adopted at a conference of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California held on May 3, 2007; the following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:

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STEVE LARSON  
Executive Director