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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC SAYS REBATES NOW AVAILABLE FOR SINGLE-FAMILY HOME SOLAR WATER HEATING SYSTEMS

SAN FRANCISCO, May 17, 2010 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today announced that consumers can now apply for cash rebates of up to \$1,875 for the installation of solar water heating systems on single-family residential homes.

On May 1, 2010, the California Solar Initiative (CSI) Thermal Program began accepting applications for rebates under the \$350 million program that promotes the installation of solar water heating systems on homes and businesses served by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison, San Diego Gas and Electric Company (SDG&E), and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas).

The rebates will help homes and businesses defray the cost of installing high-quality solar water heaters that can significantly lower water heating bills, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and cut California's dependence on fossil fuels. Rebates will be available for businesses and multi-family buildings this summer.

The CSI-Thermal Program is the latest addition to the Go Solar California campaign, which encourages the use of solar in California. Like the CSI program that provides incentives for solar photovoltaics systems, the goal of the CSI-Thermal Program is to grow a competitive, sustainable solar water heating industry in California that benefits the environment while providing local jobs for skilled engineers, manufacturers, installers, and sales people. In addition to cash rebates to energy users, the CSI-Thermal Program also provides funds to train installers, increase public awareness, lower building permit costs, and evaluate the impact of the technology.

In order to promote high-quality systems, the CSI-Thermal Program requires all systems to be certified by the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (SRCC). To incentivize good design, actual incentive amounts are based on the SRCC estimate of each system's annual energy production. The typical system displacing natural gas will initially qualify for an incentive of \$1,500, and the average electric-displacing system will qualify for an incentive of \$1,000. (Monthly electric bills savings on average are higher than gas bill savings.) Rebates are available retroactively for qualifying systems installed after July 15, 2009.

Incentive levels will decline over the life of the program in four steps to spur market transformation. The CSI-Thermal Program will run for eight years until December 31, 2017, or until the program funds are exhausted, whichever occurs first.

The CSI Thermal Program is administered by PG&E, Edison, SoCalGas, and the California Center for Sustainable Energy (CCSE) in the SDG&E territory. PG&E and SDG&E, in coordination with CCSE, will disburse incentives to both electric and natural gas customers who install eligible solar water heating systems in their territories. Edison will disburse incentives to customers who install electric displacing solar water heating systems. SoCalGas will disburse incentives to customers in its territory who install natural gas displacing solar water heating systems. For applications and administrator contact information for all the utilities, visit www.gosolarcalifornia.ca.gov/solarwater/index.html.

Homeowners interested in purchasing a solar thermal system are encouraged to obtain bids from at least three licensed solar contractors. Contractors (or homeowners who choose to self-install) first must attend a designated CSI-Thermal Program training workshop. This training is intended to familiarize installers with program rules and requirements; it is not a course on the basics of solar thermal installation. Check with your local program administrator for dates and locations of workshops.

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

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