



California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Docket #: A.06-06-002 and A.06-06-032

Media Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366, news@cpuc.ca.gov

PUC APPROVES UTILITY BUDGETS TO ASSIST LOW-INCOME CUSTOMERS

SAN FRANCISCO, December 14, 2006 -- The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) today approved utility budgets and programs that will provide 20 percent discounts to the energy bills of low-income consumers and energy efficiency services and products to qualifying low-income customers at no cost. Qualifying customers are those individuals and families that make less than 175 percent to 200 percent of federal poverty levels, depending upon the energy provider.

The Commission adopted budgets, policies, and program parameters for the Low-Income Energy Efficiency (LIEE) and California Alternate Rate for Energy (CARE) programs of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE), Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), San Diego Gas and Electric Company (SDG&E), and six smaller energy utilities.

The adopted budgets for 2007 and 2008 for the large utilities are as follows:

2007 and 2008 Utility LIEE and CARE Adopted Budgets				
	2007		2008	
Utility	CARE	LIEE	CARE	LIEE
PG&E	\$544,557,000	\$77,733,500	\$595,432,000	\$77,733,500
SCE	\$256,798,000	\$32,609,290	\$268,798,000	\$32,609,290
SoCalGas	\$127,304,243	\$33,415,541	\$131,003,059	\$33,211,971
SDG&E	\$48,751,885	\$13,424,892	\$50,985,233	\$13,302,750
Total	\$977,411,128	\$157,183,223	\$1,046,218,292	\$156,857,511

For these four utilities, LIEE and CARE are designed to provide energy efficiency services and products to more than 150,000 low-income households in California and discounted energy rates to more than 3.9 million low-income customers in 2007. The four utilities' estimates suggest LIEE

programs together will reduce electricity demand in 2007 by more than 86 million kilowatt hours and natural gas demand by more than 3.6 million therms.

“These programs allow the most vulnerable Californians to save money on their bills, while including them in the statewide effort to protect our environment and assure a more reliable, low-cost energy infrastructure,” said Commissioner Dian M. Grueneich, the assigned Commissioner on energy efficiency and low-income programs.

The Commission also approved 2007-2008 budgets and program elements for LIEE and CARE programs for six small energy utilities: Alpine Natural Gas Company, Bear Valley Electric Service, PacifiCorp, Sierra Pacific Power Company, Southwest Gas Company, and West Coast Gas Company. The adopted budgets for 2007-2008 for these six utilities are as follows:

UTILITY	2007		2008	
	CARE	LIEE	CARE	LIEE
Alpine	\$9,350	\$23,650	\$9,925	\$26,300
Bear Valley	\$181,500	\$110,000	\$187,500	\$110,000
PacifiCorp	\$1,051,505	\$168,000	\$1,051,505	\$168,000
Sierra Pacific	\$395,035	\$110,000	\$410,709	\$110,000
Southwest Gas	\$8,933,330	\$1,080,000	\$8,933,330	\$1,080,000
WestCoast Gas	\$7,100	\$0	\$7,100	\$0
Total	\$10,577,820	\$1,491,650	\$10,600,069	\$1,494,300

The LIEE programs for these six utilities are designed to provide services to 3,740 residences in California. The six utilities combined will apply the CARE discount to the electric and natural gas rates of 62,211 low-income customers in California.

“By providing low-income households with the knowledge and ability to save energy, these programs enable individuals and families to save financial resources that can be used instead toward necessities such as rent or food,” said Ortensia Lopez, Chair of the Low Income Oversight Board (LIOB). The LIOB, established by California statute, advises the Commission on low-income electric, gas, and water customer issues and serves as liaison to low-income ratepayers. The 11 member LIOB consists of representatives of the public and utilities, and meets several times a year.

To enroll in LIEE or CARE, consumers should contact their utility. More information on the programs, including income eligibility limits, is available on the PUC’s website at

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/energy/solar/lowincomeprogs.htm>.

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

###