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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC PROVIDES WILDFIRE-IMPACTED CUSTOMERS WITH INFORMATION ON AUTOMATIC PROTECTIONS

SAN FRANCISCO, November 14, 2018 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) would like to let those impacted by the devastating wildfires in our state know that there are customer protections that are automatically available to them as a result of the State of Emergency declared in California.

Electric and Natural Gas Utility Customer Protections

- **Disconnections:** Wildfire-impacted customers cannot be disconnected for nonpayment and associated fees.
- **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.
- **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.

Water and Sewer Utility Customer Protections



- **Unpaid Bills:** Water companies must work cooperatively with affected customers to resolve unpaid bills, and minimize disconnections for non-payment.
- **Waive Reconnection and Facilities Fees:** Water companies must waive reconnection or facilities fees for affected customers and suspend deposits for affected customers who must reconnect to the system.
- **Payment Plans:** Water companies must provide reasonable payment options to affected customers.
- **Bill Waiver** Water companies must waive bills for victims who lost their homes.

Home Telephone Service Customer Protections

Communication companies in fire-impacted areas must refund their customers who have home phone service for the periods that the customers are without service due to the wildfires. Carriers of Last Resort must waive certain charges, such as connection fees, for affected customers.

The CPUC is monitoring the fire conditions throughout the state, in coordination with our partners from CAL FIRE and the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). CAL FIRE determines the sources of ignition of the fires. The CPUC’s staff investigations assess the compliance of electric facilities with applicable rules and regulations in fire-impacted areas.

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians’ access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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