



California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

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PRESS RELEASE

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

CPUC ENSURES ESSENTIAL UTILITY SERVICES FOR CONSUMERS TO ASSIST IN COVID-19 MITIGATION

SAN FRANCISCO, March 17, 2020 – The California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC) Executive Director today determined that energy, water, sewer, and communications companies under CPUC jurisdiction should halt customer disconnections for non-payment as a result of the State of Emergency called by Gov. Gavin Newsom due to COVID-19.

“In these unsettling and unprecedented times, many people are concerned about the health and safety of themselves and their loved ones. They should not also have to worry about their essential utility services being shut off for non-payment because they are unable to report to work due to illness, quarantine, or social distancing,” said CPUC President Marybel Batjer. “The actions we are taking today will ensure that utility services remain available for California’s most vulnerable populations.”

The CPUC previously adopted utility customer protection measures that apply in cases where the declared emergency relates to the disruption or degradation of utility services in the case of manmade or natural disasters. Today’s action, which was provided to the utilities via letter, extends those protections to mitigate some of the disruptions to Californians’ daily lives related to COVID-19. The CPUC’s action is to ensure that utility services will remain reliable and assist in California’s COVID-19 response by allowing more people to safely self-quarantine or telework.

The customer protections described in the letter apply retroactively from March 4, 2020, when Gov. Newsom declared the State of Emergency in California.

Certain utilities and service providers have already announced voluntary moratoriums on service disconnections for non-payment, and today’s action ensures that they continue the moratoriums and



that any energy, water, sewer, and communications company under the CPUC's jurisdiction follows suit.

Further, on March 16, 2020, Gov. Newsom issued an Executive Order requesting that the CPUC monitor the measures undertaken by public and private utility providers to implement customer service protections in response to COVID-19. The CPUC expects utilities and service providers to report to the CPUC on all customer protection measures they implement in response to COVID-19 as soon as they are implemented so that the CPUC may publicly report on the measures at www.cpuc.ca.gov/covid.

The CPUC's Executive Director's letter to the utilities, which the CPUC's Commissioners will have an opportunity to ratify in the near future, is available at www.cpuc.ca.gov/covid.

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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