Decision _____

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Andrea Slade, Complainant, vs. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (U39E), Defendant.	(ECP) Case 26-05-031

DECISION DENYING COMPLAINT

Summary

This Decision denies Complainant Andrea Slade's complaint alleging Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) did not properly credit Complainant for solar power exported to PG&E for the period March-August 2025.

This proceeding is closed.

1. Procedural and Factual Background

Complainant Andrea Slade filed Case (C.) 25-05-031 on May 19, 2026. The complainant alleges that PG&E did not properly credit her account for solar power generated and exported to PG&E during a roughly six-month period ending in August 2025.

PG&E filed an answer to the complaint on July 9, 2026. The answer generally denied the substantive allegations of the complaint.

An expedited complaint hearing was held on August 17, 2026, before Administrative Law Judge Jacob L. Rambo. The Complainant and PG&E each provided witness testimony and documentary evidence in support of their position. The matter was submitted for decision at the close of the hearing.

Complaint installed solar panels at her home in Red Bluff in July 2022. Through the period leading up to early 2025 and since August 2025, Complainant's solar array generated more power than was necessary to supply her home. She participated in PG&E's Net Energy Metering (NEM) program.

In August 2025, PG&E sent the Complainant a "true-up" bill reflecting the cost of Complainant's power import from PG&E minus the value of energy her system exported to the grid. The period of January through August 2025 showed a significant increase in the amount of power imported.

The Complainant's monthly electrical bills generally averaged less than $15 per month. In August 2023 and August 2024 her bill reflected credits of $288.47 and $75.77 respectively based upon the annual NEM true-up. The bill for August 2025 was $2,664.27.

The Complainant owns the solar power system at her home. She is responsible for its maintenance and upkeep. She also owns and is responsible for the maintenance of the power breakers at her home. PG&E owns the power meter attached to the home and is responsible for its maintenance and upkeep. The meter tracks all power flowing into Complainant's home from the PG&E grid and all power sent from the to the grid. The numbers for the Complainants

electrical usage and exports are reported to PG&E electronically and stored on the meter. Over time, the digital display on PG&E meters can dim, making it difficult to read the display. Dimming is not reflective of the meter's ability to track and report power imports and exports.

2. Analysis

2.1. Contentions of the Parties

The Complainant contends that PG&E's meter was defective and did not properly register all the power exported. She argues that when PG&E inspected the meter after the August 2025 true-up bill, water intrusion was detected. She hypothesized that the water intrusion in the meter may have caused it to malfunction. In addition, Complainant argues that a defect in her breaker created electrical noise that prevented solar production data from being uploaded.

PG&E contends that the significant decrease in reported solar production was the result of a defect in the solar power generation system. It argues that the meter passed accuracy tests and that is technologically impossible for power to be exported from the solar system without registering on the meter.

2.2. Resolution of the Dispute

As explained below, PG&E's position is upheld. The overwhelming evidence supports the finding that Complainant's solar system stopped producing power for a significant period. As a result, Complainant became a net energy importer, reliant on PG&E to power her home. Thus, the August 2025 true-up bill accurately reflected the Complainant's consumption.

On October 27, 2025, PG&E inspected the meter at Complainant's home. The screen had dimmed but was still readable. The meter was tested and found

to be operating well within the 2% accuracy range. The technician explained that power flows through the meter like water through a pipe. When energy is imported, is turns the meter in one direction and when it is exported the meter turns in the opposite direction. The testing revealed that the meter correctly registered energy flow in both directions. PG&E argues that it is impossible for power to export to the grid without being registered by the meter.

The technician testified that the meter was replaced during his visit due to the dimming of the screen. While the dimming of the screen did not affect the accuracy of the meter, it did make it somewhat more difficult for the homeowner to read the screen and verify the net power passing through the meter. The technician noted that there was some dry particulate matter inside the meter that may indicate minor water intrusion at one point that had subsequently dried. He found no evidence that water intrusion had damaged the meter or impaired its function.

During his visits, the technician noted that the circuit breaker located near the meter was making a sound indicative of improper operation or failure. He testified that he looked at the breaker and found evidence of damage consistent with possible arching or a short. He testified that in his experience solar systems have safety mechanisms that shut off production when faults in the system are detected. In her complainant, Ms. Slade concedes that her breaker was not functioning correctly.

The evidence presented establishes that the solar system did not generate power during the period in question. The solar system does not export energy to PG&E without it registering on the meter. This finding is corroborated by the

consumption data presented. Complainant's theory that the export data were not recorded correctly is undermined by the import data. There is no evidence that the Complainant's energy exports were not accurately recorded resulting in a lower credit at true-up. The fact that energy imports increased during the same period indicates that the solar system was not supplying power to the home.

The evidence is insufficient to establish why the system stopped working for a period. The broken breaker suggests that the technician's theory is plausible and that a safety feature may have triggered the system to cease operating. Whatever the cause, there is no evidence to establish that PG&E bears responsibility for the system shutting off. As noted above, the solar system and breakers are Complainant's property and responsibility. We find that the PG&E equipment was functioning properly.

There is no evidence suggesting that the Complainant was aware that the solar system was not producing power. She reasonably relied upon the historic billing and true-up pattern in planning for the cost of electricity. An unexpected increase of more than $2,650 in electric charges presents a hardship. Accordingly, PG&E is directed to provide Complainant with a plan for paying the bill over a period of not less than 24 months, without interest. The parties may extend that period upon mutual agreement without further order of the Commission.

3. Public Comments Are Not Authorized

The 30-day public review and comment period required by Public Utilities Code section 311 is not applicable to expedited complaint proceedings per Rule 14.7(b) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

4. Assignment of Proceeding

Commissioner Karen Douglas is the assigned Commissioner and Jacob L. Rambo is the assigned Administrative Law Judge in this proceeding.

O R D E R

1. Complainant Andrea Slade is ordered to pay Defendant Pacific Gas and Electric Company $2,664.27 for the Net Energy Metering August 2025 true-up billing. Complainant shall be granted a payment plan of not less than 24 months to make full payment, without interest.
2. Complaint 26-05-028 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated _____, at Sacramento, California