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ORIGINAL

Decision No. 83225

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Investigation on the Commission's
Own Motion into the Adequacy and
Reliability of the Energy and Fuel
Requirements and Supply of the
Electric Public Utilities in the
State of California.

Case No. 9581

FIFTH INTERIM ORDER

On November 13, 1973 by Decision No. 82139, this Commission ordered respondent electric utilities to proceed forthwith with a voluntary program of conservation and curtailment to achieve a reduction of 10 percent in the use of electric power. After hearings commencing November 29, 1973, Decision No. 82305 dated January 3, 1974 was issued ordering mandatory curtailment of specific customer groups to achieve a minimum of 15 percent reduction of electric usage.

Mandatory curtailment of specific customer groups included outdoor advertising, decorative lighting, functional outdoor lighting, outdoor public gatherings and indoor business lighting.

Decision No. 82305 restricted the use of promotional business signs to one sign between the hours of sunset and one-half (1/2) hour after closing and billboard illumination between the hours of sunset and 9:00 p.m. After hearings were held and evidence introduced showing mandatory curtailment of usage was discriminatory to their industries, Decision No. 82358 dated January 18, 1974 authorized business to operate window and display lighting and billboards to illuminate one outdoor sign between the hours of sunset and one-half (1/2) hour after closing, whichever is later. Decision No. 82381 dated May 15, 1974 further amended the curtailment provisions of Decision No. 82305 to allow business to illuminate two rather than one on premise electric sign.

In Decision No. 82881, the Commission indicated that it did not intend to seek out particular segments of the public or economy and impose disproportionately burdensome restrictions, but that it was necessary to establish procedures to conserve energy and control shortages to the extent possible. To this end a schedule of voluntary conservation efforts to achieve a system level of not less than 10 percent from normal usage was ordered.

During the critical fuel shortage of the past winter and spring season, two of the most affected industries with respect to the Commission's mandatory curtailment order effected energy savings of up to 33 percent. This compared to the 15 percent reduction in consumption requested of other electric customers.

For the immediate future the levels of mandatory curtailment of those industries most affected can be relaxed at this time. However, as indicated in Decision ^{No} 82881, a continued voluntary program will provide for an ongoing accumulation of valuable experience in implementing conservation programs that will be the least disruptive of essential electrical services and that a shortage of residual fuel oil for steam-electric generation is anticipated to continue into 1976 and perhaps beyond. Therefore, it may become necessary to return to higher levels of conservation and/or stricter curtailment measures as the winter months approach or thereafter. Therefore all customers are called upon to continue their voluntary efforts to conserve electric energy including restricting their use of energy for business signs and outdoor advertising.

Findings and Conclusions

1. Certain industries affected by the Commission's mandatory curtailment order achieved energy savings of up to 33 percent.
2. Mandatory curtailments of certain affected industries can be further relaxed at this time.

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3. Conservation and curtailment procedures should continue in existence as outlined in Decision No. 82881.

IT IS ORDERED that Paragraph (a) of Appendix A as set forth in Decision No. 82881 is temporarily suspended.

The effective date of this order is the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 30th day of JULY, 1974.

Vernon L. Stenger
President
William Synovis, Jr.
[Signature]
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Commissioners

Commissioner J. P. Vukasin, Jr., being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.