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Sent: 10/6/2011 1:37:26 PM
To: Prosper, Terrie D. (terrie.prosper@cpuc.ca.gov)
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject: CPUC Creates Low Income Solar Water Heating Program: CPUC Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS

RELEASE Media Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366,
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CPUC CREATES LOW INCOME SOLAR WATER HEATING PROGRAM

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 6, 2011 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today established a low income California Solar Initiative (CSI)-Thermal Program.

In a previous decision the CPUC allocated \$25 million in CSI-Thermal Program incentives in order to promote the installation of gas-displacing solar water heating systems on qualifying low-income single-family and multifamily residences in the service areas of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), and San Diego Gas and Electric.

“The CSI-Thermal Program will offer increased incentives to qualifying single-family and multifamily low income customers who install solar water heating systems that displace natural gas usage,” said CPUC President Michael R. Peevey. “This program will help ease the financial burden on low income customers who may otherwise not be able to participate in the program.”

Added Commissioner Timothy Alan Simon, “As the Assigned Commissioner for the Low Income Oversight Board, California Alternate Rates for Energy, and the Energy Savings Assistance Program proceedings, I support the decision to implement the low income solar water heating incentive program. Solar water heaters are cost effective for many applications over the life of the system. Although solar water heaters cost more initially than conventional water heaters, the fuel they use – sunshine - is free.

This allows us to achieve our goals of delivering cost effective energy savings to low income customers.”

Said Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval, “I am pleased that California Solar Initiative incentives are being offered to multifamily properties with natural gas water heating so that benefits of energy savings from solar water heating can be passed on to tenants.”

Incentives for qualifying single-family low income customers will be 200 percent of the applicable CSI-Thermal solar water heater incentive level, while incentives for qualifying multifamily affordable housing will be 150 percent of the applicable CSI-Thermal solar water heater incentive level.

The \$25 million budget for CSI-Thermal low income solar water heater incentives will be funded by collections from gas ratepayers pursuant to Assembly Bill 1470, and as previously established in a CPUC decision. This low income program will be administered by the same Program Administrators that administer the gas-displacing portion of the general market CSI-Thermal Program, namely PG&E, SoCalGas, and the California Center for Sustainable Energy.

The proposal voted on is available at http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/word_pdf/AGENDA_DECISION/144219.pdf.

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

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