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April 22, 2020

Mr. Drew Bohan  
Executive Director  
California Energy Commission  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Ms. Alice Stebbins  
Executive Director  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

SUBJECT: NCPA Member Actions Taken in Response to COVID-19

Dear Directors Bohan and Stebbins:

On behalf of the Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) and our 15 publicly owned utility (POU) members that serve retail electric load, and in response to your April 10<sup>th</sup> inquiry, I am pleased to provide the attached update regarding the various activities that NCPA members are undertaking to address customer needs in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. Consistent with the effort being taken at the state level to address the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 for Californians, we trust you will find that NCPA members are deploying a number of actions to protect the 700,000 customers our members serve in Northern California. While these vary by utility, some highlights of our members' efforts include the suspension of utility disconnections for customer non-payment; suspension of late fees and fees associated with reconnecting utility service; extended payment arrangements; increased consumer awareness campaigns on energy conservation and electrical safety; broadened eligibility for low-income relief programs; and customer bill credits to offset the financial hardship that customers may be experiencing due to COVID-19.

As you review the materials, please note that the table provides a snapshot of activities as of today, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and that our local governing boards will be working diligently to help our communities get through this pandemic. Our member POU's are deeply integrated into comprehensive local response efforts, working side by side with city and county officials to continually evaluate innovative ways to support their communities. In the coming months, it is likely that additional actions will be taken by our local governing boards at future board meetings to address community needs.

I welcome any questions or follow-up you might have.

Sincerely,

RANDY S. HOWARD  
General Manager  
(916) 781-4200

Attachment



## NCPA Members' COVID-19 Response – As of April 22

Utility	Service Disconnection Policy	Customer Relief Programs and Credits/Rebates	Other Customer Assistance Measures
	<i>Please describe any service disconnection and/or reconnection policies that your utility is implementing.</i>	<i>Describe any customer relief programs and/or credits/rebates that you are offering to customers to help mitigate the financial impacts of COVID-19.</i>	<i>To the extent your utility is implementing any other customer assistance measures, such as waiver of late fees, please describe them here.</i>
<b>Alameda Municipal Power</b>	<p>Suspended service disconnections for residential and commercial non-payment, effective immediately and in effect until further notice.</p> <p>Restored service to customers disconnected for non-payment in the weeks prior to the pandemic.</p>	<p>AMP continues to offer its existing customer programs, which include low-income assistance. For more information on the utility's current programs, visit: <a href="https://www.alamedamp.com/165/Financial-Assistance">https://www.alamedamp.com/165/Financial-Assistance</a></p>	<p>Suspended late fees for all customers.</p> <p>Implemented a payment installment program that allows residential and small commercial customers to pay overdue balances over 12 months.</p> <p>Increased the length of payment extensions for all customers.</p>
<b>Biggs</b>	<p>None at this time. The City Council concluded that the \$100 per customer climate credit approved at the 4/14 City Council meeting was enough to virtually eliminate any need to impose late charges or service disconnects for the month of April.</p>	<p>Biggs is providing a \$100 climate credit to each residential account in April 2020.</p> <p>The City Council will review the current situation and consider further action at its 5/12 City Council meeting.</p>	<p>City will begin absorbing the \$4.95/credit card transaction charge and ACH vendor fee previously charged for customer bill payments to encourage online payment.</p>
<b>Gridley</b>	<p>Suspended disconnections for non-payment of water, electric, and sewer until further direction from City Administrator.</p>	<p>Gridley continues to offer its existing programs, which can be found here: <a href="http://gridley.ca.us/government-and-departments/departments/electric-department/">http://gridley.ca.us/government-and-departments/departments/electric-department/</a>.</p>	<p>No further measures to report at this time.</p>
<b>Healdsburg</b>	<p>Suspended utility disconnections and working with past-due customers to set-up payment plans.</p>	<p>In specific response to COVID-19, from April – June, the utility is offering a 100% rate discount for customers participating in its low-income program (usually a 25% discount for electric).</p> <p>Healdsburg continues to offer its existing customers programs, which include low-income assistance. Details of current programs are available here: <a href="https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/173/Utility-Programs">https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/173/Utility-Programs</a></p>	<p>Late fees and re-connect fees have been waived.</p>
<b>Lodi</b>	<p>Suspended utility disconnections for non-payment through 4/30.</p>	<p>Lodi continues to offer its existing customer programs, which include low-income assistance. Details of current programs are available here: <a href="http://www.lodielectric.com/818/Discounts-Incentives-and-Rebates">http://www.lodielectric.com/818/Discounts-Incentives-and-Rebates</a>.</p> <p>In addition to its existing programs, Lodi is reviewing a proposal to provide one-time bill credit to all electric utility customer accounts. Further action may be taken in the coming weeks.</p>	<p>Have temporarily suspended recertification for medical discount customers for at least one year.</p>



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<p><b>Lompoc</b></p>	<p>Utility disconnections have been suspended for 60 days (adopted 3/17).</p>	<p>Lompoc continues to offer its existing customer programs, which include low-income assistance. Details of current programs are available here: <a href="https://www.cityoflompoc.com/government/departments/utilities/electric">https://www.cityoflompoc.com/government/departments/utilities/electric</a></p>	<p>Late fees have been eliminated through May 2020.</p> <p>The City has a customer service stand outside City Hall, which has forms and a phone for customers to contact staff.</p> <p>Utility Billing made forms fillable for electronic submission. The City accepts forms by email, fax and drop box. Utility Billing accepts payments by phone, website and in drop box.</p> <p>Customer service field staff is delivering forms to customers that do not have access to internet or who may have special needs.</p> <p>Staff is meeting with customers at City Hall by appointment only.</p> <p>Utility Billing offers bill payment plans.</p> <p>Utility Billing is currently looking at other ways to better assist customers in need.</p>
<p><b>Palo Alto</b></p>	<p>Suspended utility disconnection for non-payment for 90-days.</p>	<p>Palo Alto continues to offer its existing customer programs. Details are available here: <a href="https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/utl/default.asp">https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/utl/default.asp</a>.</p> <p>Established customer payment plans to amortize repayment over 24 months.</p> <p>For Medical Rate Assistance Program, eliminated requirement for customers to participate in Residential Energy Assistance Program as a pre-requisite.</p> <p>For low-income customers, allowed for qualification based on current year (used to be based on prior year).</p>	<p>Late fees have been suspended for 90 days.</p> <p>Also working on public awareness and customer donations for the utility's PLEDGE program that uses customer donations to provide a one-time grant of up to \$750 for residential bill payment for customers in need.</p>
<p><b>Port of Oakland</b></p>	<p>The Port doesn't have residential customers, so they haven't suspended disconnections (though they rarely do them anyway). Port had to suspend Shore Power Commissioning service since staff cannot go out to new vessels to set-up interconnections.</p>	<p>The Port does not have any residential customers, so it continues to operate its existing programs and work with customers on any challenges.</p>	<p>N/A – no residential customers</p>
<p><b>PSREC</b></p>	<p>Temporarily suspended utility service disconnections for non-payment.</p>	<p>PSREC continues to offer its existing programs, which include low-income assistance. Details on existing programs are available here: <a href="https://www.psrec.coop/services/low-income-assistance/">https://www.psrec.coop/services/low-income-assistance/</a>.</p>	<p>PSREC is waiving all late fees.</p>



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		In specific response to COVID-19, PSREC is encouraging members to contact LIHEAP and other community assistance programs for help with paying their bills and encouraging those who are able to donate to those programs that accept donations for helping to pay utility bills and support local food banks etc.	
<b>Redding</b>	<p>As of 3/16, suspended utility disconnection due to non-payment for residential and non-residential until further notice.</p> <p>Also restored services for customers that previously had power shut off prior to the emergence of COVID-19.</p>	<p>As of 3/26, approved issuance of one-time \$50 per customer rebate for all customers (residential and business)</p> <p>As of 4/22, and in addition to the \$50 credit noted above, REU will also be offering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an automatic \$200 electric bill credit to every active utility account;</li> <li>• an automatic \$300 Community Assistance for Redding Electric Services (CARES) Credit for customers participating in the residential energy discount program;</li> <li>• Upon application, a \$300 CARES credit for customers experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19;</li> <li>• Refunds on customer utility deposits so they can be used as customer credits</li> <li>• Ability for customers to amortize outstanding utility balances for up to 24 months.</li> <li>• If the stay-at-home order is extended throughout the summer, Redding may consider offering additional assistance via CARES credits.</li> </ul>	As of 3/26, suspended collections processes and late fee accumulations.
<b>Roseville</b>	<p>Suspended utility service disconnections for non-payment.</p> <p>Also reconnected any customer that was off for non-payment back to mid-March. Roseville Electric does not have any customers that are currently disconnected from service for non-payment.</p>	<p>Specifically in response to COVID-19, introduced the Electric Residential Relief Program, a short-term assistance program designed to support residents who may be struggling financially because of COVID-19. Qualifying customers receive a one-time credit of \$50/multi-family residential account and \$100/single-family residential account. Information on this program can be found <a href="#">here</a>. Eligible customers will also be enrolled in the Electric Rate Assistance Program, which provides a 15% discount on electric service each month for up to two years. The utility is also working with customers to create payment plan arrangements, extending due dates, and allowing customers to make partial payments.</p> <p>Roseville continues to offer its existing customer programs, which include low-income assistance. More details can be found here: <a href="https://www.roseville.ca.us/government/department/electric_utility">https://www.roseville.ca.us/government/department/electric_utility</a>.</p>	Late fees have been waived until further notice.



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<p><b>Santa Clara (Silicon Valley Power)</b></p>	<p>Suspended service disconnection for non-payment for residential and commercial customers, until further notice.</p>	<p>In response to COVID-19, the utility is offering payment plans for customers who are experiencing hardship or are impacted by COVID-19.</p> <p>On 3/31, the Santa Clara City Council approved a one-time \$30 per customer rebate for all residential customers.</p> <p>SVP continues to offer its existing programs, which include low-income assistance. Details on existing programs can be found here: <a href="https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/">https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/</a>.</p>	<p>As of 4/16: The City re-launched a residential "Help Your Neighbor" utility fund to receive community donations that can help those in need cover utility bill payments.</p> <p>SVP has also created a short-term COVID Financial Rate Assistance Program (6 months) for residential customers impacted by COVID. This will offer a 25% discount off the electric portion of the utility bill (first 800 kwh only). The utility has streamlined paperwork requirements; the application is <a href="#">online</a>.</p>
<p><b>Shasta Lake</b></p>	<p>Suspended shutoffs and reactivated accounts that were shutoff for nonpayment prior to COVID-19.</p>	<p>In Q4 2019, the City Council approved two \$35 bill credits for each electric customer. The first credit was distributed in December 2019 and the second was scheduled for June 2020. City Council action on 4/22 expedited the timeline for the second credit so it will now occur in May and also increased the amount of the credit to \$50 per customer.</p>	<p>No further measures to report at this time.</p>
<p><b>Truckee-Donner</b></p>	<p>TDPUD suspended disconnects for non-payment early in the COVID-19 Crisis.</p>	<p>TDPUD has an existing Payment Assistance Program along with rebates to help customers save energy, water, and money. Payment Assistance is an income qualified residential program and provided a credit on the customer's bill equal to the largest bill in the last 12-months. Customers can qualify based on traditional Nevada County income levels or if they can document a 25% loss of incomes.</p> <p>TDPUD's Board on April 15<sup>th</sup> took action on the COVID-19 Customer Relief Program to temporarily increase the funding for the Payment Assistance Program by six times (adding an additional \$275,000) doubling the amount of assistance to two months bill credit. For the loss of 25% of income requirement, TDPUD will accept documentation of filing for unemployment or self-certification from primary residential customers who are self-employed or small business owners. The new budget has the potential to serve 15% of our primary residential customers in need.</p>	<p>TDPUD has numerous customer assistance programs such as Equal Payment Plan and access to Nevada County's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). TDPUD's customer service team works with customers in need to advise them of available programs and, when in default, work with them to do what we can to help them get caught up.</p> <p>TDPUD's Board has also directed staff to bring back an item at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting to review the response to the COVID-19 Customer Relief Program and to explore ways to support all of TDPUD's customers, especially the small businesses in our community.</p>
<p><b>Ukiah</b></p>	<p>Suspended utility shutoffs (timeline aligns with City Hall closure, which is currently until further notice).</p>	<p>Ukiah continues to offer its existing customer programs, which include low-income assistance. Details on existing programs can be found here: <a href="http://www.cityofukiah.com/electric-utility/">http://www.cityofukiah.com/electric-utility/</a></p>	<p>Ukiah is waiving all late and reconnect fees.</p>