

ADVANTAGE

builder's

SUMMER • 2006

Tax Credits for New Home Builders

Builders of new energy-efficient, site-built homes that save 50 percent or more off the heating and cooling energy of a comparable dwelling within the same climate zone are eligible for a \$2,000 tax credit.

The comparable home must meet the requirements of the 2004 supplement of the 2003 International Energy Conservation Code. Credit can only be taken for homes substantially completed after Aug. 8, 2005, and for homes acquired from the builder for use as a residence between Dec. 31, 2005, and Jan. 1, 2008.

Builders of manufactured homes are also eligible for the tax incentive, with the option of meeting the 50 percent energy savings criteria for the full \$2,000 credit, or by meeting a 30 percent energy savings standard for a credit of \$1,000. Manufactured homes that meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star Homes program standard are also eligible for the lesser credit.

To reach the 50 percent savings necessary for the credit, builders can incorporate a number of energy-saving practices, such as installing high-efficiency windows and doors and energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, including central air conditioners that exceed a 13 SEER rating, and by adequately sealing exterior framing and

heating/cooling air ducts. Building envelope components must account for at least 10 percent of the energy savings from the home.

To qualify for the incentive, builders of both site-built and manufactured homes must obtain certification for all eligible homes from an independent, third-party certifier with Residential Energy Service Network (RESNET) accreditation, or that of a similar program. The California Home Energy Efficiency Rating Services organization (CHEERS) is accredited to provide these services (www.cheers.org).

For more information on receiving credit for high-efficiency new homes and other federal energy tax incentive information, visit the Tax Incentives Assistance Project Web site at www.energytaxincentives.org.



Rebates For Energy-Efficient Construction

The 2006 - 2008 Residential New Construction Program offers builders and developers incentives for adding energy-efficient measures to homes.

To obtain an application package and obtain information, call 1-800-342-7737 or visit www.pge.com/newhomes.

High-Density Standard Established

PG&E revises minimum allowable separation.



In an effort to improve customer satisfaction, and meet the growing needs of today's emerging building trends, PG&E has revised its minimum wet and dry utility separation standard.

In May, PG&E established a High Density Development focus group made up of over 40 developers and industry leaders in Northern and Central California. The purpose of the group is to advise PG&E on emerging trends and identify ways to address high-density construction needs.

"Developers are bringing

projects to us that look different than they did 10 years ago," said John Conley, PG&E's project coordinator. "We are taking a common sense approach to meet the needs of our customers, without sacrificing safety."

What's new?

Input from the group resulted in a recent PG&E Bulletin that reduced the minimum horizontal separation between company facilities and other parallel "wet" facilities in a joint trench to 3 feet — with the presence of a minimum 1-foot of undisturbed earth or the installation of a suitable barrier. Previously, the separation standard allowed for 5 feet.

In the extraordinary case that a minimum 3-foot horizontal separation cannot be attained between "wet"

utilities and company dry facilities, a waiver may be requested by the local inspection supervisor and submitted to the Service Planning Support program manager for approval.

The request for a waiver must:

- Be made in writing and submitted to the company ADE during the planning and design phase of the project;
- Clearly describe the conditions necessitating the waiver;
- Include a proposed design;
- Include a mitigation proposal to provide a barrier between the "wet" utilities and PG&E dry facilities in the event that 1 foot of undisturbed earth cannot be maintained.

At no time will a separation of less than 1 foot be allowed.

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PG&E Begins Consolidation Efforts

Concord Resource Management Center opens.

PG&E's Resource Management Center in Concord opened its doors at Gateway Boulevard on June 5, the first of seven centers that PG&E will debut across the system this year.

The following functions listed may be consolidated under one or more RMC location — rather than jobs being spread out over expansive geographic distances. These functions include, but are not limited to: forecasting; planning; designing; estimating; scheduling; dispatching; and administrative support.

The anticipated result is better communication and improved efficiency in processes and practices, which will allow PG&E to better meet its customers' needs. These changes are part of PG&E's Business Transformation efforts, and are a major step in realizing the company's vision of becoming the leading utility in the United States.

Approximately two-thirds of PG&E employees who are currently performing these functions in offices throughout the service area will move into the Resource Management Centers. The other one-third will remain in the local offices to address customer concerns locally.

Building industry customers will continue to work with their Senior New Business Reps in the local offices. As your project managers, they are your single point of contact for all issues related to your project.

During the next six months, PG&E will continue to increase staffing at the Concord Center, and open the remaining primary and transitional Centers in Fresno, Sacramento, Chico, Bakersfield, Santa Rosa and the San Jose area.

High-Density Standard *(continued from front)*

More information

The focus group will continue to meet and provide input to PG&E about high-density related utility challenges and/or project impediments. For more information about focus group meetings, contact Jim Chaaban at j2cz@pge.com.

If you have any questions or suggestions related to high-density development, contact John Conley, Service Planning Support (JWCa@pge.com) or Mark Heckman, Asset Management (MWVH3@pge.com).

Developers Use Online Forms For Multiple Transactions

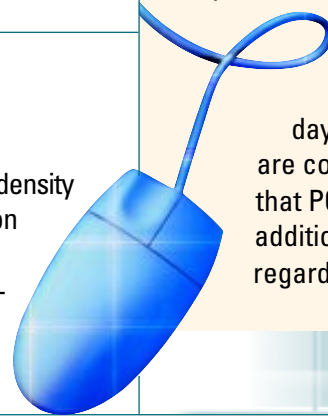
Online forms are available for developers to submit multiple service requests, such as meter sets or stop service requests.

Visit www.pge.com, click on "Customer Service," and then "Multiple Transaction Requests."

The forms can be used for requests that are at least two days in advance, excluding weekends and holidays. These should not be used for immediate service needs. If immediate service is required within 48 hours, call our 24-hour Customer Service line at 1-800-743-5000.

E-mail requests will be processed within one business day of receipt, and a confirmation response will be sent by e-mail.

Users should verify that e-mail addresses and daytime phone numbers are correct in the event that PG&E requires additional information regarding the request.



Meet the Manager:

Mike Varni, PG&E's Area 4 Director of Operations, Maintenance and Construction

Mike Varni is Director of Operations, Maintenance and Construction in Area 4, which consists of Fresno, Kern, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. In his 38 years with PG&E, Mike has held a number of positions in the company, starting as a groundman in 1968, and serving as a driver, lineman, troubleman and a first-line supervisor. After spending his entire career in Area 3 (Central Coast, San Jose), he took on the challenges as OM& C Director of Area 4 two years ago.

"The commercial and residential growth in the Central Valley is similar to the growth that we experienced in the South Bay Area in the 1990s," says Mike. "We learned a lot during that period." As the company continues to meet the escalating

energy demand in the area, Mike's field experience also will play a pivotal role in shaping PG&E's commitment to provide outstanding New Business service.

PG&E is currently undertaking a major business transformation that will significantly restructure its operations, with the goal of fundamentally improving service and delivering it more cost-effectively. Mike has high expectations, and his employees are aware what's at stake. "They understand the importance of what they do; that their jobs are critical to the direction of PG&E and its transformation process," he says.

In addition to connecting with employees, Mike also shares an open-door policy with customers. "I welcome the opportunity when builders and developers to walk in the front door and sit down with us to communicate their needs. We strive to meet our commitments." Mike has directed his staff to meet any communication issue head-on, and is sure that his organization has the tools in place to address any concerns. "Our employees are committed to doing what's right for our customers," he says. "If they see something differently and let us know — we will address it."

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feedback

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