

April 9, 2002

**Advice 2381-G/2223-E**

(Pacific Gas and Electric Company ID U 39 M)

Public Utilities Commission of the State of California

**Subject: Revisions to PG&E's Balanced Payment Plan**

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) hereby submits for filing revisions to its gas and electric rules. The affected tariff sheets are listed on the enclosed Attachment I.<sup>1</sup>

**Purpose**

The purpose of this filing is to revise the language of PG&E's Balanced Payment Plan (BPP). PG&E proposes to eliminate the 12-month settlement requirement of BPP accounts. This revision will have no adverse effect on charges paid by customers.

**Background**

As part of its on-going efforts to provide exceptional service to its customers, PG&E is implementing a new customer information system. Later this year, PG&E intends to switch from the current information system to the new CorDaptix system. As part of the analysis leading to this change of customer information systems, PG&E has identified tariff improvements that will make the transition easier and more efficient to implement.

Under the current tariff, the BPP is based on the customer's most recent 12 months of historical usage. Every four months the customer's account is recalculated to determine if the BPP amount needs to be adjusted. If the difference between the recalculated amount and the BPP amount is less than 15 percent, the BPP amount is not changed. If the difference is over 15 percent, the BPP amount is adjusted to reflect the new payment amount. Rule 9, Section G,

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<sup>1</sup> PG&E reserves all legal rights to challenge the decisions or statutes under which it has been required to make this advice filing, and nothing in this advice filing constitutes a waiver of such rights. Also, PG&E reserves any additional legal rights to challenge the requirement to make this advice filing by reason of its status as a debtor under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code, and nothing in this advice filing constitutes a waiver of such rights. PG&E reserves all rights to amend or revise its filings before the Commission and other agencies to implement the requirements of the order or orders of the Bankruptcy Court confirming PG&E's plan of reorganization as originally filed on September 20, 2001, and subsequently amended.

*Balanced Payment Plan*, currently requires a single, annual settlement payment or credit to each BPP customer. In the settlement month, the customer either receives a refund or is required to pay the difference between actual meter reads and BPP payments made.

PG&E proposes to eliminate the annual settlement of BPP accounts. Instead of the annual settlement, PG&E will continue to review each BPP account every four months and adjust the BPP amount if necessary. Customers will benefit from this change because it eliminates the need for a "true-up" payment every 12 months. Instead, customers will receive BPP bills that more closely reflect their current usage.

### **Tariff Revisions**

PG&E proposes to eliminate the 12-month settlement requirement of BPP accounts. The draft tariffs filed in this advice letter are in strike-and-bold format to ease the process of review. PG&E will supplement this filing prior to the actual CorDaptix implementation date with actual tariff sheets.

### **Protests**

Anyone wishing to protest this filing may do so by sending a letter by **April 29, 2002**, which is 20 days from the date of this filing. The protest must state the grounds upon which it is based, including such items as financial and service impact, and should be submitted expeditiously. Protests should be mailed to:

IMC Branch Chief  
Energy Division  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 4002  
San Francisco, California 94102  
Facsimile: (415) 703-2200

Copies should also be mailed to the attention of the Director, Energy Division, Room 4005 and Jerry Royer, Energy Division, at the address shown above. It is also requested that a copy of the protest be sent via postal mail and facsimile to Pacific Gas and Electric Company on the same date it is mailed or delivered to the Commission at the address shown below.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company  
Attention: Les Guliasi  
Director, Regulatory Relations  
77 Beale Street, Mail Code B10C  
P.O. Box 770000  
San Francisco, California 94177  
Facsimile: (415) 973-7226

**Effective Date**

PG&E requests that this advice filing become effective on regular notice, **May 20, 2002**, which is 40 days after the date of filing.

**Notice**

In accordance with General Order 96-A, Section III, Paragraph G, a copy of this advice letter is being sent electronically and via U.S. mail to parties shown on the attached list. Address changes should be directed to Nelia Avendano at (415) 973-3529. Advice letter filings can also be accessed electronically at:

[http://www.pge.com/customer\\_services/business/tariffs/](http://www.pge.com/customer_services/business/tariffs/)

Vice President - Regulatory Relations

Attachments



RULE 9—RENDERING AND PAYMENT OF BILLS  
(Continued)

F. CLOSING BILL PAYABLE ON PRESENTATION

Removal bills, special bills, bills rendered on vacation of premises or bills rendered to persons discontinuing the service, shall be paid on presentation. Bills for connection or reconnection of service and payments for deposits or to reinstate deposits as required under the rules of PG&E shall be paid before service will be connected or reconnected.

G. BALANCED PAYMENT PLAN

Single family residential customers who wish to minimize variations in monthly bills, may elect to participate in the Balanced Payment Plan (BPP). This plan is detailed as follows:

1. A Customer can join the plan in any month of the year and the plan will extend through the following twelve months.
2. Participation is subject to approval by PG&E.
3. Meters will be read and billed at regular intervals.
4. Customers will be expected to pay the BPP amount shown due.
5. The BPP amount will be one-twelfth of the annual bill as estimated by PG&E, based on the customer's most recent twelve months history of use, or, if that is not available, the usage pattern of comparable customers similarly situated.
- ~~6. In the twelfth month (the Settlement Month), each account will be balanced by a bill showing a debit or credit amount which is the net of twelve months' bills based on the meter readings less BPP payments made.~~
- ~~7. Credit amounts on the settlement bill of \$10.00 or more will be refunded by check.~~

(Continued)



RULE 9—RENDERING AND PAYMENT OF BILLS  
(Continued)

G. BALANCED PAYMENT PLAN (Cont'd.)

68. BPP amounts will be reviewed three times a year or at other times due to a rate change, and adjusted if required to reduce the likelihood of a large payment due or credit in the Settlement Month. **imbalance between actual charges and BPP charges. Customers will be notified of any change in the BPP amount by bill message.**

79. Participants will be removed from the plan if a bill containing a prior unpaid BPP amount becomes delinquent as defined in Rule 11.

H. RETURNED CHECK CHARGE

If a check, tendered in payment of amounts owing PG&E, is not honored by a bank and is returned to PG&E unpaid, PG&E will add to the customer's bill a charge of \$6.00 for processing each such returned check. Where service is subject to discontinuance under Rule 11, the returned check charge shall be included in the total amount due and payable.

I. FIELD COLLECTION CHARGE

PG&E may require payment of a Field Collection Charge of \$10.00 when an authorized PG&E representative makes a field call to a customer's premises to discontinue gas service in accordance with Rule 11 for nonpayment of a past due billing for service. PG&E may also require payment of the \$10.00 Field Collection Charge when an authorized PG&E representative makes a field call to discontinue gas service for nonpayment of a credit deposit that was requested in accordance with Rule 6.

Where service is discontinued the Provisions of gas Rule 11, the field collection charge will be included in the total amount due and payable.

If, at the time the authorized PG&E representative makes the field call to the customer's premises, the customer makes payment in full or makes acceptable payment arrangements in order to avoid discontinuance of service, PG&E may still require payment of the \$10.00 Field Collection Charge.

(Continued)