

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



February 7, 2011

Advice Letter 4168

Rasha Prince, Director
Regulatory Affairs
Southern California Gas
555 W. Fifth Street, GT14D6
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011

**Subject: Request to Increase Funding for SoCalGas Company's
Gas Assistance Fund (GAF)**

Dear Ms. Prince:

Advice Letter 4168 is effective December 15, 2010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie A. Fitch".

Julie A. Fitch, Director
Energy Division



Rasha Prince
Director
Regulatory Affairs

555 W. Fifth Street, GT14D6
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November 15, 2010

Advice No. 4168
(U 904 G)

Public Utilities Commission of the State of California

Subject: Request to Increase Funding for Southern California Gas Company's (SoCalGas) Gas Assistance Fund (GAF)

Purpose

This filing requests the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) authorization to charge a total of \$3 million to SoCalGas' Core Fixed Cost Account (CFCA) and Noncore Fixed Cost Account (NFCA) for recovery in future rates in order to make available additional funds for the GAF.

Background

As a result of the current economic conditions, SoCalGas is experiencing an increase in calls from customers requesting bill payment assistance. Presently, unemployment rates in California have risen to an unprecedented level of 12.2% in September 2010. With companies downsizing and families losing their homes, SoCalGas' customers are experiencing difficulties paying their gas bills.

In an effort to respond expeditiously to customers' concerns in this economic climate and to alleviate the impact of their bills, SoCalGas is seeking authorization to increase the funds currently available in its GAF to provide temporary relief to those customers in need of assistance.

The GAF, administered by the United Way of Greater Los Angeles (<http://www.unitedwayla.org/donate/other/Pages/UtilityAssistance.aspx>), is funded by donations from customers, shareholders and employees of SoCalGas to provide monetary assistance on a customer's bill. It is open to qualified customers who are experiencing temporary financial hardships and are not eligible for state or federal assistance. Normal program policy holds that for every dollar donated by customers for this customer assistance program, SoCalGas matches dollar for dollar up to \$250,000. However, some years the SoCalGas match exceeds customer donations if circumstances warrant. For example, the 2007-2008 GAF matched \$204,000 received from SoCalGas customer and employee contributions. SoCalGas and its shareholders matched the

giving, dollar for dollar, and added \$50,000 in non-matched funds in anticipation of a cold winter. For 2008-2009 GAF, SoCalGas shareholders matched customer donations of approximately \$178,000 with almost a two-to-one match providing an additional \$172,000 for a total grant of \$350,000. For the 2009-2010 program year, customers donated \$10,870. This was in recognition of the extraordinary economic conditions of our most vulnerable customers.

Under the current proposed GAF, qualified customers in need of assistance will be eligible to receive up to \$100 to help subsidize their unpaid gas bills. SoCalGas communicates this program to customers in a bill insert/onset in a customer's monthly billing statement, at www.socalgas.com, through community based organizations, and press releases.

Request for Increase in Funding

SoCalGas initially filed Advice No. (AL) 3963 on February 20, 2009 where SoCalGas proposed using funds from its Self Generation Program Memorandum Account (SGPMA) to support the GAF. The Commission approved this request in Resolution E-4251 on September 10, 2009. In response to the approval of the Resolution, SoCalGas' shareholders made contributions totaling \$750,000 to the United Way in December 2009 and March 2010; however, the funds from the SGPMA have not been transferred to the GAF as a result of the Division of Ratepayer Advocates' (DRA's) Application for Rehearing filed on October 27, 2009.¹ DRA's Application for Rehearing challenged the transfer of SGPMA funds to the GAF program to be in violation of the Public Utilities Code and Commission precedent.²

DRA's Application for Rehearing remained pending before the Commission when the Commission initiated Rulemaking (R.) 10-02-005 which sought to establish ways to improve customer notification and education to decrease the number of gas and electric utility service disconnections. As a result of discussions in the course of R.10-02-005, DRA and The Utility Reform Network (TURN) agreed with SoCalGas on the need to provide further bill payment assistance to customers in need. The parties agreed on the need for additional support as long as the requested funds were not transferred from the SGPMA³, instead agreeing to use \$3 million collected through the CFCA and NFCA to provide funding for the GAF as presented herein.⁴

¹ The Commission issued Resolution E-4251 approving SoCalGas' request in addition to a similar request from San Diego Gas & Electric to transfer \$1 million from its Rate Design Settlement Account and \$0.3 million from its Post-2005 Gas Energy Efficiency Balancing Account to increase funding for its Neighbor to Neighbor Program.

² DRA Application for Rehearing of Resolution E-4251 dated October 27, 2009, page 2.

³ With the filing of the Advice Letter described herein, SoCalGas plans to no longer use the \$3 million from the SGPMA. The transfer of SGPMA funds previously authorized in Resolution E-4251 will be returned to the SGPMA.

⁴ SoCalGas and DRA had discussions with the Energy Division on the best procedural steps to address Resolution E-4251 and DRA's Application for Rehearing with SoCalGas' new request to use \$3 million from SoCalGas' fixed costs balancing accounts to fund the GAF. As directed by the Energy Division, SoCalGas has withdrawn AL 3963 and, as described in this advice letter, submits its new proposal for funding the GAF. DRA will withdraw its Application for Rehearing upon issuance of a Commission resolution approving this advice letter and modifying Resolution E-4251 accordingly.

Specifically, SoCalGas requests herein approval to charge a total of \$3 million to its CFCA and NFCA in order to provide additional funds for the GAF to assist customers who are experiencing financial hardships. The CFCA and NFCA primarily record the difference between the authorized margin, excluding the transmission revenue requirements and firm access rights (FAR) revenue requirement, and other non-gas costs allocated to the core and noncore customers, respectively.

The GAF program is one of several assistance programs that SoCalGas provides its customers. SoCalGas will continue to offer and communicate its currently existing services such as the California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) program, Medical Baseline program and the Low Income Energy Efficiency program. SoCalGas also informs its customers that they might also be able to receive bill and home weatherization assistance through the California Department of Community Services and Development's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Taken as a whole, these programs provide SoCalGas customers with several resources for assistance.

Should SoCalGas need additional funds; an advice letter similar to this request will be filed seeking Commission approval.

This filing will not cause the withdrawal of service, or conflict with any rate schedule or rule.

Rate Impact

Resolution E-4251 originally approved the transfer of \$3 million from the SGPMA to fund the GAF. The SGPMA is allocated on an Equal Cents Per Therm (ECPT) basis similar to the allocation methodology used for the CFCA and NFCA; therefore the resulting rate impact of AL 4168 will be consistent with that previously approved by the Commission in Resolution E-4251.

Class of Service	Applicable Rate Schedules	Change \$000s
Core	GR, G10, G-AC, G-NGV, G-EN	\$1,113
NonCore	GT-F, GT-I, GT-TLS	\$463
Wholesale & International (excluding SDG&E)	GT-TLS	\$119
Electric Generation	GT-F5D, GT-I5D, GT-5CA, GT-5RS, GT-5NV, GT-I5BV	\$915
SDG&E	GT-SD	\$396
Unbundled Storage	G-BSS, G-LTS, G-AUC, G-TBS	\$0
Firm Access Rights	G-RPA	\$0
System Total		\$3,006

Protest

Anyone may protest this Advice Letter to the Commission. The protest must state the grounds upon which it is based, including such items as financial and service impact, and should be submitted expeditiously. The protest must be made in writing and must be received within 20 days of the date this Advice Letter, which is December 5, 2010. There is no restriction on who may file a protest. The address for mailing or delivering a protest to the Commission is:

CPUC Energy Division
Attn: Tariff Unit
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Copies of the protest should also be sent via e-mail to the attention of both Maria Salinas (mas@cpuc.ca.gov) and to Honesto Gatchalian (jni@cpuc.ca.gov) of the Energy Division. A copy of the protest should also be sent via both e-mail and facsimile to the address shown below on the same date it is mailed or delivered to the Commission.

Attn: Sid Newsom
Tariff Manager - GT14D6
555 West Fifth Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011
Facsimile No. (213) 244-4957
E-mail: snewsom@SempraUtilities.com

Effective Date

SoCalGas believes this Advice Letter is subject to Energy Division disposition and should be classified as Tier 2 (effective after staff approval) pursuant to GO 96-B and respectfully requests that it be approved effective December 15, 2010, which is 30 days from the date filed.

Notice

A copy of this advice letter is being sent to the parties listed on Attachment A.

Rasha Prince
Director – Regulatory Affairs

Attachments

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

ADVICE LETTER FILING SUMMARY ENERGY UTILITY

MUST BE COMPLETED BY UTILITY (Attach additional pages as needed)

Company name/CPUC Utility No. **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY (U 904G)**

Utility type:

ELC

GAS

PLC

HEAT

WATER

Contact Person: Sid Newsom

Phone #: (213) 244-2846

E-mail: SNewsom@semprautilities.com

EXPLANATION OF UTILITY TYPE

ELC = Electric

GAS = Gas

PLC = Pipeline

HEAT = Heat

WATER = Water

(Date Filed/ Received Stamp by CPUC)

Advice Letter (AL) #: 4168

Subject of AL: Request to Increase Funding SCG Gas Assistance Fund (GAF)

Keywords (choose from CPUC listing): Increase Rates; Balancing Account

AL filing type: Monthly Quarterly Annual One-Time Other

If AL filed in compliance with a Commission order, indicate relevant Decision/Resolution #:

N/A

Does AL replace a withdrawn or rejected AL? If so, identify the prior AL Approved AL 3963

Summarize differences between the AL and the prior withdrawn or rejected AL¹: See AL

Does AL request confidential treatment? If so, provide explanation: No

Resolution Required? Yes No

Tier Designation: 1 2 3

Requested effective date: 12/15/10

No. of tariff sheets: 4

Estimated system annual revenue effect (%): _____

Estimated system average rate effect (%): _____

When rates are affected by AL, include attachment in AL showing average rate effects on customer classes (residential, small commercial, large C/I, agricultural, lighting).

Tariff schedules affected: Preliminary Statement Part V - Balancing Accounts; TOC

Service affected and changes proposed¹: _____

Pending advice letters that revise the same tariff sheets: None

Protests and all other correspondence regarding this AL are due no later than 20 days after the date of this filing, unless otherwise authorized by the Commission, and shall be sent to:

CPUC, Energy Division

Attention: Tariff Unit

505 Van Ness Ave.,

San Francisco, CA 94102

mas@cpuc.ca.gov and jnj@cpuc.ca.gov

Southern California Gas Company

Attention: Sid Newsom

555 West 5th Street, GT14D6

Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011

SNewsom@semprautilities.com

¹ Discuss in AL if more space is needed.

ATTACHMENT A

Advice No. 4168

(See Attached Service List)

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ATTACHMENT B
Advice No. 4168

Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.	Title of Sheet	Cancelling Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.
Revised 46552-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS, CORE FIXED COST ACCOUNT (CFCA), Sheet 1	Revised 45273-G
Revised 46553-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS, NONCORE FIXED COST ACCOUNT (NFCA), Sheet 1	Revised 45275-G
Revised 46554-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS, NONCORE FIXED COST ACCOUNT (NFCA), Sheet 2	Original 45276-G
Revised 46555-G	TABLE OF CONTENTS	Revised 46550-G

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS
CORE FIXED COST ACCOUNT (CFCA)

Sheet 1

1. Purpose

The CFCA is an interest bearing balancing account recorded on SoCalGas' financial statements. The purpose of this account is to balance the difference between the authorized margin, (excluding the transmission revenue requirements and firm access rights (FAR) revenue requirement) and other non-gas costs as detailed below, including administrative costs and uncollectible deferred billings associated with the payment deferral plan pursuant to Resolution E-4065, and funding of SoCalGas' Gas Assistance Fund (GAF) program pursuant to Advice No. 4167, allocated to the core market with revenues intended to recover these costs.

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2. Applicability

The CFCA shall apply to all core gas customers.

3. Rates

The projected year-end CFCA balance will be applied to core gas transportation rates.

4. Accounting Procedures

SoCalGas shall maintain the CFCA by recording entries at the end of each month, net of FF&U, as follows:

- a. A debit entry equal to one-twelfth of the authorized margin;
- b. A debit entry equal to the recorded cost of the core portion of company-use fuel (excluding transmission and load balancing company-use fuel);
- c. A debit entry equal to the recorded cost for the core portion of unaccounted for gas;
- d. A debit entry equal to the recorded cost for the core portion of well incidents and surface leaks;
- e. A debit entry equal to incremental administrative costs and any amounts written off as uncollectible associated with the payment deferral plan related to core customers;
- f. A debit entry equal to the actual funds used, up to amounts authorized by the Commission, in providing eligible customers with assistance in paying their bills in connection with SoCalGas' Gas Assistance Fund (GAF) program;
- g. A credit entry equal to the core portion of the following recorded revenues: transportation revenues from core deliveries; revenues from the sale of core storage capacity rights; base revenues that would have been collected from customers absent the core pricing flexibility program, and other revenues that the Commission has directed SoCalGas to allocate to the core market;
- h. An entry to amortize the previous year's balance; and
- i. An entry equal to interest on the average balance in the account during the month, calculated in the manner described in Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.

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(Continued)

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)
 ADVICE LETTER NO. 4168
 DECISION NO.

ISSUED BY
Lee Schavrien
 Senior Vice President
 Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)
 DATE FILED Nov 15, 2010
 EFFECTIVE Dec 15, 2010
 RESOLUTION NO. _____

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS
NONCORE FIXED COST ACCOUNT (NFCA)

Sheet 1

1. Purpose

The NFCA is an interest-bearing balancing account recorded on SoCalGas' financial statements. The purpose of this account is to balance the difference between the authorized margin (excluding the transmission revenue requirement and firm access rights (FAR) revenue requirement and other non-gas costs as detailed below associated with the noncore market, including administrative costs and uncollectible deferred billings associated with the payment deferral plan pursuant to Resolution E-4065 and funding of SoCalGas' Gas Assistance Fund (GAF) program pursuant to Advice No. 4167, with noncore revenues intended to recover these costs. The noncore market excludes the Unbundled Storage Program. Pursuant to the BCAP Decision 09-11-006, the Commission authorized the NFCA 100% balancing account treatment (i.e., balancing of 100% of noncore costs and revenues).

The NFCA shall be divided into two subaccounts: a) authorized base margin and b) non-base margin costs and revenues.

2. Applicability

The NFCA shall apply to all noncore gas customers excluding EOR.

3. Rates

The projected year-end NFCA balance will be applied to noncore gas transportation rates.

4. Accounting Procedures – Authorized Base Margin Subaccount

SoCalGas shall maintain this subaccount by recording entries at the end of each month, net of FF&U, as follows:

- a. A debit entry equal to the seasonalized monthly amount of the authorized margin;
- b. A credit entry equal to the noncore revenues to recover the authorized margin excluding revenues from (1) future non-tariff contracts with Sempra Energy affiliates not subject to competitive bidding and (2) Competitive Load Growth Opportunities for noncore Rule No. 38 and Red Team incentive revenues;
- c. An entry to amortize the previous year's balance; and
- d. An entry equal to interest on the average balance in the subaccount during the month, calculated in the manner described in Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.

(Continued)

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)
ADVICE LETTER NO. 4168
DECISION NO.

ISSUED BY
Lee Schavrien
Senior Vice President
Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)
DATE FILED Nov 15, 2010
EFFECTIVE Dec 15, 2010
RESOLUTION NO. _____

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS
NONCORE FIXED COST ACCOUNT (NFCA)

Sheet 2

(Continued)

5. Accounting Procedures – Non-Base Margin Costs and Revenues Subaccount

SoCalGas shall maintain this subaccount by recording entries at the end of each month, net of FF&U, as follows:

- a. A debit entry equal to the recorded cost for the noncore portion of company-use fuel (excluding transmission and load balancing company-use fuel);
- b. A debit entry equal to the recorded cost for the noncore portion of unaccounted for gas;
- c. A debit entry equal to the recorded cost for the noncore portion of well incidents and surface leaks;
- d. A debit entry equal to incremental administrative costs and any amounts written off as uncollectible associated with the payment deferral plan related to noncore customers;
- e. A debit entry equal to the actual funds used, up to amounts authorized by the Commission, in providing eligible customers with assistance in paying their bills in connection with SoCalGas' Gas Assistance Fund (GAF) program;
- f. A credit entry equal to the noncore revenues to recover the costs associated with this subaccount;
- g. A credit entry equal to 100% of the net revenues associated with the Utility System Operator providing transportation imbalance services under Schedule No. G-IMB to the Utility Gas Acquisition Department;
- h. An entry to amortize the previous year's balance; and
- i. An entry equal to interest on the average balance in the subaccount during the month, calculated in the manner described in Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.

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6. Disposition

In each annual October regulatory account balance update filing, SoCalGas will amortize the projected year-end balance effective January 1 of the following year. For the first year subsequent to the BCAP decision, both the Authorized Base Margin Subaccount and Non-Base Margin Costs and Revenues Subaccount will be allocated on an Equal Cents Per Therm (ECPT) basis. Starting in the second year subsequent to the BCAP decision, the Authorized Base Margin Subaccount will be allocated on an Equal Percent of Authorized Margin (EPAM) basis. The Non-Base Margin Costs and Revenues Subaccount will continue to be allocated on an ECPT basis.

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)

ADVICE LETTER NO. 4168
 DECISION NO.

2H15

ISSUED BY

Lee Schavrien
 Senior Vice President
 Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)

DATE FILED Nov 15, 2010
 EFFECTIVE Dec 15, 2010
 RESOLUTION NO. _____

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The following listed sheets contain all effective Schedules of Rates and Rules affecting service and information relating thereto in effect on the date indicated thereon.

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PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

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(Continued)

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)
 ADVICE LETTER NO. 4168
 DECISION NO.

ISSUED BY
Lee Schavrien
 Senior Vice President
 Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)
 DATE FILED Nov 15, 2010
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