

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE



May 6, 2021

Advice Letter SCG 5666 / -A / -B

Ronald van der Leeden
Director, Regulatory Affairs
Southern California Gas Company
555 W. Fifth Street, GT14D6
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011

**SUBJECT: Staff Disposition of Southern California Gas Company's AL 5666 / -A / -B
Regarding Modifications to Rules Regarding Credit, Collection, and
Disconnection Practices Pursuant to Decision (D.) 20-06-003 Ordering
Paragraph 6**

Dear Mr. van der Leeden,

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Energy Division (ED) approves Southern California Gas Company's (SoCalGas) Advice Letter 5666 and partial Supplemental filings A and B, regarding Modifications to Rules Regarding Credit, Collection, and Disconnection Practices Pursuant to Decision (D.) 20-06-003 Ordering Paragraph (OP) 6, with an effective date of May 6, 2021. Based on its analysis, ED staff has determined AL 5666 and partial Supplemental filings A and B comply with the requirements of D. 20-06-003.

Attachment 1 contains a detailed discussion of the AL, the protest, replies and ED staff's determination that the AL and Supplementals A and B are compliant with D.20-06-003 OP 6. Please contact Ben Menzies of Energy Division at benjamin.menzies@cpuc.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ER" followed by "FOR".

Edward Randolph
Deputy Executive Director for Energy and Climate Policy/
Director, Energy Division

cc: David Cheng, TURN, dcheng@turn.org

Attachment 1

On June 16, 2020, the CPUC issued D. 20-06-003 regarding new customer disconnection protections, which directed SoCalGas, along with other large investor-owned energy utilities, to file a Tier 1 Advice Letter within 30 days modifying several elements of its tariff related to customer disconnections for nonpayment. On July 16, 2020, SoCalGas filed Advice Letter (AL) 5666, proposing to modify its tariff to conform with multiple provisions of D.20-06-003. On July 31, 2020, SoCalGas filed Supplemental AL 5666-A, containing multiple revisions to conform with the requirements of D. 20-06-003 that had been omitted from AL 5666.

On August 20, 2020, The Utility Reform Network (TURN) timely protested AL 5666-A, arguing that the proposed tariff language improperly allowed SoCalGas to offer payment plans “up to” 12 months in length to customers prior to disconnection, rather than binding SoCalGas to offering 12-month payment plans to all such customers as required in D.20-06-003. On August 20, 2020, SoCalGas submitted Supplement AL 5666-B, incorporating TURN’s requested changes that would require SoCalGas to offer 12-month payment plans to all customers prior to disconnection (although customers who specifically request payment plans of a shorter duration than 12 months may still request them). On August 24, 2020, SoCalGas replied to TURN’s protest noting that AL 5666-B incorporated TURN’s requested language.

ED staff finds that SoCalGas AL 5666-B resolves TURN’s stated concern and is compliant with the requirements of D.20-06-003. Therefore, AL 5666 and partial Supplemental filings A and B are approved with an effective date of May 6, 2021.



Ronald van der Leeden
Director
Regulatory Affairs

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RvanderLeeden@socalgas.com

August 20, 2020

Advice No. 5666-B
(U 904 G)

Public Utilities Commission of the State of California

Subject: Partial Supplement - Modifications to Rules Regarding Credit, Collection, and Disconnection Practices Pursuant to Decision (D.) 20-06-003 Ordering Paragraph (OP) 6

Purpose

This submittal partially supplements Advice No. (AL) 5666 and AL 5666-A in compliance with D.20-06-003, *Phase I Decision Adopting Rules and Policy Changes to Reduce Residential Customer Disconnections for the Larger California-Jurisdictional Energy Utilities*, OP 6. Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) respectfully requests Commission approval to revise its Rule No. 09, applicable throughout its service territory, as shown on Attachment A.

Background

On June 11, 2020, the Commission approved D.20-06-003, with modifications to the interim rules in D.18-03-013 and establishing additional measures to address residential disconnections and reconnections. OP 6 in D.20-06-003 requires SoCalGas to incorporate, in its tariffs, the following:

If any of the rules adopted herein require changes to a utility's tariff, that utility shall promptly [submit] an advice letter to implement such changes within 30 days of the issuance date of this decision. Provided that the changes are of a ministerial nature, a Tier 1 advice letter [submittal] is acceptable for this purpose.

If there are any conflicts with the protections set forth in D.20-06-003 and those set forth in Resolution M-4842, then the Emergency Customer Protections are controlling.

On July 16, 2020, SoCalGas submitted AL 5666 in compliance with D.20-06-003, OP 6 requesting Commission approval to revise its Rule No. 03, Application for Service; Rule

No. 06, Establishment and Re-Establishment of Credit; Rule No. 07, Deposits; Rule No. 09, Discontinuance of Service; and Rule No. 10, Service Charges.

As a result of a review of AL 5666, SoCalGas identified the need to make additional revisions, including revisions pursuant to OP 15 in D.20-06-003 which requires:

Southern California Edison Company, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, and Southern California Gas Company shall provide disconnection notices via email to customers who have opted to receive electronic communications from the utilities.

In compliance with OP 6 and OP 15 in D.20-06-003, on July 31, 2020, SoCalGas submitted AL 5666-A, a partial supplement, to revise its Rule Nos. 01, 03, 06, 09, and 12.

Upon further review, SoCalGas identified a need to make a minor revision related to payment arrangements for core customers to its Rule No. 09, provided herein as shown on Attachment A.

Proposed Tariff Revisions

Pursuant to D.20-06-003, OP 6, SoCalGas proposes to revise its Rule No. 09, Discontinuance of Service, Section C.6.a. (Sheet 4), summarized below, with language being removed in strike through red font and language added in bolded font, as follows:

- C. NON-PAYMENT OF BILLS (Continued)
 - 6. Termination Dispute for Core Customers
 - a. Customer Contacts Utility. If the customer is temporarily unable to pay ~~its~~**their** bill, **the Utility may, at its discretion, extend a payment arrangement to a customer who alleges an inability to pay. However, for residential customers,** the Utility ~~must~~**shall** offer customers ~~payment arrangements for up to~~ a 12-month ~~period~~**payment plan** or to switch any **existing** payment arrangements of less than 12 months to a payment plan of 12 months. The customer must . . .

The proposed tariff revisions are shown on Attachment A.

A redlined version of the tariff revisions is available upon request. Parties interested in a PDF version of the redlined revisions should contact Tariffs at Tariffs@Socalgas.com.

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 of this advice letter, which is September 9, 2020. The address for mailing or delivering a protest to the Commission is:

CPUC Energy Division
Attention: 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 the Energy Division Tariff Unit (EDTariffUnit@cpuc.ca.gov). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the shelter at home orders, SoCalGas is currently unable to receive protests or comments to this advice letter via U.S. mail or fax. Please submit protests or comments to this advice letter via e-mail to the e-mail address shown below on the same date it is mailed or e-mailed to the Commission.

Attn: Ray B. Ortiz
Tariff Manager - GT14D6
555 West Fifth Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011
Facsimile No.: (213) 244-4957
E-mail: ROrtiz@socalgas.com

Effective Date

SoCalGas believes this advice letter is subject to Energy Division disposition and should be classified as Tier 1 (effective pending disposition) pursuant to General Order (GO) 96-B and OP 6 in D.20-06-003. SoCalGas respectfully requests this advice letter become effective on August 20, 2020, which is the date submitted.

Notice

A copy of this advice letter is being sent to SoCalGas' GO 96-B service list and the Commission's service list in R.18-07-005. Address change requests to the GO 96-B service list should be directed via e-mail to tariffs@socalgas.com or call 213-244-2837. For changes to all other service lists, please contact the Commission's Process Office at 415-703-2021 or via e-mail at Process_Office@cpuc.ca.gov.

/s/ Ronald van der Leeden
Ronald van der Leeden
Director - Regulatory Affairs

Attachments



ADVICE LETTER SUMMARY

ENERGY UTILITY



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

Company name/CPUC Utility No.:

Utility type:

ELC GAS WATER
 PLC HEAT

Contact Person:

Phone #:
E-mail:
E-mail Disposition Notice to:

EXPLANATION OF UTILITY TYPE

ELC = Electric GAS = Gas WATER = Water
PLC = Pipeline HEAT = Heat

(Date Submitted / Received Stamp by CPUC)

Advice Letter (AL) #:

Tier Designation:

Subject of AL:

Keywords (choose from CPUC listing):

AL Type: Monthly Quarterly Annual One-Time Other:

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

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

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

Confidential treatment requested? Yes No

If yes, specification of confidential information:

Confidential information will be made available to appropriate parties who execute a nondisclosure agreement. Name and contact information to request nondisclosure agreement/ access to confidential information:

Resolution required? Yes No

Requested effective date:

No. of tariff sheets:

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:

Service affected and changes proposed¹:

Pending advice letters that revise the same tariff sheets:

¹Discuss in AL if more space is needed.

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

CPUC, Energy Division
Attention: Tariff Unit
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102
Email: EDTariffUnit@cpuc.ca.gov

Name:
Title:
Utility Name:
Address:
City:
State: Zip:
Telephone (xxx) xxx-xxxx:
Facsimile (xxx) xxx-xxxx:
Email:

Name:
Title:
Utility Name:
Address:
City:
State: Zip:
Telephone (xxx) xxx-xxxx:
Facsimile (xxx) xxx-xxxx:
Email:

ATTACHMENT A
Advice No. 5666-B

Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.	Title of Sheet	Cancelling Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.
Revised 57920-G	Rule No. 09, DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE, Sheet 4	Revised 57886-G Revised 57817-G, 57620- G
Revised 57921-G	TABLE OF CONTENTS	Revised 57894-G Revised 57821-G, 57679- G
Revised 57922-G	TABLE OF CONTENTS	Revised 57919-G

Rule No. 09
DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE

Sheet 4

(Continued)

C. NON-PAYMENT OF BILLS (Continued)

4. Reasonable Attempt to Contact Customers (Continued)

h. (Continued)

At the request of the customer, the Utility shall provide its Disconnection Notices in Braille. Customers may request such format through the Customer Contact Center. The Braille Disconnection Notice shall also be mailed to customers who have requested bills in Braille. The Braille-translated Disconnection Notice will be in conjunction with the system-generated, non-Braille notice they receive and may not be received the same day. The collection cycle will be adjusted in the customer's favor to accommodate the timing difference of the Braille notice and non-Braille notice.

5. Termination in Error. In the event the Utility terminates service in error, such service shall be restored, without charge, as provided for in Rule No. 10.

6. Termination Dispute for Core Customers

a. Customer Contacts Utility. If the customer is temporarily unable to pay their bill, the Utility may, at its discretion, extend a payment arrangement to a customer who alleges an inability to pay. However, for residential customers, the Utility shall offer customers a 12-month payment plan or to switch any existing payment arrangements of less than 12 months to a payment plan of 12 months. The customer must contact the Utility prior to the expiration date of any delinquency notice before termination of service to be eligible for payment arrangements. If arrangements are granted, the customer must comply with the agreement and pay all future bills on time in order to continue service. The Utility shall furnish information on the availability of various financial assistance programs to those customers who demonstrate an inability to pay their bill.

Gas service to a residential customer cannot be terminated for nonpayment until the utility offers to enroll eligible customers in all applicable benefit programs administered by the utility. The utility is not required to make affirmative inquiry of every residential household as to whether they are enrolled in applicable benefit programs. If the Utility is in contact with a customer prior to disconnection, however, the Utility shall inquire if the customer is interested in hearing about applicable benefit programs. Residential customers must enroll in the applicable benefit programs within two billing cycles of being made aware of the applicable program.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): Gas service to a residential customer shall not be terminated if a customer has a LIHEAP pledge pending.

(Continued)

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)
ADVICE LETTER NO. 5666-B
DECISION NO. 20-06-003

ISSUED BY
Dan Skopec
Vice President
Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)
SUBMITTED Aug 20, 2020
EFFECTIVE Aug 20, 2020
RESOLUTION NO. _____

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6	Establishment and Re-Establishment of Credit	57883-G,57884-G
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(Continued)

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)
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(Continued)

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