

CPUC Public Agenda 3495

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 10:00 a.m.
Remote Presentation

Commissioners:

Marybel Batjer, President
Martha Guzman Aceves
Clifford Rechtschaffen
Genevieve Shiroma
Darcie L. Houck

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California Public
Utilities Commission

CPUC Mission

We Empower California through:

- Assuring utility services are clean and safe.
- Providing for critical services and infrastructure.
- Designing rates that are fair and reasonable.
- Protecting the interests of consumers and ratepayers

CPUC Core Values



Accountability



Excellence



Integrity



**Open
Communication**



Stewardship

Commissioner Code of Conduct

- I. Commissioners should conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the public, for fellow Commissioners, and for Commission staff.
- II. Commission meetings should be opportunities for a full and respectful exchange of ideas and the responsible execution of Commission duties.
- III. Serving on the Commission is an honor and Commissioners should treat their colleagues at the Commission with respect for the varied backgrounds, skills and interests that each one brings.
- IV. Commissioners are public officials who should uphold the integrity of their office at all times.

Public Comment

- Per Resolution ALJ-252, **any member of the public** (excluding parties and their representatives) **who wishes to address the CPUC about matters before the Commission** must call in to toll-free number:



1-800-857-1917

Passcode: 9899501

- ***Para escuchar esta reunión en español, por favor llame: (800) 857-1917, código de acceso: 3799627.***
- Once called, each speaker has up to 1 minute at the discretion of the Commission President.
- A bell will ring when time has expired.
- Public Comment is not permitted on the following items:
 - 5
 - All items on the Closed Session Agenda

Public Agenda Changes

Items shown on the Consent Agenda will be taken up and voted on as a group in one of the first items of business of each CPUC meeting.

- Items on Today's Consent Agenda are:
1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.
- Any Commissioner, with consent of the other Commissioners, may request an item from the Regular Agenda be moved to the Consent Agenda prior to the meeting.
- **No Item** from the Regular Agenda has been added to the Consent Agenda.
- Any Commissioner may request an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion on the Regular Agenda prior to the meeting.
- **No Item** has been moved to the Regular Agenda.
- **Items 2 and 5** have been withdrawn.
- The following items have been held to future Commission Meetings:
 - **Held to 11/4/21: 19, 19A and 20.**
 - **Held to 11/18/21: 3 and 3A.**

Regular Agenda

- Each item on the Regular Agenda (and its alternate if any) will be introduced by the assigned Commissioner or CPUC staff and discussed before it is moved for a vote.
- For each agenda item, a summary of the proposed action is included on the agenda; the CPUC's final decision may, however, differ from that proposed.
- The complete text of every Proposed Decision or Draft Resolution is available for download on the CPUC's website: www.cpuc.ca.gov
- Late changes to agenda items are available on the Virtual Escutia Table.

Regular Agenda | Wildfire Safety Resolutions and Reports

Item #21 [19767] – Action of the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety on Pacific Gas and Electric Company's 2021 Wildfire Mitigation Plan Update Pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 8386

Res WSD-021

PROPOSED OUTCOME:

- Ratifies the attached action of the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety to approve the 2021 Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) Update of Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- WMP's articulate an electrical corporation's understanding of its utility-related wildfire risk and the proposed actions to reduce that risk and prevent catastrophic wildfires caused by utility infrastructure. By implementing measures such as vegetation management, system hardening, grid topology improvements, improving asset inspection and maintenance, situational awareness, improving community engagement and awareness, and other measures, utility-related catastrophic wildfire risk should be reduced over time.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Costs are not considered in this Resolution, as Public Utilities Code Section 8386.4 (b) provides for Commission cost review in a utility General Rate Case or, in some cases, a separate application. Nothing in this Resolution should be construed as approval of the costs associated with the WMP mitigation efforts.

Regular Agenda | Orders Extending Statutory Deadline

Item #22 [19912] – Order Extending Statutory Deadline

A.20-03-001

Application of Suburban Water Systems for Authority to Increase Rates Charged for Water Service by \$14,268,446 or 17.33% in 2021, by \$5,787,612 or 6.04% in 2022, and by \$5,784,955 or 5.70% in 2023.

Ratesetting

Comr. Shiroma - Judge Nojan

PROPOSED OUTCOME:

- Extends Statutory Deadline for completion of this proceeding until December 31, 2021.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- There are no safety considerations associated with this Order Extending Statutory Deadline.

ESTIMATED COST:

- There are no costs associated with this Order Extending Statutory Deadline.

Regular Agenda | Orders Extending Statutory Deadline (continued)

Item #23 [19918] – Order Extending Statutory Deadline

A.18-03-009

Joint Application of Southern California Edison Company and San Diego Gas & Electric Company for the 2018 Nuclear Decommissioning Cost Triennial Proceeding.

Ratesetting

Comr. Batjer - Judge Haga

PROPOSED OUTCOME:

- Extends Statutory Deadline for completion of this proceeding until December 22, 2021.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- There are no safety considerations associated with this Order Extending Statutory Deadline.

ESTIMATED COST:

- There are no costs associated with this Order Extending Statutory Deadline.

Regular Agenda | Orders Extending Statutory Deadline (continued)

Item #24 [19922] – Order Extending Statutory Deadline

A.20-04-017

Joint Application of California-American Water Company and Warring Water Service, Inc. for an Order Authorizing Warring Water Service, Inc. to Sell and California-American Water to Purchase the Water Utility Assets of Warring Water Service, Inc.

Ratesetting

Comr. Guzman Aceves - Judge Watts-Zagha

PROPOSED OUTCOME:

- Extends Statutory Deadline for completion of this proceeding until December 27, 2021.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- There are no safety considerations associated with this Order Extending Statutory Deadline.

ESTIMATED COST:

- There are no costs associated with this Order Extending Statutory Deadline.

Management Reports



Item #25 [19935]

Report and Discussion on Recent Consumer Protection and Safety Activities

CPUC Protecting Consumers: The Work of Consumer Affairs Branch and Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division

California Public Utilities Voting Meeting

October 21, 2021



California Public
Utilities Commission

Consumer Affairs Branch

Edwin A. Charkowicz,
Analytics Unit Program and Project Supervisor,
Consumer Affairs Branch, News and Outreach Office



California Public
Utilities Commission

Presentation Overview

1. CAB Overview
2. Continue Supporting the Mission of the CPUC
3. Issues Facing Consumers
4. Data Sharing
5. Emerging Issues

Overview of CAB

- Assists consumers with complaints submitted against regulated energy, telco, and water utilities
- Addresses constituent complaints referred by state Legislative contacts
- Tracks and analyzes complaint data for trends related to utility regulation and policies to inform program and policy recommendations
- Monitors proceedings and advises decision-makers on issues that potentially impact consumers

Most frequent issues include:

- **Billing:** High charges, delayed bills or not rendered, disconnection for non-payment, erroneous bills
- **Service:** Outages (includes utility Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), fast trip, etc.), disconnections in error (human error), lack of quality (static, dropped calls, etc.)
- **California LifeLine:** Enrollment, recertification, and appeals
- Mobile Home Park inquiries and complaints (PU Code 739)

Continue Supporting the Mission of the CPUC

- CAB data shared with the Divisions, e.g., Core Transport Agent data for Utility Enforcement Branch
- Support Enforcement Teams with CAB data
- Provide customer insight in proceedings, e.g., Energy Utility Customer Bill Debt Accumulated During the COVID-19 Pandemic (R.21-02-014)
 - Advised the office of Commissioner Guzman Aceves on disconnections
 - CBO engagement issues post-moratorium COVID-19 Strike Force
- Participate in Low Income Oversight Board meetings

Current Issues Facing Consumers

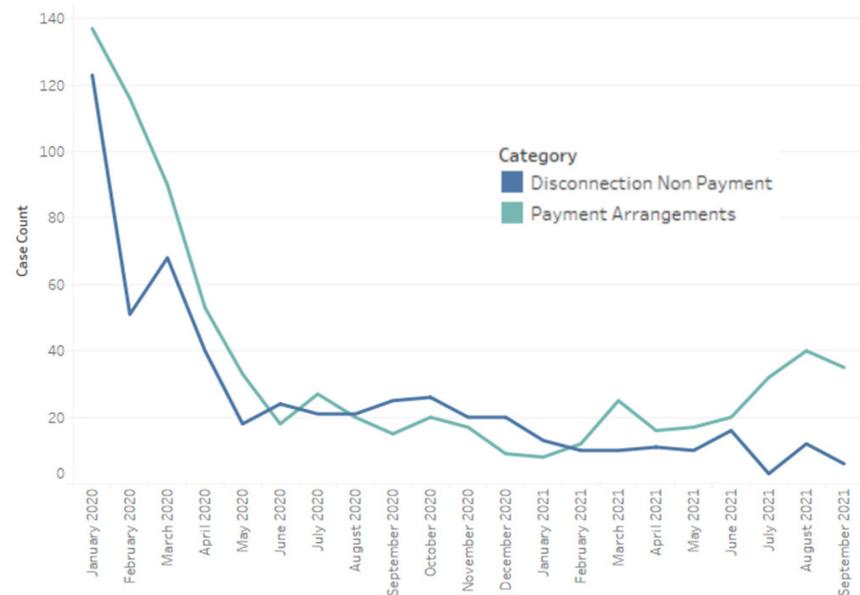
- Pandemic protections resulted in fewer disconnections and payment arrangement contacts
- Customers are facing the end of the moratorium
- Customers facing an increasing array of protection programs
- PG&E outage contacts on the rise due to Fast Trip events
- Billing system changes at Southern California Edison exacerbate the issues facing the ability of customers to keep up with bills

Pandemic Protections Contact Trends

All utility disconnection non-payment and payment arrangement contacts from January 2020 to September 2021

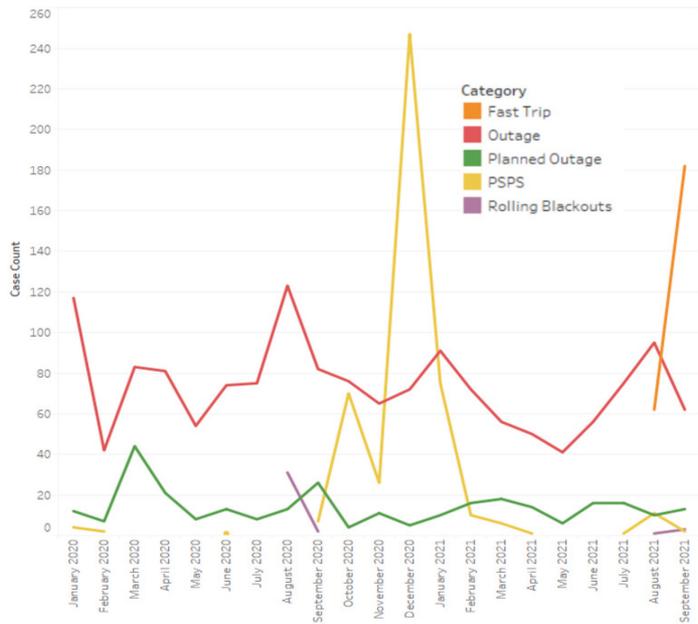
- Customers benefited from the moratorium protections put into place – easier to make payment arrangements and disconnections decreased significantly
- Summer 2021 noted an increase in payment arrangement contacts – data shows customers started to navigate payment plans prior to moratorium end

All Consumer Contacts: Disconnection Non Payment and Payment Arrangements
January 2020 - September 2021



Outage Contact - Top Utilities

All Industry Outage Related Contacts by Type
January 2020 - September 2021



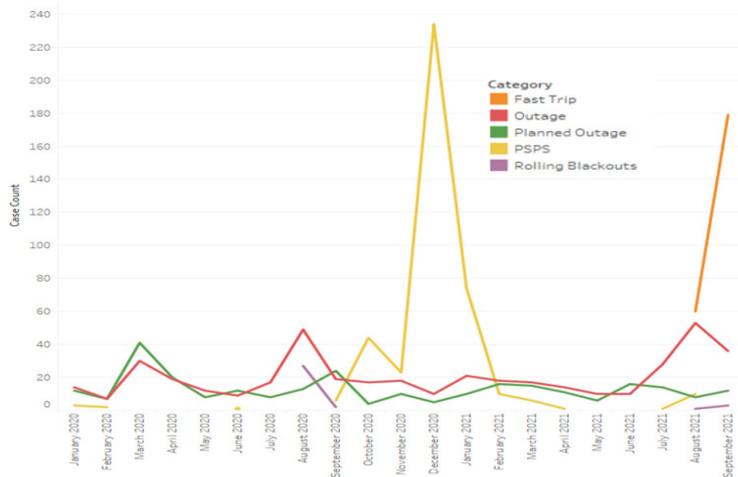
Companies With the Most Outage Contacts by Type
January 2020 - September 2021



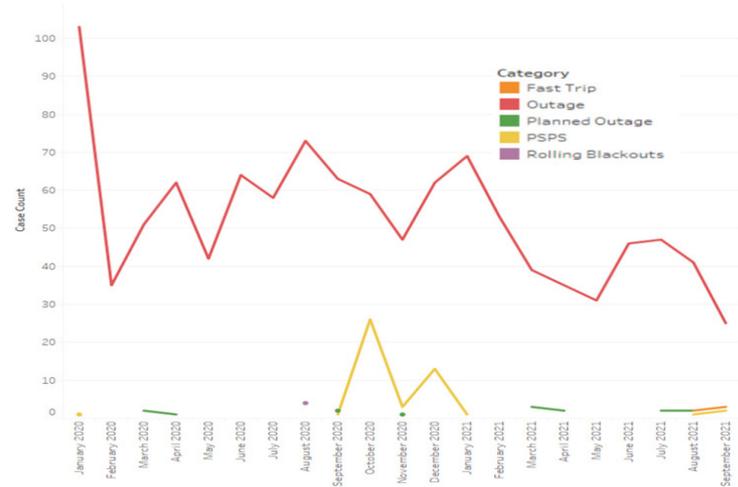
Outage Contact – Top Utilities

- Telco outages generally occur evenly during the year
- Telco outage contacts increase during PSPS and Fast Trip events
- Energy utility outage contacts driven by PSPS, Fast Trip, service, and planned outages
 - Southern California Edison: PSPS events December 2020
 - PG&E: Fast Trip events in August and September 2021

All Energy Outage Related Contacts by Type
Received January 2020 - September 2021



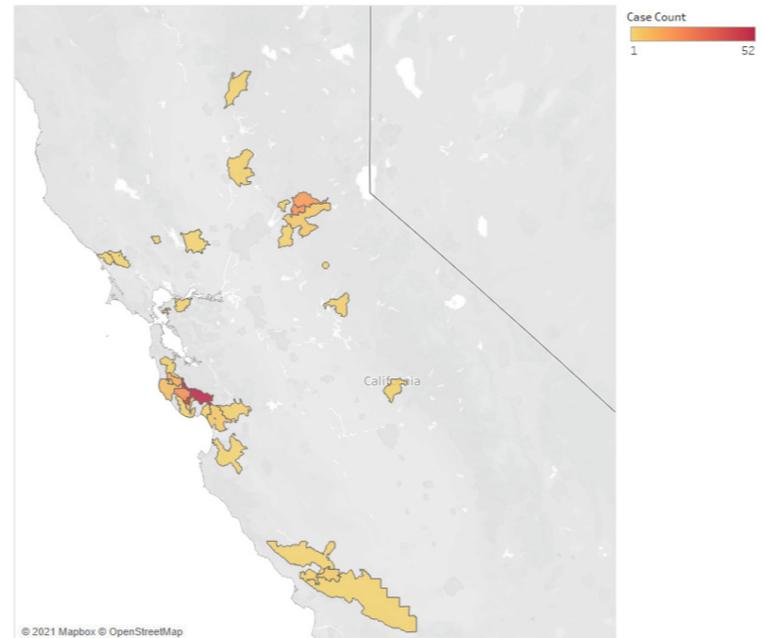
All Communications Outage Related Contacts by Type
January 2020 - September 2021



Outage Contact Trends – PG&E Fast Trip

PG&E – Fast Trip events in August and September 2021

PG&E Fast Trip Contact Distribution by Zip Code
August - September 2021

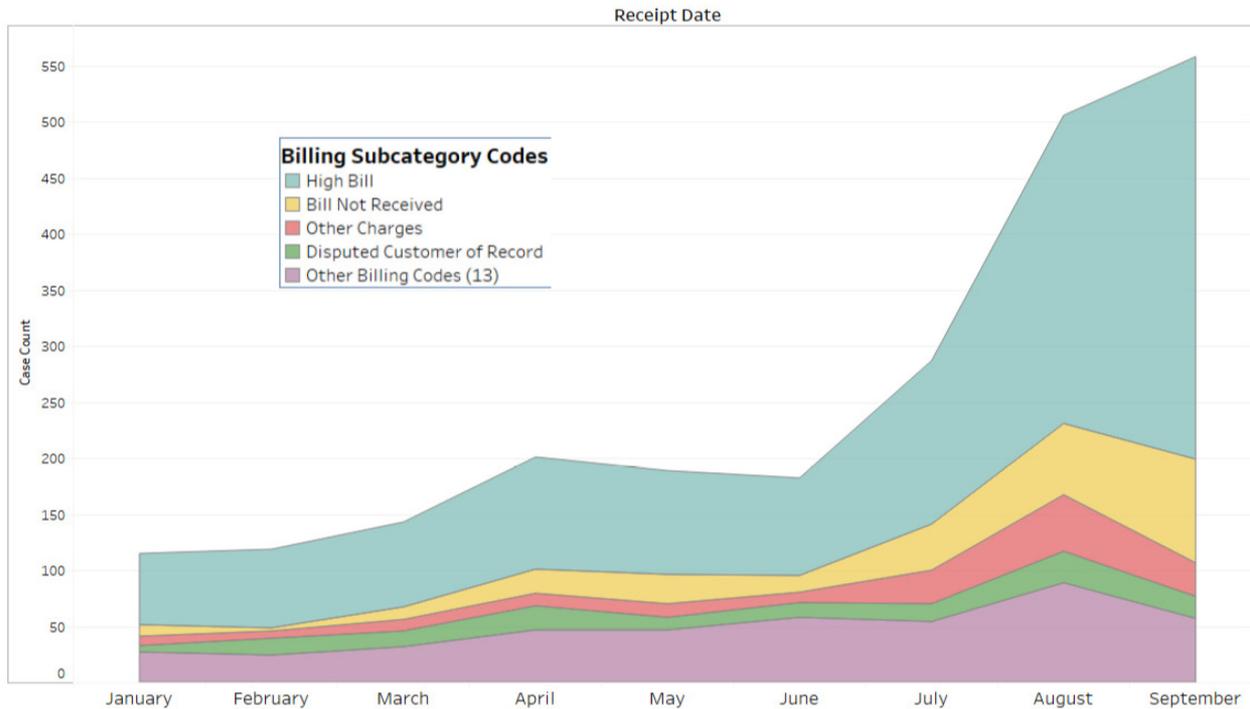


Southern California Edison (SCE) – Billing Contacts

- SCE billing system issues stem from 2019 and worsened with the cutover to its new system in April 2021. Issues include:
 - No bills for multiple billing periods
 - Delayed bills become larger with cumulative months' usage and charges
 - Erroneous bills – meter data affecting Net Energy Metering (NEM) and Community Choice Aggregator (CCA) customers
 - Unprepared to handle the resultant volume of customer calls – insufficient preparation/resources
- Problem overlaps with moratorium and potentially exacerbates General Rate Case and Time of Use rate changes
- CAB continues to work with Energy Division and Utility Enforcement Branch to monitor and address these SCE issues
- CAB actions to address issue with SCE:
 - Monthly status meetings with, and weekly updates from, SCE
 - Direct communications between CAB Operations and SCE
 - Communication of emerging issues and customer messaging used by SCE to ensure consistency

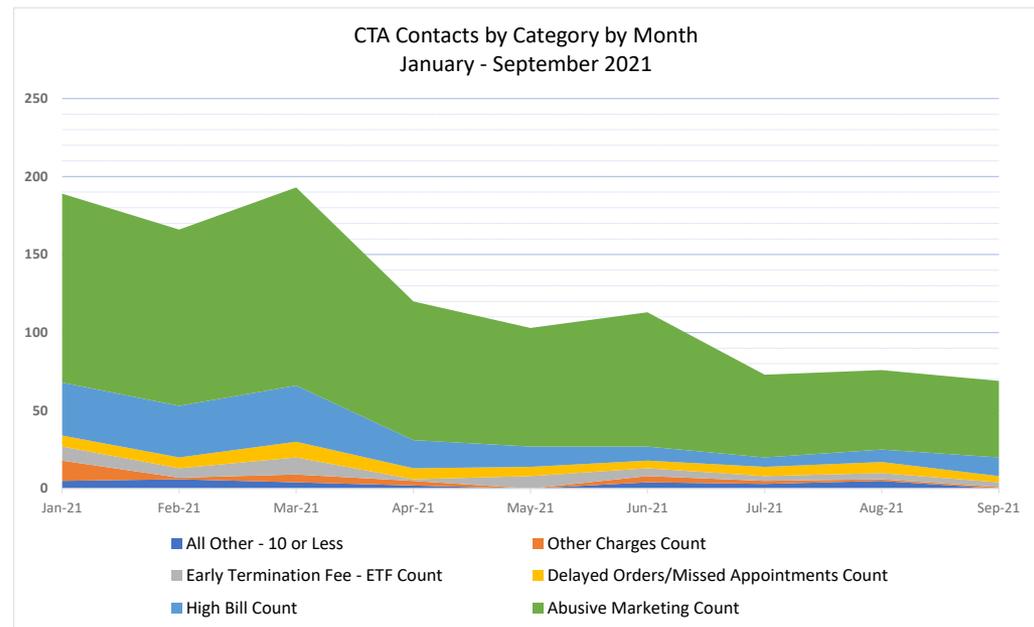
SCE – Billing Contacts *cont.*

SCE Billing Category Distribution
January 2021 - September 2021



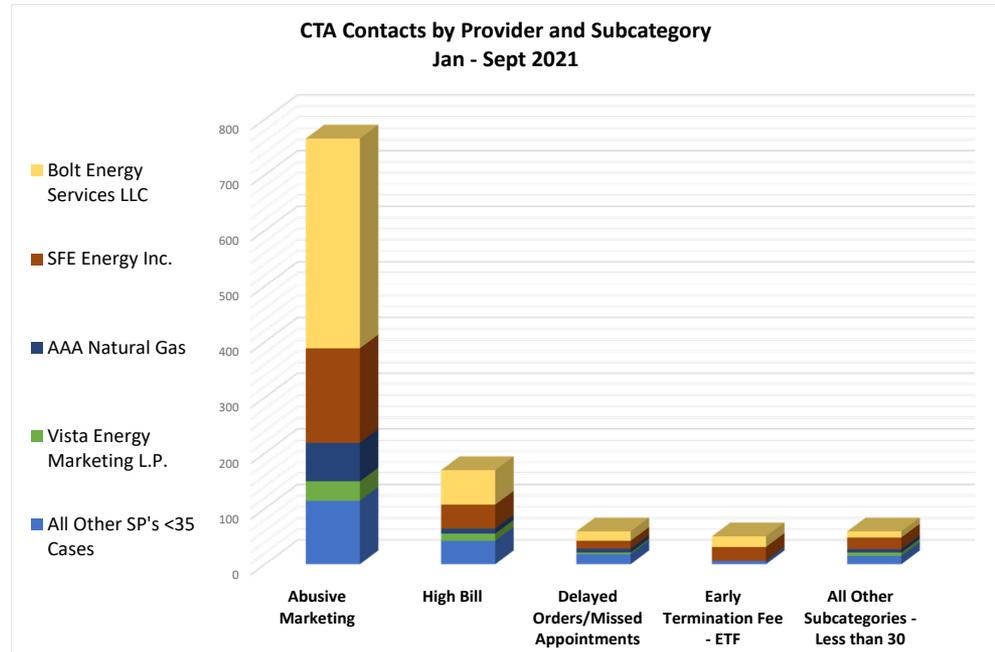
CAB Data Sharing – Utility Enforcement Branch

Core Transport Agent (CTA) monthly data reported to Utility Enforcement Branch



CAB Data Sharing – Utility Enforcement Branch

CTA contacts by primary subcategory and provider



Emerging Issues

- Recertification for CARE and California LifeLine
- SCE rate changes rolling out in fall 2021 and winter 2022
 - SCE General Rate Case rate increase of 9% – October 2021
 - Ladder customer migration to Time of Use rates from November 2020 through April 2022
- Continuing impacts from wildfire mitigations on outages
 - Fast Trip outages affecting consumers
 - No notification, multiple events, unknown duration, affecting High Fire Risk areas
- Energy utilities expect to resume disconnections post-California Arrearage Payment Program (CAPP) adjustment around February 2022

Consumer Complaints Play Key Roles in CPED's Enforcement Work

Douglas Ito, Director
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED)

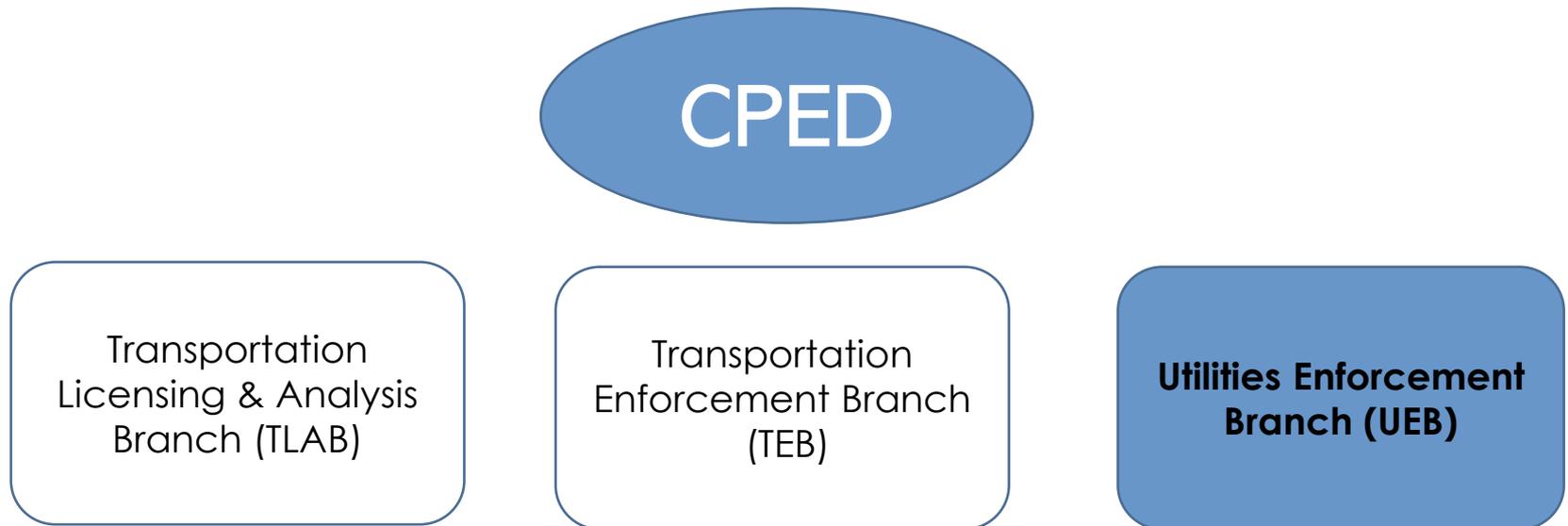


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Overview

- CPED Structure
- Utilities Enforcement Branch
- CIMS's Important Role in Enforcement
- Consumer Protection in Core Transport Agent (CTA) Program
- Data on CTA Enforcement Activity

Consumer Protection & Enforcement Division (CPED) Structure



Utilities Enforcement Branch (UEB)

- Protects consumers from utility provider fraud and abuse by:
 - Enforcing consumer protection laws and regulations
 - Developing and implementing enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance, punish violations, and deter future wrongdoing
- Monitors and identifies fraud and abuse through:
 - Analysis of consumer complaints in CIMS
 - Collaboration with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies
 - Investigations of industry referrals and Fraud Hotline complaints
 - Assessment of industry trends to spot consumer vulnerabilities

Consumer Information Management System

- Consumer Information Management System (CIMS) data are used to implement our citation programs
 - Core Transport Agent (CTA) Citation Program
 - Slamming Citation Program
 - Electric and Gas Disconnection Citation Program
- Complaint data are reviewed and analyzed monthly for trends and spikes
- UEB also uses CIMS data to uncover any prior history of consumer abuse for:
 - Applicants for Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity
 - Lifeline Carriers Eligibility Advice Letters
 - Wireless Identification Registrations
- UEB may protest such applications based on the evidence uncovered
- CIMS data are used to support allegations of wrongdoing in proceedings

Consumer Protection in Core Transport Agent Program

- Commission rules protect consumers from unauthorized switches in their gas providers
- UEB uses CTA complaints in CIMs to
 - Identify unauthorized enrollment, abusive marketing practices, and misrepresentations
 - Build evidence and support enforcement actions in investigations
- UEB uses several progressive enforcement tools and strategies
 - Citations are issued to CTAs that fail to provide valid proof of enrollment authorizations
 - Cease and Desist letters are issued based on identified patterns of abusive marketing practices, including requiring root cause analyses for identified wrongdoings and negotiating changes in marketing processes
 - UEB may seek the revocation or suspension of a CTA's registration when warranted

Core Transport Agent Enforcement Activity

Since Adoption of CTA Citation Program in October 2018

	CTA-Related Complaints		Data Requests Issued	Citations Issued	Cease & Desist/ Request for Action
	Total	Unauthorized Enrollment Complaints			
2018 Nov. to Dec.	246	65	12	0	0
2019	1,614	428	87	6	6
2020	1,409	353	87	39	1
2021 Jan. to Sep.	1,247	276	70	11	2
TOTAL	4,516	1,122	256	56	9

Status of CTA Cease & Desists and Requests For Action

- 2019: Six Cease & Desists(C&D)
 - CTAs stopped problematic marketing activity immediately, retrained sales agents, and updated their processes/procedures
- 2020: One C&D
 - C&D - CTA fired the contractor responsible for wrongful actions
- 2021: Two Requests for Action, and one Notice of Intent to Seek Suspension/Revocation of Registration
 - Requests For Action – CTAs responded promptly with long-term solutions
 - Notice of Intent - CTA agreed to implement changes to reduce misrepresentation complaints. This case remains open for monitoring and further evaluation



California Public Utilities Commission

Item #25 [19935]

Report and Discussion on Recent Consumer Protection and Safety Activities

Commissioners' Reports



Commissioner
Martha Guzman Aceves



Commissioner
Clifford Rechtschaffen



President
Marybel Batjer



Commissioner
Genevieve Shiroma



Commissioner
Darcie L. Houck

The CPUC thanks you for participating in today's meeting

The next Public Meeting will be:

November 4, 2021

10:00 a.m.

remote





California Public Utilities Commission

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