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Historic Votes By Arizona Corporation Commission Will Increase Energy Efficiency
Consumers, Businesses To Save Energy and Money

Phoenix, AZ - Today, through votes ranging from approval of the Arizona Public Service (APS) rate case settlement agreement to formal initiation of an Energy Efficiency Standard, the Arizona Corporation Commission acted to save consumers and businesses money by ramping up energy efficiency in Arizona.

The Commission's 4-1 vote to approve a rate case settlement agreement between APS and 22 ratepayer and low-income advocates will increase the utility's commitment to energy efficiency measures bringing greater energy savings and security to all APS customers.

"The Commission worked hard to get APS ratepayers a good deal," according to Jeff Schlegel with the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET), an intervener in the APS rate case. "The energy efficiency measures to be installed in 2010-2012 will save 13.5 million megawatt hours of energy over their lifetime, equivalent to the electricity used by about 1 million homes in a year."

Energy efficiency measures in the APS rate case settlement include making energy saving improvements, such as replacing old air conditioners and lights with more efficient models, and adding attic and wall insulation to 1,000 homes and 100 schools in 2010.

"Energy is a major expense on school budgets today. Arizona schools spend more than \$300 million each year on energy," said Chuck Essigs, Director of Governmental Relations, Arizona Association of School Business Officials, also an intervener in the APS rate case. "Increasing energy efficiency in schools reduces energy bills, saves taxpayer dollars and frees up money to be spent where it matters most – educating our students."

Prior to approving the APS rate case settlement, the Commission also unanimously approved the APS 2010 Energy Efficiency Implementation plan, a key component to achieving the provisions in the settlement that will expand energy-saving programs for homeowners, businesses and low-income households.

“Arizonans are feeling not just a pinch but a punch from this terrible economy. This is especially true for our low-income residents and families that live paycheck to paycheck,” said Cynthia Zwick, Executive Director for the Arizona Community Action Association. “We see first hand how APS’ weatherization programs have helped save people money and make their homes more comfortable and healthier places to live. We commend the Commission and look forward to continuing our work with APS to deliver energy saving programs to even more people.”

The Commission’s actions today follow the Commission’s approval of an Integrated Resource Plan rulemaking process last week that provides additional opportunities to prioritize energy efficiency and renewable energy.

“The energy efficiency and renewable energy provisions in the settlement will take Arizona and its largest utility a big step forward in decreasing energy use and reliance on polluting sources of energy,” said Sandy Bahr, Chapter Director of the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club. “This, coupled with the energy efficiency standard, will mean less air pollution, fewer emissions that contribute to climate change, and a more sustainable future for all Arizonans.”

The Commission also voted unanimously today to formally initiate an Energy Efficiency Standard rulemaking process, which advocates have stated should require the utilities to achieve at least 20 percent energy savings from energy efficiency by 2020.

“Energy efficiency is the gift that keeps giving. Ratepayers save money on their monthly electric bills; children, seniors and those with weak immune systems enjoy better health; and Arizonans continue to receive improved air quality,” stated Diane E. Brown, Executive Director of the Arizona PIRG Education Fund.