

Green

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Today's News:

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FIVE STATES SEE PRIMARY FIGHTS for state commission elections. Energy issues key in most contests. (P. 3)

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GREEN NOTES: Casio evaluating fluorine gas as more benign substitute for other compounds used in LCD making. (P. 5)

STATE ACTIVITIES: New Jersey Senate bill would waive 7 percent state sales tax on Energy Star-certified products. (P. 5)

'Alternative' To PG&E

CEA Proposes Energy Use 'Declaration' for TVs in California

The CE industry offered alternatives to California proposals for digital TV 'on' mode energy use mandates that industry said would help state regulators work "collaboratively" with companies to cut products' energy use. A Wednesday California Energy Commission public workshop in Sacramento will explore a new 'on' mode standard for TVs. The CEA, the Natural Resources Defense Council, utilities and other groups are expected to testify.

In proposals it touted as alternatives to one by Pacific Gas & Electric, the CEA said the Commission could require that, as of Feb. 17, 2009, any manufacturer wanting to sell a digital TV brand in California submit prior to sale an "energy use declaration" for each model. That would include TV model number, type of display technology and active model power consumption of the model calculated as per the International Electrotechnical Commission standard IEC 6208.

Such a reporting requirement would help the Commission "better monitor and evaluate" energy use and efficiency trends for TVs, the association said. Using it, the body could "review direct evidence that technological advancements and market-oriented programs continue to drive energy efficiency improvements in televisions." Regulators could review and add industry recommendations for energy use disclosure mandates, it said.

CEA urged the Commission to join an education effort industry will launch in California with the Environmental Protection Agency to promote TVs meeting the Energy Star specification taking effect in November. The specification will save money and energy, the CEA said. With at least two major TV sales peri-

ods before the February analog cut-off, the “time is right to launch a campaign to raise consumer awareness of energy efficiency and Energy Star for televisions.”

Meanwhile, PG&E submitted a revised standards proposal for TVs that it said Southern California Edison and Sempra Energy Utility back. The utility proposed that the Commission set standards to be implemented in stages, the first becoming effective in January 2011 and the second two years later. The standard would use a formula based on viewable screen size. Under the revised proposal, the standard in its first phase would save 349 GWh a year, with incremental savings of 243 GWh in the second phase for a combined annual saving of 593 GWh. Combined annual savings of 6,516 GWh/yr would result after full stock turn over, it said. -- *Dinesh Kumar*

Final Approval Due September

California Energy Plan Seeks 10% CE ‘Plug Load’ Reductions By 2015

Getting electrical “plug loads” of appliances and CE devices to grow “at a slower rate and then decline through technological innovation” is among goals outlined in a draft energy efficiency plan released Monday at the California Public Utilities Commission (GED July 14 p2).

The PUC launched a rulemaking asking what in the plan it should kill, or what’s missing that should be there. Comments are due July 31, replies Aug. 7. The PUC plans to approve a final version of the plan in September, along with incentive programs running 2009 through 2011, it said.

Only through “market transformation and customer demand for energy-efficient products” will the goal of reducing plug loads become reality, the plan said. Plug loads “will be managed by developing consumer electronics and appliances that use less energy and provide tools to enable customers to understand and manage their energy demand,” it said.

Plug loads “are a complex, rapidly growing driver of electricity consumption,” the plan said. “They range from the ubiquitous energy-thief transformers on almost every appliance, to home offices and the 1+ kW home entertainment centers growing in popularity.” Potential savings from this plug load strategy could be 200 MW by 2011 with larger potential savings in the future, the plans said.

The plan calls for a 10 percent drop in plug loads “mid term,” 2012 to 2015, and a 25 percent cut long term, 2016 to 2020. For the near term, 2009 to 2011, the PUC will “work with research organizations to develop smarter products with lower energy requirements,” it said. It also will work with manufacturers “to raise product energy efficiency, both when in use and in standby mode,” it said.

By 2011, the PUC will complete “initial market research” identifying “triggers” that persuade consumers to decide to choose “highly energy-efficient devices” over less efficient products, it said. It will use the data to launch a “public awareness and information campaign to promote purchase of more efficient products and create behavioral changes in the way products are perceived, used and managed,” it said. By 2011, the goal will be to “deploy a package of rebates, incentives and voluntary industry agreements to bring significant numbers of the best current technologies for managing plug loads” to market, it said. Examples include smart power strips and “informative visual displays,” it said.

The plan is to promote “a new energy-efficiency planning and coordination landscape in California,” allying the public and private sectors, consumers and others, no matter what the “geographical, jurisdictional, regula-

tory or political boundaries,” it said. “The various actors must work collaboratively over the long-term to leverage all of the available resources to change the way Californians use energy at home and at work,” it said.

The roadmap calls for “technology advancement” that will “match -- or even exceed -- the consumer electronics industry in innovation, time to market and consumer acceptance,” the plan said. “The development, enhancement, deployment and operation of more and better energy-efficiency-related technology is fundamental to achieving California’s energy-efficiency vision and goals,” it said. -- *Paul Gluckman*

Five Primaries Before October

Energy Issues Key in Election Fights for State Utilities Commission Seats

Five states will have primary election battles for state utility commission nominations between now and October, while five other states that elect state regulators will see contests in November. Georgia and Alabama held party primaries Tuesday. Energy issues have dominated campaigns in all states, with telecom largely undiscussed.

Both parties had primaries July 15 in Georgia for Public Service Commission seats. The open District Four seat for northern Georgia had primary fights in both major parties. Republican incumbent Commissioner Angela Speir didn’t seek reelection. In the Republican primary, former Commissioner Lauren “Bubba” McDonald sought returning to the PSC, where he served 1998-2002. He faced GOP rival Pam Davidson, a Blue Ridge energy consultant. In the Democratic primary Norcross engineer Bob Indech competed against retired Hiawasee energy policy consultant Jim Powell. The primary winners will compete in November against Libertarian candidate Brandon Givens, a Gainesville teacher.

One-term Republican incumbent Commissioner Doug Everett sought to defeat GOP rival Rick Collum, a Moultrie attorney, for the right to face Libertarian Party candidate John Monds of Cairo in November for the District One PSC seat representing southern Georgia. No Democrat filed for this seat. All races have focused on energy issues, with consumer protection also becoming an issue in the District One contest.

In Alabama, two Republicans vied in the GOP primary for the right to oppose former Democratic Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley in November for the open seat of Public Service Commission president, being vacated by retiring Republican Jim Sullivan. The GOP race was between former state Republican chairwoman Andress “Twinkle” Cavanaugh and Chelsea marketing consultant Matt Chauncey. Cavanaugh raised \$205,500 for her primary campaign, compared to \$65,000 for Chauncey.

In Oklahoma, Woodward energy attorney Dana Murphy (R) faces state Rep. Rob Johnson, R-Kingfisher, in the July 29 GOP primary for the two-year unexpired Corporation Commission term of former member Denise Bode. Murphy is making her second run for the commission, having lost in 2004. The primary winner will face Democratic incumbent Jim Roth in November. Roth was appointed last spring to fill in for Bode until the election.

In Arizona, eight Republican and four Democratic candidates will vie in the Sept. 2 primaries for three Corporation Commission seats vacated because of term limits. GOP Commissioners Jeff Hatch-Miller, Mike Gleason and William Mundell couldn't run again. Republican contenders include two three-member slates and two other Republicans running solo. One slate includes state Reps. Marian McClure of Tucson, Bob Robson of Chandler and Bob Stump of Peoria. The other GOP slate consists of Rick Fowlkes of Mesa, who ran four years ago on the Libertarian ticket, Avondale telecom technology specialist Joe Hobbs and Buckeye executive Keith Swapp. Also running for a Republican seat are former Scottsdale state lawmaker John Allen and former Commissioner Barry Wong.

Four Democrats are vying in the Arizona primary for the three seats. They include Cochise County supervisor Paul Newman, sharing a slate with former state lawmaker Sandra Kennedy, Flagstaff City Council member Kara Kelty and Phoenix energy consultant Sam George.

In Louisiana, District 1 Republican Commissioner Jay Blossman seeks a third term. He will face two Republican challengers in the Oct. 4 GOP primary -- former state Rep. Kenneth Ordinet of Arabi and Metairie attorney Eric Skrmetta. The Republican primary winner for the southeastern Louisiana seat will face two independents in November, Bruce Kincaide and John Schwegmann, both of Metairie. No Democrats filed to run in District 1. For the southwestern Louisiana District 4 seat, Democratic Commissioner Foster Campbell will be seeking his second PSC term in November, opposed by independent James Crowley of Shreveport. No Republicans filed to run in District 4.

Elsewhere, state political parties have picked candidates for the November elections. Montana has contests for all three Public Service Commission seats with an open seat in District 3, representing southwestern counties. District 3 Democratic Commissioner Bob Raney chose not to run again. State Rep. Alan Olson, R-Roundup, will face off in November against Democrat John Vincent a former state lawmaker from Gallatin Gateway, to replace Raney. For the District 2 seat representing southeastern counties, Republican Commissioner Brad Molnar is seeking his second term. He's being challenged by Democrat Ron Tussing, mayor of Billings. In the race for the District 4 seat, representing western Montana, Republican Commissioner Doug Mood seeks a second PSC term, challenged by Democrat Gail Gutsche of Missoula, a consultant and former state legislator. The campaigns have focused on energy.

In Nebraska, Democratic Commissioner Anne Boyle seeks her third term, against Republican John McColister of Omaha, a Nebraska Congressman from 1970-1976, and Green Party candidate Doug Patterson of Omaha.

In New Mexico, Santa Fe insurance manager Jerome Block, son of a former state regulator, will run as the Democratic candidate for the open District 3 seat representing north-central counties, being vacated by Commissioner Ben Lujan who is running for Congress. Block will be opposed by Green Party activist Rick Lass of Santa Fe. No Republicans filed for the seat.

In North Dakota, Democrat Cheryl Bergian, a Fargo attorney, will face Republican college professor Brian Kalk of Fargo for the Public Service Commission seat being vacated by retiring four-term Commissioner Susan Wefald. Bergian ran for the PSC in 2006 but lost.

In South Dakota, Republican Public Utilities Commission Chairman Gary Hanson is seeking his second PUC term. He is opposed by state Democratic Party Legislative Director Matt McLarty. -- *Herb Kirchhoff*

Companies

Viaspace's Direct Methanol Fuel Cell subsidiary agreed with an unnamed portable electronics maker to provide methanol fuel cell cartridges and interface valves, Viaspace said. CEO Carl Kukkonen said his company is teaming with Japan's Sato Group for the project. The electronics maker didn't want its name revealed for now, Kukkonen told us.

Toshiba will offer a computer trade-in and recycling program for all brands of PCs during Q3, it said. All new Toshiba laptops are RoHS compatible, the company said as it announced that its Satellite laptop line has been enhanced with the latest Intel Centrino 2 processor. That means less use of lead, mercury and other hazardous substances, it said.

International

Two halogenated fire retardants are among 16 substances of very high concern listed by the European Chemicals Agency. The agency administers REACH, a new EC regulation on chemicals and their safe use.

Green Notes

In LCD makers' ongoing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from manufacturing, Casio is evaluating fluorine gas to replace sulfur hexafluoride used to process thin-film panels. Toshiba Matsushita Display and other companies have studied fluorine gas as an alternative to sulfur hexafluoride and perfluoride compounds or PFCs used in making silicon panels (GED July 14 p2, July 10 p2). Sulfur hexafluoride is widely deemed a greater contributor to global warming than CO2 emissions. By switching to fluorine gas, Casio reckons, it can reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions 20 percent, Nikkei reported. But fluorine gas presents challenges, because it's reactive with other compounds and possibly explosive. Casio believes it can reduce risks by managing hydrochloric acid and sulfuric acid levels and controlling voltage in the process. The jury's still out on whether the fluorine gas process will be adopted, for reasons of cost and other factors, but Casio expects to make a decision this year.

State Activities

A bill in the New Jersey Senate would waive the 7 percent state sales tax on Energy Star-certified products, *The Record* newspaper reported. The bill is sponsored by Sen. Bill Baroni, R-Hamilton Township, the paper said.



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