



CWLP News Release

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CWLP ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS UPDATES FOR REDUCING RATE IMPACTS

City Water, Light and Power is proposing a change to Project RELIEF, its financial assistance program to customers for their CWLP bill. Another program, the Senior Citizen Discount, is also getting a boost with the roll-in of the fuel adjustment charge to the base rate. CWLP's Energy Services Office is also ready to serve customers with efficiency tips, energy audits and rebates to reduce rate impacts.

"We don't take asking our customers for rate increases lightly," said CWLP Chief Utilities Engineer Eric Hobbie. "We understand that these are tough economic times so we want to be able to make sure our customers know about our assistance programs."

Historically, the Project RELIEF program has been funded almost entirely by customer donations. Some contributions are made from the community at large and some are by payroll deduction from city employees. Because the need to assist more families exists, if the rate increase is approved by City Council, CWLP is proposing expanding the Project RELIEF program to reduce hardship on more customers. CWLP is proposing a 2 to 1 CWLP match to these funds. On average, CWLP collects \$25,000 per year in Project RELIEF donations, which assists on average about 120 families. CWLP is proposing adding in a minimum CWLP contribution of \$50,000 to the Project RELIEF fund. Additionally, any amount over \$25,000 that would be donated by customers, CWLP would match \$2 to every \$1 up to \$150,000 per year. CWLP hopes this will allow those customers who are the most at risk to have increased access to financial assistance and to allow them to continue to receive utility services despite the impacts of the rate increase.

CWLP has a current Senior Citizen Discount program, which runs

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currently and offers 10% to low income seniors. Those that are qualified for this program will immediately benefit from the Fuel Adjustment roll-in to the base rate option, effective March 1. Currently the 10% senior citizen electric rate discount only applies to the energy rate and not fuel adjustment. By decreasing the fuel adjustment portion of the bill and moving the actual current fuel costs to the base rate, low income seniors will gain an immediate additional savings of 2.4% with the fuel adjustment roll-in.

The average home or business in Springfield has the potential to save between 10 % to 30% on their annual energy usage. The shortest end to minimizing the impact of an electric rate increase is for customers to reduce their energy usage. CWLP's Energy Services Office (ESO) is tasked with helping residential and commercial customers increase personal comfort and convenience while reducing utility costs. A brand new solar rebate program is now available along with seven residential and five commercial efficiency programs. These programs include home energy audits, technical assistance from CWLP energy planners, various rebates and an array of educational opportunities for customers to gain expertise and quick tips on how to save on energy costs.

More information can be found on billing assistance programs, the Senior Citizens Discount and the Energy Services Office at www.cwlp.com.

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