

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
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August 20, 2009

**To:** Performance Data Providers, Performance Monitoring and Reporting System Providers, Solar Contractors, California Solar Initiative Participants, Self-Generation Incentive Program Participants, Emerging Renewable Program, Rebuild a Greener San Diego Solar Program Participants

**From:** CPUC Energy Division

**Re: Collection of Installed Solar System Performance Data**

The CPUC is requesting performance data on solar systems that were subsidized by incentives from the State of California-authorized rebate programs, including the California Solar Initiative (CSI), the Self Generation Incentive Program (SGIP), the Emerging Renewables Program (ERP), and the Rebuild a Greener San Diego Solar Program.

The CPUC is requesting your assistance in collecting solar system performance data for systems that you have installed and for which you collect performance data. This performance information is critical to the evaluation of the CSI Program and the solar technologies making up the CSI. Further, the CPUC is required by statute to report to the Legislature on the electricity generated from systems installed under the CSI program.<sup>1</sup> Since many individuals and companies already routinely collect solar system performance data, it will greatly reduce CSI program costs if this data can be shared confidentially with the CPUC from existing data sources.

This letter explains:

- The value of submitting solar system performance data to the CPUC
- What solar system performance data information is needed
- How the solar system performance data will be used (and not used)
- How you can help submit solar system performance data

### **What is the value for us to submit solar system performance data to the CPUC?**

An effective CSI Program is important for the future success of the solar industry. In order to successfully gauge the CSI Program's effectiveness the CPUC will need performance data information from both large and small systems. Performance data is already gathered from large projects receiving the Performance Based Incentive (PBI) through the CSI program and many of those receiving incentives under the Self Generation Incentive Program (SGIP). However, there is substantial data missing from smaller systems that were not required to submit actual performance data to receive the Expected Performance Based Buydown (EPBB) incentive, and those receiving incentives under the Emerging Renewables Program (ERP) or Rebuild a Greener San Diego Solar Program. These solar customers who received the upfront incentive payment under the CSI Program have also agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of the CSI Program's measurement and evaluation program by "providing access to the Program Administrators and/or third-parties contracted by the CPUC and/or Program Administrators access to the site and any available data and information collected on the system".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Public Utilities Code 2851©(3) requires the CPUC to submit an annual assessment to the Legislature which includes the electrical generating capacity of systems installed under the CSI program.

<sup>2</sup> CSI Program Handbook, Section 2.10, page 29, July 2009.

The collected solar system performance data will be used to understand:

1. If the CSI Program meeting its objective of optimizing solar system performance with incentives that encourage optimal system performance.
2. The extent to which solar customers are contributing to electricity peak load reduction.
  - a. Answering this question requires 15-minute or hourly data as opposed to daily, monthly, or annual production data.
3. The extent to which solar customers are contributing to Greenhouse Gas reductions.
4. How solar system performance varies in different geographical regions.
5. The effect of solar customers on California's electrical grid.
6. The cumulative impact of all solar projects installed in PG&E, SDG&E, and SCE territories.

Understanding these issues will help the CPUC better assess how well the CSI Program is meeting its Legislative and programmatic goals as well as help in informing future policy decisions. The CPUC has a CSI Program Evaluation Plan<sup>3</sup> that goes into further detail about the evaluation program's goals and objectives.

### **What solar system performance data information is needed?**

The CPUC's CSI evaluation program needs solar system performance data for systems that were operating anytime between 2007 through the end of 2009. Performance data being sought is the 15-minute electric net generation interval data from any grid-connected solar project that is installed in the territories of PG&E, SCE, and/or SDG&E. For your convenience, the performance data can be in any delimited electronic data format and should contain:

- Site identification including Incentive (CSI, SGIP, ERP, etc.) Application Number, Installer, host or site customer name, site address, and utility account information. The most valuable of these is the Incentive Application Number if it is available (it provides a robust link to other needed site data);
- Time and date for each interval and an indication if this time is the beginning or end of the data collection period; and
- Energy or power generated during each time interval and indication if this data is kW, kWh, etc.

### **How will the solar system performance data be used?**

The CPUC (through its program evaluation contractor, Itron, Inc.) is collecting information on the individual performance of solar systems. However, this performance data will only be reported in aggregate to ensure that specific confidential customer and contractor data is never released. Site specific information on solar customers, specific solar contractors, performance data providers (PDP) and performance monitoring reporting service (PMRS) providers will be held in the strictest confidentiality and will NOT be included in any publicly available data.

### **How can you help submit solar system performance data?**

Itron has established the following ways for you to submit solar system performance data:

- Electronic data can be mailed on compact disc (CD) to Itron at:  
Itron, Inc  
2800 Fifth Street, Suite 110  
Davis, CA 95618
- Electronic data can be e-mailed to Itron at [SolarData@Itron.com](mailto:SolarData@Itron.com)
- Electronic data can be submitted online at:  
<http://www.calsolarresearch.ca.gov/SolarData.html>

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<sup>3</sup> <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/efile/RULINGS/85800.pdf>

The following personnel are the leads for receiving solar system performance data for the purposes of this CPUC program evaluation. Please contact any of the following people to discuss submitting your data to Itron, Inc.:

Itron, Stephan Barsun, [stephan.barsun@itron.com](mailto:stephan.barsun@itron.com), 509-891-3187

PG&E, Matt Heling, [MGH9@pge.com](mailto:MGH9@pge.com)

SCE, Suzanne Fuller, [Suzanne.fuller@sce.com](mailto:Suzanne.fuller@sce.com)

CCSE, Tim Treadwell, [timothy.treadwell@energycenter.org](mailto:timothy.treadwell@energycenter.org)

CPUC, Melicia Charles, [mvc@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:mvc@cpuc.ca.gov)

Thank you in advance for your consideration and cooperation in this matter.

Molly Sterkel ([mts@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:mts@cpuc.ca.gov))

California Public Utilities Commission

Energy Division

California Solar Initiative and Distributed Generation Section