Utility Enforcement Branch Core Work and Enforcement Programs

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Utility Enforcement Branch
Safety and Enforcement Division

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Utility Enforcement Branch

- UEB is comprised of 22 authorized positions located in SF, LA and Sacramento, forming two section:
  - Telco Fraud Section
  - Electric & CEQA Section
- In support of SED's mission, UEB protects California utility consumers from fraud and abuse by ensuring service providers' compliance with consumer protection laws and regulations

Utility Enforcement Branch's Core Work

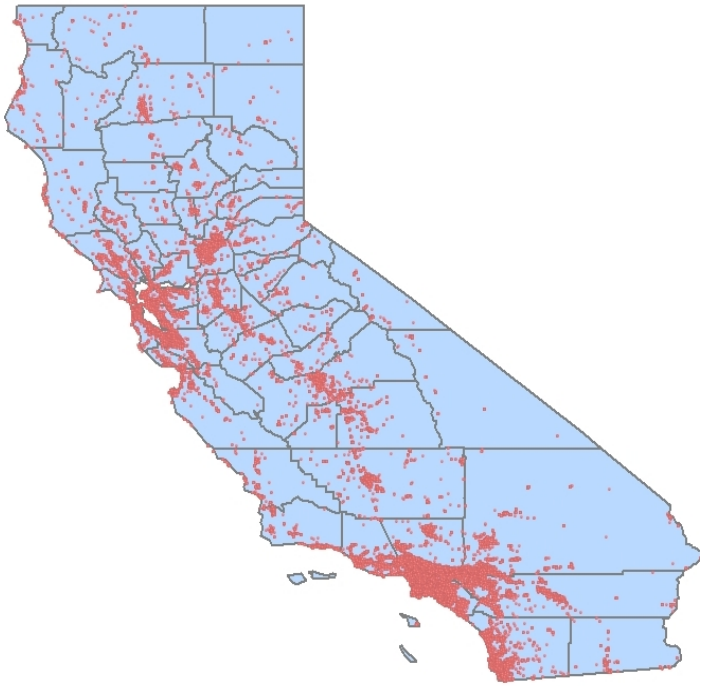
- Monitor fraud and abuse
  - Follow industry trends to spot consumer vulnerabilities
  - Review consumer complaints
  - Resolve and investigate Fraud Hotline complaints
- Investigate and prosecute fraud and abuse
- Work with federal and state agencies, community organizations and trade associations
- Collaborate with outside law enforcement agencies
- Advise the Commission on issues in Rulemakings
- Monitor and ensure compliance with Commission decisions
- Review license applications by telco providers for fitness
- Inspect payphones for safety and proper signage

UEB Enforcement Programs

- Pursue OIIs and OSCs in cases of rule/code violations, including: cramming, slamming, misleading advertising, unfair business practices, ratemaking misrepresentations, etc.
- Slamming Citation Program
- Resource Adequacy Requirement Citation Program
- Renewables Portfolio Standard Citation Program
- CEQA Citation Program
- Utility Whistleblower Fraud Hotline
- CPCN Application Review
- Prepaid Phonecard Enforcement
- Payphone Enforcement

Payphones Inspections

- Payphones remain important in certain areas
  - ~27,000 California payphones
  - Concentrated in: LA Basin, SF Bay Area, I-5 Corridor
- Provide essential and safety-related services:
  - Basic communication
  - Long distance services
  - 211 – Community Services
  - 411 – Information
  - 711 – Hearing Impaired
  - 911 – Emergency



Fines and Restitution from UEB's Cases

- UEB's cases have resulting in approximately $340 million in total Commission ordered fines and restitution in the past ten years. Prominent cases include:
  - $33.4 million in 2015 decision on Comcast's unauthorized publication of unlisted information
  - $24 million in 2014 decision on TracFone's unpaid surcharges, fees and associated interest
    - Motion filed for Commission adoption of a $10 million settlement in the penalty phase
  - $1 million in 2009 decision on SDG&E's alleged Rule 1 violation
  - $152 million in 2008 and 2009 decisions on SCE's manipulation of Performance-Based Ratemaking
  - $35 million in 2007 decision on PG&E's improper back-billing
  - $30 million in 2004 and 2007 decisions on Cingular's unfair practices surrounding its early termination fees
  - $3 million in 2006 decision on MCI's alleged slamming and cramming

UEB Contacts

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Fraud Hotline
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