



SOUTHWEST GAS CORPORATION

October 5, 2005

The Honorable Steven A. Weissman
Administrative Law Judge
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Southwest Gas Corporation (U 905 G)
R.04-01-006 – OIR on Commission's Proposed Policies and
Programs Governing Post-2003 Low-Income Assistance Programs
Data Request No.: ALJ-DR-1 (1 through 5)

Judge Weissman:

Enclosed please find Southwest's responses to questions 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the above referenced data request. The response to question 3 will be provided on or before October 10, 2005. Pursuant to your directive on October 3, 2005, copies of these responses were served electronically on all parties of record in proceeding R.04-01-006.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (702) 364-3079.

Respectfully,

Randall W. Sable
Manager/State Regulatory Affairs

RS:vo
Enclosures

c: R.04-01-006 Service List
Sean Gallagher, Energy Division
Karen A. Degannes, Energy Division

**SOUTHWEST GAS CORPORATION
ORDER INSTITUTING RULEMAKING ON THE COMMISSION'S
PROPOSED POLICIES AND PROGRAMS GOVERNING
POST-2003 LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

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**CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
ALJ STEVEN WEISSMAN
DATA REQUEST NO. ALJ-1
(ALJ-DR-1-1 THROUGH ALJ-DR-1-5)**

RULEMAKING NO.: R.04-01-006
COMMISSION: CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DATE OF REQUEST: OCTOBER 4, 2005

Request No. ALJ-DR-1-1:

What are the utility's total available carry-over funds from prior years for all low-income programs (broken down by program)?

Respondent: Conservation & Demand Side Management

Response:

Pursuant to D.03-03-007 rendered in A.02-07-009, et al., Southwest's remaining 2003 and 2004 LIEE Program Year dollars carried over to the 2005 LIEE Program Year budget totaled \$204,101 (see attachment). However, Southwest does not carry-over unused CARE Program Year dollars since Southwest's CARE Program Year budgets are funded through a two-way balancing account which are trued up annually for any over or under collections.

R.04-01-006

**LOW-INCOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM
BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES**

ALJ-DR-1-1

<u>Program</u>	<u>PPP Funding</u>			<u>Approved 2005 D.05-07-014</u>
	<u>Approved 2003 D.03-03-007</u>	<u>Approved 2004 D.03-12-016</u>	<u>Total 2003 & 2004</u>	
LIEE				
Authorized	\$500,000	\$936,560	\$1,436,560	\$860,000
Spent	\$436,883	\$795,576	\$1,232,459	
Under/(Over)	\$63,117	\$140,984	\$204,101	

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**CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
ALJ STEVEN WEISSMAN
DATA REQUEST NO. ALJ-1
(ALJ-DR-1-1 THROUGH ALJ-DR-1-5)**

RULEMAKING NO.: R.04-01-006
COMMISSION: CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DATE OF REQUEST: OCTOBER 4, 2005

Request No. ALJ-DR-1-2:

For each utility, what are the likely dollar impacts if the Commission were to adopt the proposals to eliminate reconnection fees for CARE customers and to ban winter service shut-offs for customers making minimum bill payments? What are the likely dollar impacts if the Commission were to suspend collection of deposits on low income customers?

Respondent: Customer Assistance Support Training

Response:

- a. Southwest estimates that the minimum dollar impact of eliminating reconnection fees for CARE customers would be \$41,000 annually.
- b. To avoid shut-off, Southwest requires a minimum payment equal to the customer's thirty (30) day past due balance. Therefore, there is no immediate impact if CARE customers pay their arrears instead of their total bill to avoid disconnect during the winter. For those customers who find it difficult to pay their 30 day past due balance, Southwest has always been willing to work with its customers by offering payment arrangements and may also refer customers to bill assistance programs offered by outside agencies.
- c. The estimated dollar impact to Southwest of suspending collection of deposits for CARE customers would be approximately \$81,000 per month.

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**CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
ALJ STEVEN WEISSMAN
DATA REQUEST NO. ALJ-1
(ALJ-DR-1-1 THROUGH ALJ-DR-1-5)**

RULEMAKING NO.: R.04-01-006
COMMISSION: CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DATE OF REQUEST: OCTOBER 4, 2005

Request No. ALJ-DR-1-4:

How could each utility target Low-Income Energy Efficiency program relief to master meter customers and other under-served customers in multi-family dwellings?

Respondent: Customer Assistance Support Training

Response:

Southwest would propose to send letters and informational materials about the Low-Income Energy Efficiency program to the master-metered and multi-family account holders with a request to distribute these materials to the submetered customers living on their premises.

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**CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
ALJ STEVEN WEISSMAN
DATA REQUEST NO. ALJ-1
(ALJ-DR-1-1 THROUGH ALJ-DR-1-5)**

RULEMAKING NO.: R.04-01-006
COMMISSION: CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DATE OF REQUEST: OCTOBER 4, 2005

Request No. ALJ-DR-1-5:

Please comment on the following additional concepts:

- a. Suspending CARE recertification activities for the coming winter;
- b. Committing not to close any local offices during the coming winter and not to close any additional such offices thereafter without first notifying the Commission and receiving approval.

Respondent: Customer Assistance Support Training /
Conservation & Demand Side Management

Response:

- a. Southwest currently utilizes a daily automated mail process to recertify its CARE customers. Sixty (60) days prior to their two-year CARE Program expiration date, Southwest mails a notification letter to its CARE customers requesting that a new CARE application be completed and returned to Southwest. Upon receipt of a completed application, Southwest renews the customer's CARE Program enrollment for an additional two years. In contrast, if a completed application is not received from the customer by their expiration date, the customer's enrollment in the CARE Program is cancelled.

Southwest has identified approximately 3,500 CARE customers whose expiration dates fall during the 2005/2006 winter heating season or November 1, 2005 through March 31, 2006. In September, Southwest began mailing notification letters to customers whose expiration dates fall in

Continued on page 2

Response to Request No. ALJ-DR-1-5: (cont.)

November. Should Southwest be directed to suspend its recertification process throughout the 2005/2006 winter heating season, Southwest requests that appropriate time be given to allow a modification to its process in order to cease cancellation of CARE Program enrollments beginning November 1.

- b. Southwest has no current plans to close any local business offices in California during the 2005/2006 winter heating season. As has been our practice, Southwest will provide the Commission with proper advance notice and appropriately address any Commission concerns.