

Public Utility Commission of Texas

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Electric Customer Protections for Ike Victims **Disconnections Prohibited, Deposits Waived until Oct. 10**

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) on Wednesday approved an emergency order to help electric customers affected by Hurricane Ike.

The order prohibits electric service disconnections, waives deposit requirements for new service and prohibits higher fees for non-business day, same-day service reconnections and priority move-in requests. The prohibitions and waiver are effective until Oct. 10, 2008.

Eligible customers under the order are CenterPoint Energy customers in areas that have had the greatest percentage of extended outages as designated by specific zip codes in the Houston-Galveston area. The order also extends to Entergy Texas customers in Galveston, Jefferson, Chambers and Orange Counties.

Other customers are eligible for the benefits if they live in a county that is included in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster declaration (or in Rusk County) and provide evidence that they have been adversely impacted by Hurricane Ike. Proof of residence, such as a driver's license, electric bill or voter registration card may be required.

The Commission also directed the electric companies in the Houston-Galveston area to develop a process to allow customers to initiate electric service. Utilities have not read meters to initiate service for customers moving into this area because workforces are currently devoted to restoring service.

Electric and telephone customers affected by Hurricane Ike are encouraged to contact their providers who may offer customer protections or benefits above and beyond the scope of the Commission's order.

The Commission limited the duration of the order to Oct. 10 since the three-member panel's next scheduled open meeting is Oct. 8. At that time the Commission will review the effectiveness of the order and determine if any changes, deletions or additions are needed.

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