Governor Ducey Announces Electric Utility Relief Package

News Release

March 26, 2020

PHOENIX — Governor Doug Ducey today announced a cooperative agreement with the state's largest electric utilities to continue to provide reliable electricity to homes, hospitals, and businesses while making sure that Arizona residents facing financial difficulties will have choice, assistance, and reliable access to electricity.

Under the agreement, Arizona Public Service (APS), Salt River Project (SRP), Tucson Electric Power (TEP) and six electric cooperatives have all agreed to the following:

- No customer will have power to their home shut off during the remainder of the crisis for inability to pay;
- No penalties, late fees or interest will be assessed during this time.
- The utility companies will work with their customers to provide flexible options for payment, as well as guidance and choice of rate and payment plans.

In addition, the utilities all agreed to the following innovative solutions:

- Customer service representatives will work with customers desiring to switch plans during this time if they no longer feel that their current plan is the best option for them. No customer will be required to stay in a plan that they chose under different

circumstances if another one would be better for them and is approved under current regulatory rate structures. This will ensure that people have the flexibility to make the best decision for them, their family or their business.

- Customer service representatives are available for individualized service to the hospitals and health care providers during this time. While our healthcare system is being tested during this crisis, the utilities are committed to ensuring that their energy needs will be met.

- The utilities have agreed to work with one another across the state during this emergency to provide resources and coverage for one another to ensure continued reliable service. Arizonans can rest assured that the electric utility crews will work cooperatively to maintain power reliability. Resources will be available for rural cooperatives should their crews need supplementing.

Governor Ducey **met with electric utility representatives (https://twitter.com/dougducey/status/1242528443352285184)** on Tuesday to discuss actions to protect customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I'm grateful to Arizona's electricity providers for stepping up to protect customers during this unprecedented time," said Governor Ducey. "Responding to COVID-19 and supporting Arizonans impacted will require a whole-of-state approach. This agreement includes important measures to make sure families, businesses and healthcare facilities continue to have access to reliable electricity throughout this public health emergency."

"SRP appreciates Governor Ducey's concern for the continued reliability of the electrical grid and his commitment to working with us to ensure our customers remain safe and connected to power and water," said SRP CEO and General Manager Mike Hummel. "We are committed to working with our customers, the Governor, local nonprofits and community action agencies to ensure our assistance is available to those who need it most."

"The employees of APS take pride in powering Arizona by providing the critical service of electricity to customers throughout the state," said Jeff Guldner, Chairman and CEO of APS. "Our focus now, more than ever before, is on partnering across the industry and with the State of Arizona, to support the people counting on us through these challenging times."

"We know many of our customers have been hit hard by this pandemic, and we want to do everything we can to help," said David G. Hutchens, CEO of TEP, UniSource and their parent company, UNS Energy Corp. "We appreciate the leadership of Governor Ducey and all our public officials during this period of unprecedented and urgent need."

"Because Arizona's rural electric cooperatives are member-owned and member-driven, we understand the needs of our communities better than most," said Dave Lock, CEO, Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative Association. "The current pandemic is a unique situation. Because of that, cooperatives have decided to temporarily waive disconnections so our communities can better withstand this crisis. After all, we're all in this together."

Background:

- The utilities have recently committed over $3 million to community support and customer assistance programs to support residential customers and small businesses facing financial hardship due to COVID-19.

- The Governor and utilities have advocated for additional federal funds in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to assist Arizona utility customers unable to pay their bills. The federal COVID-19 relief legislation passed by the U.S. Senate last night includes over $11 million in additional bill assistance funds for Arizona.

- On March 22nd Governor Ducey announced the launch of a new statewide COVID-19 Hotline administered by 2-1-1 Arizona and the Crisis Response Network. Through the Hotline Arizonans can easily reach important information and stay healthy. The service is offered in English and Spanish and is available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm each day of the week.

More information on how to receive utility assistance is available on **ArizonaTogether.org (http://arizonatogether.org/)**.

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