



NEWS RELEASE
GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 18, 2002

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**PSC Selects SCANA To Be The Regulated Natural Gas Provider Established
By The Natural Gas Consumers' Relief Act (HB 1568) And Takes Other Action**

ATLANTA – Today, the Georgia Public Service Commission (Commission or PSC) selected SCANA to be the Regulated Natural Gas Provider, adopted rules for electric membership corporations to seek certification to market natural gas, and initiated rulemaking on terms of service for natural gas marketers. Each of these actions was taken to further implement provisions contained in the recently enacted Natural Gas Consumers' Relief Act.

SCANA was one of three marketers to bid to become the Regulated Natural Gas Provider, which is responsible for serving two groups of customers: consumers who meet the definition of low income as established by the Department of Human Resources and consumers who are unable to receive service from a marketer. The Commission approved the most advantageous pricing plan of several alternatives proposed by SCANA. The approved plan has the lowest prices for consumers and a special rate for senior citizens. Low-income customers will pay about \$0.22 per therm over the wholesale price of natural gas with a \$4.95 monthly customer charge; low-income seniors will pay about \$0.20 over wholesale with a \$4.95 monthly customer charge; and high risk customers will pay around \$0.36 over wholesale with a \$11.95 monthly customer charge. In addition, SCANA will set up a strong notification and customer education program to ensure that those who qualify to use the Regulated Provider will be served. The approved plan also limits the exposure to the Universal Service Fund from which the Commission pays the regulated provider for uncollectibles relating to low-income customers. All customers should eventually benefit from the downward pressure on prices as fewer bad debt customers are served by the natural gas marketers. The Georgia General Assembly by law required the Commission to select a Regulated Provider by July 1, 2002. SCANA will begin accepting customers after August 15 and is expected to begin selling gas to these two customer groups on September 1, 2002.

Other actions by the PSC today included adopting rules for electric membership corporations to seek certification to market natural gas and approving Staff's recommendation to issue proposed rules for natural gas marketer terms of service. The proposed terms of service rules set forth minimum standards for which terms of service are to be offered to consumers; require marketer terms of service to be approved by the Commission; set forth provisions that must be contained in the disclosure statement given to consumers; recognize a consumer's three-day right to rescind a contract entered into with a marketer; establish a self-executing mechanism for marketers to resolve complaints; and, specify penalties for a marketer's failure to comply with the terms of service rules.

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