

Why Is Gavin Getting in Bed with PG&E?

Just as City Hall prepares a final vote to implement Community Choice Aggregation – a policy that will break PG&E's monopoly and attain 50% of the city's energy from local renewable energy – Mayor Gavin Newsom is launching several high-profile projects with PG&E. The projects are all environmental in name, and are all token in impact. We, the Green Guerrillas Against Greenwash, are concerned that the Mayor may be attempting to buffer his environmental credentials with these high-profile partnerships and then fail to prioritize the implementation of the policy that will actually have a substantive impact on preventing climate change. The Mayor & PG&E have had the following meaningless hook-ups:

- ▶ **Giant Stadium Goes Solar; What About the Rest of Us?** It's great that the Giants' stadium is going solar today. But let's not lose sight of the fact that this 123 kilowatts of solar is 0.03% of the 360 megawatts that Community Choice will achieve. This installation – paid by PG&E ratepayers – will power 40 houses, while Community Choice policy will power 50% of the entire city of San Francisco.
- ▶ **BC3 Partnership Politely Asks Business To Be Nice.** Mayor Newsom launched and funded a business-government partnership called the Business Council on Climate Change, which has no requirements or targets for emission reduction. It asks members – including PG&E and Gap Inc. – to follow principles such as 'community leadership'. Launched on March 1, 2007, the Mayor said this partnership aims, "to serve as a worldwide model for new economically friendly solutions." The time for empty partnerships politely asking for voluntary reductions is over.
- ▶ **Mayor's Solar Plan is 1/10 of Community Choice.** On March 22, 2007, Mayor Newsom announced a plan to get 35 megawatts of solar power. This is a mere 10% of the renewable energy capacity being offered by Community Choice Aggregation. Will this confuse and prevent the public from knowing that a much more serious solar policy is possible
- ▶ **Let's Green(Wash) This City?** Mayor Newsom participated in PG&E's high-profile launch events for its 'Lets Green This City' campaign. This PR campaign has deluged our city with a multi-million dollar PR campaign attempting to co-opt the environmental benefit of bicyclists, farmers market shoppers and environmental nonprofits – while failing to provide a single drop of green energy.
- ▶ **Watch the Money Behind 'Energy Watch'.** The Mayor announced the "Energy Watch" partnership with PG&E on February 6, 2007 to fund energy efficiency programs. This \$11.5 million program hands over taxpayer's money paid each month, called the Public Goods Charge, to PG&E to administer. This allows PG&E to look as if it is doing this work out of its own pocket and goodwill. Meanwhile, it is well established, and common sense, that energy efficiency programs are far more effective when given to third-parties and not to the utility company that profits from selling energy. (For more info on this see Women's Energy Matters).

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Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is a policy that allows communities to take over the role of purchasing electricity for its residents and provide reliable, locally generated renewable power that meets or beats PG&E's rates. CCA feasibility studies of 22 cities show that 40 percent renewable energy can be achieved with no rate increase. By building in best practices in energy efficiency, San Francisco and Marin's CCA plans call for 50 percent renewable energy supplies by 2017. (In contrast, PG&E is currently violating state renewable energy minimum law; its stated goal is to achieve minimum state mandates of 20% by 2010; and it's positioning for a massive expansion of nuclear and gas).

Community Choice Aggregation was passed by California's legislature in 2002 (AB117-Migden) and is actively being considered by 48 cities and counties in California. Eleven of these, including San Francisco, Marin, and Chula Vista – are in the late stages of implementation planning. Throughout the country, 1.5 million people already get their energy from Community Choice. Cleveland, for example, demonstrates that CCA can save ratepayers more than 5% on each bill and reduces air pollution by 70 percent.

San Francisco's CCA will produce 360 megawatts of peak load renewable energy, which accounts for 50% of the city's energy needs. Locally generated renewable power cushions ratepayers from fossil fuels – which have highly volatile prices and are largely imported from regions suffering military oppression. Community Choice also demonstrates that nuclear power can be replaced by safe and renewable energy, since San Francisco's CCA alone accounts for 1/6 of PG&E's Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant output.

Community Choice Aggregation is endorsed by dozens of environmental and public good advocates including: Senior Action Network, Community First Coalition, Sierra Club, Local Power, Green Party, Our City, Women's Energy Matters, Greenpeace, and League of Young Voters.

Green Guerrillas Against Greenwash (GGAG) is a citizen group formed out of disgust for PG&E's 'Lets Green This City' greenwashing campaign and is further outraged at PG&E's attempt to prevent cities from implementing Community Choice Aggregation. Green Guerrillas stand opposed to dirty energy, such as LNG and nuclear, and stand for climate solutions built on robust efficiency and renewable energy. By holding high-profile actions and through their website, www.LetsGreenWashThisCity.org, Green Guerrillas focus on embarrassing PG&E and exposing their plans to undermine truly green legislation.

<http://www.LetsGreenWashThisCity.org>