



**Pacific Gas and  
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**NEWS**

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**Pacific Gas and Electric Company Provides \$425,000 in Grants to 2-1-1 Bay Area Service**

*Four Bay Area Organizations Operate Free Community Service Information Line*

**SAN FRANCISCO** – Continuing its long-standing commitment to support the diverse communities it serves, Pacific Gas and Electric Company today presented checks totaling \$425,000 to 4 Bay Area organizations to support their operation and expansion of 2-1-1 phone service in the region.

2-1-1 is a toll-free, easy-to-remember phone number that connects people with important community services, such as child care, flu-shot information, employment assistance, counseling, food, shelter, volunteer opportunities and more. In the Bay Area, 2-1-1 is currently available 24 hours a day in more than 150 languages in three counties: Alameda, San Francisco and Santa Clara.

“Today’s event completes our \$770,000 commitment to provide much needed information and services to those who seek help for every day needs and in times of crisis. This national non-emergency response system was instrumental in helping victims of Hurricane Katrina and those affected by the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001,” said Ophelia Basgal, vice president for Civic Partnership and Community Initiatives at Pacific Gas and Electric Company, “This to me is a truly unique service that helps people cut through the tape and be there for each other.”

The gift recipients, which operate 2-1-1 in the Bay Area, include United Way of the Bay Area, Eden I&R, United Way Silicon Valley and Contra Costa Crisis Center. PG&E’s gift will support these organizations’ collaborative efforts to establish an integrated, region-wide 2-1-1 network by the spring of 2008.

“Every hour of every day, someone in the Bay Area needs essential services—from flu-shot information, to counseling, to quality care for a child or aging parent,” said Anne Wilson, CEO of United Way of the Bay Area. “Pacific Gas and Electric’s generous gift will help United Way and its partners expand 2-1-1 so that more Bay Area residents can quickly connect with

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community services. Establishing a 2-1-1 regional network in the Bay Area is also crucial preparation for the next major earthquake or other disaster.”

“Throughout California individual 2-1-1 centers are relying on private/public partnerships to support the 24/7 access to health and human service information. Here in Alameda County, the 14 cities and the county joined together to formulate a fair and equitable leveraged funding plan that includes: a per capita share of costs for each city; a direct funding match from the county; and a leveraged funding amount from the private sector,” said Barbara Bernstein, Executive Director, Eden Information and Referral Inc. “Pacific Gas and Electric Company is one of several local corporations demonstrating leadership roles in partnering with government entities to meet the needs of vulnerable populations – especially non-English speakers.”

“The value of 211 can’t be over stated. Both on a day-to-day basis and in times of disaster, 211 enables people to access services in their community quickly and easily,” said John Bateson, Executive Director, Contra Costa Crisis Center. “Local residents get the help they need when they need it, in the language of their choice, thus increasing their access to care, reducing disparities for ethnic communities, and preventing long-term health and social problems.”

“Since the February launch of 2-1-1 Santa Clara County, more than 10,000 local people have called asking for assistance and the calls are continuing to increase month over month,” said Amari Romero-Thomas, Senior Vice-President, United Way Silicon Valley. “Through its generous contribution, PG&E demonstrates it understands that people need easy-to-access to information about programs and services that they need, when they need it.”

Since the early 1970’s, hundreds of non-profit community organizations called “Information and Referral Services” (I&Rs) have been established nationwide to help individuals navigate the maze of telephone numbers to reach local services such as shelters, employment agencies, child care, and senior health assistance. In 2000, the Federal Communication Commission reserved the “2-1-1” dialing code to be used exclusively by these groups for this purpose. First launched 10 years ago in Atlanta, 2-1-1 service now operates in parts of 41 states, including California. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has ruled that each county will select one organization to provide the service, with that selection subject to CPUC ratification.

2-1-1 is an integral component of disaster-response infrastructure. In times of disaster, 2-1-1 significantly alleviates non-emergency calls to 9-1-1 and serves as a vital link for individuals seeking to provide resources or volunteer. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, it has become

clear that affected residents who used 2-1-1 greatly improved their chances to receive assistance. Given that experience, the Bay Area's designated 2-1-1 providers and their partners are working together to ensure that a robust, recognizable, and familiar 2-1-1 system – integrated across counties so that information can be shared regarding both clients and services – is established here quickly.

PG&E's support of economic development programs is part of the utility's long history of making charitable grants tailored to the needs of the wide variety of communities it serves. The company's broader program of support to communities includes cash grants, in-kind contributions, and volunteers for community-based nonprofit organizations, and for schools and other governmental programs throughout northern and central California. This year, PG&E is increasing its support to charitable nonprofit organizations by 25 percent to \$18.3 million – the largest charitable commitment in the company's history. All charitable contributions are entirely funded by the company's shareholders and the level of charitable giving does not affect gas and electric rates.

Following is the list of the organizations receiving grants, which are designated by the CPUC to provide 2-1-1 service in different counties:

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>2-1-1 SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR</b>	<b>GRANT AMOUNT FOR 2006-2007</b>
Alameda	Eden I & R	\$100,000
Contra Costa	Contra Costa Crisis Center	\$50,000
San Francisco, Marin, Napa, Solano and San Mateo	United Way of the Bay Area	\$225,000
Santa Clara	United Way Silicon Valley	\$50,000

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