

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA

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State's energy problem

I am the president of the Distributed Energy Resources Group. We are a California-based, turn-key provider of energy infrastructure and energy services. Our business grows when the energy situation deteriorates, so it may seem counterintuitive that I am sending this letter. However, as I like to say to my associates, a little uncertainty is good for business; wholesale decline in the infrastructure is terrible for the economy and that hurts everyone.

At a time when California's electricity supplies are barely enough to keep up with existing demand, we're at risk of losing some of our existing power supply.

Almost 20 percent of our electricity comes from cogeneration, which is the use of one fuel (like natural gas) to produce both heat and electricity — to run factories or heat schools, for instance. But without action by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), as contracts for cogenerated power expire, they may not be renewed.

Cogeneration facilities have been a reliable source of electricity for the last 20 years, helping the state's businesses to stay on line. According to the state Energy Commission, cogeneration's environmentally friendly power also offers a cost-effective way to help meet the state's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, without damaging our economy.

I urge the CPUC to act promptly to preserve cogenerated power, and I encourage readers to learn more for themselves at www.cogenworks.com.

Steve Greenberg
Benicia