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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

Commission Approves Assistance for Low Income Natural Gas Customers on the Atlanta Gas Light Company System

ATLANTA, December 6, 2011 – Help is available for as many as 60,000 low income natural gas households in paying their winter heating bills following the Georgia Public Service Commission unanimous vote today to approve the distribution of approximately \$10 million to low income senior natural gas customers and low income customers in Group 1 with the Regulated Provider. The assistance will be distributed beginning with the December- January period as a one-time credit of up to \$160 on customers' bills. The grants will be disbursed from the natural gas Universal Service Fund and only those customers in the Atlanta Gas Light Company distribution area are eligible.

Commissioner Chairman Stan Wise, who made the motion to provide the assistance, said, "The reality is that the states are getting stuck with the impacts of drastic federal cuts to the energy assistance program and there are going to be some truly needy people out there when winter heating bills start arriving."

Senior citizens who are already receiving the AGLC senior citizen discount must apply for the grant through their natural gas marketer or Atlanta Gas Light in order to receive this assistance. Senior low income citizens who are not currently receiving the discount but are eligible should submit an application in order to qualify for this assistance. To qualify for the discount, a senior citizen must be age 65 or older and have an annual income of less than \$14,355.

Commissioner Tim Echols added, "In difficult economic times like these, it is a blessing to have funds contributed by large industrial customers to assist low income seniors. We have so many great companies in Georgia and I hope we in government will make the business climate as friendly for them as possible."

Since the inception of the Universal Service Fund (USF), the Commission has approved the disbursement of \$64.9 million in assistance for low income natural gas customers on the AGLC system. Additionally, the Commission has approved a total of \$117.8 million in grants and refunds to all AGLC customers since 1998. The USF is a fund established under the Natural Gas Deregulation Act of 1997. The law authorizes the Commission to order disbursements from the USF to assist low income consumers in times of emergency as determined by the Commission.

For more information, visit the Commission web site at www.psc.state.ga.us.

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