

Clean Power Alliance Tests Zero-Cost Daytime Electricity

More Than 4,000 Customers to Participate in Real-World Pilot Examining How Households Respond to Daytime Price Incentives

For immediate release: October 1, 2026

Los Angeles, Calif. – Clean Power Alliance (CPA), the nation’s leading green power provider and California’s largest community choice energy aggregator, is launching a two-year pilot that will give more than 4,000 Southern California households a \$0-per-kilowatt-hour generation rate from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

The [Time-Of-Use-SMART Pilot](#) (TOU-SMART), a collaborative research effort with UCLA, will help determine whether a strong daytime price incentive can alter when households use electricity, thereby lowering their bills by taking advantage of abundant daytime solar power.

Under the pilot, participating customers will pay no CPA generation charge from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., CPA’s super-off-peak period. Generation charges are already higher during the on-peak period from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and will increase slightly during the overnight off-peak period from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m., creating an incentive to shift activities such as electric vehicle charging, laundry, dishwashing, pool pumping, heating and cooling into the daytime.

CPA estimates that customers could save hundreds of dollars per year by shifting a portion of overnight electricity use to the daytime and potentially save even more by shifting some on-peak-period use. Customers who charge an electric vehicle at home could have additional opportunities to reduce their generation costs by charging during the daytime window and by signing up for CPA’s [EV SmartCharge](#) program.

Bill Protection for Participating Customers

Participants in the TOU-SMART pilot will receive bill protection designed to ensure they are not financially disadvantaged by taking part in the pilot. If a



participant would have paid more under TOU-SMART than under their previous TOU-D-PRIME rate, CPA will provide a bill credit for the difference at the end of each 12-month period. Participants can also disenroll from the pilot at any time.

“TOU-SMART is about putting an idea into practice and learning from what happens in the real world,” said CPA CEO Ted Bardacke. “We’re giving thousands of customers a meaningful financial incentive to use electricity when solar power is abundant, and what we learn from this pilot can help CPA develop new innovative rates and programs that can make clean energy more affordable.”

The pilot comes as [proposals](#) for lower-cost daytime electricity enter California’s policy conversation. TOU-SMART will provide data on how households respond to a strong daytime price incentive.

A Real-world Test of Energy-use Behavior

The idea behind the pilot is straightforward: When clean energy is abundant and electricity generation costs are lower, customers have an opportunity to shift electricity use into those hours.

For a participating household, that could mean charging an electric vehicle during the day instead of in the evening, running a pool pump or appliances during sunny hours, or adjusting heating and cooling schedules.

The pilot will measure whether customers change their electricity-use patterns, what motivates those changes, how long they last and how responses differ among households.

Participants will receive behavioral messages designed to test different approaches to encouraging load shifting. Some communications will emphasize potential cost savings, while others will focus on environmental benefits.

Researchers will examine whether certain messages are more effective than others at encouraging customers to shift electricity use and whether those changes persist over time.

Understanding How Different Households Respond

The pilot will also examine differences among participating households.



Customers with electric vehicles, pool pumps or electric heat pumps may have more opportunities to shift electricity use into the daytime. Existing consumption patterns, housing characteristics and climate conditions also may influence how readily households respond to the new rate.

Understanding that information could help CPA develop future rates, programs and customer communications that account for the circumstances and energy-use patterns of different households.

The pilot's research design has been informed by analysis and collaboration with researchers at UCLA.

In fall 2025, CPA began working with Professor Magali Delmas of UCLA Anderson School of Management and the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability to help refine the study. Delmas has conducted research into how information, incentives and other strategies can influence household energy-use behavior.

"TOU-SMART is a rare opportunity to run a rigorous field experiment on how households respond to a strong daytime price signal," said Professor Magali Delmas. "We will be able to measure whether the rate and the accompanying behavioral messages shift electricity use into midday hours, which framings work best and whether the effects persist over two years. Findings on those questions can inform how utilities and policymakers design the daytime rates that are coming as solar becomes an ever larger share of the grid."

Professor Delmas' work with CPA is helping ensure that the pilot can generate meaningful and actionable results for CPA customers and contribute to a broader understanding of how households respond to time-based electricity prices.

From Pilot to Future Programs

California is adding increasing amounts of renewable energy to its electric grid, including solar power that is most abundant during the middle of the day. Time-based electricity rates can encourage customers to use electricity when renewable resources are plentiful, but questions remain about how much households will shift their consumption, how long those changes will last, and which approaches are most effective.



Press Release



[TOU-SMART](#) is designed to help answer those questions using hourly electricity-use data, customer feedback and behavioral research.

For CPA, the results could help inform future rates, customer programs and outreach strategies.

For participating customers, the pilot provides an opportunity to explore new ways of managing household electricity use while contributing to research into how consumers can help create a more flexible, renewable-powered electric grid.

About Clean Power Alliance

Clean Power Alliance is the locally operated, not-for-profit electricity provider serving 38 communities across Los Angeles and Ventura counties. CPA is the fourth largest electricity provider in California and the number one green power provider in the United States. CPA provides clean renewable energy at competitive rates for approximately three million residents and businesses, along with innovative programs that promote resiliency, electrification and customer bill savings. CPA has an investment-grade credit rating of A from S&P Global Ratings.

Learn more about CPA at www.cleanpoweralliance.org

View CPA's most recent [Impact Report](#)

Media Contact:

John Axtell
Senior Public Relations Manager
Clean Power Alliance
jaxtell@cleanpoweralliance.org
(213) 376-4850 Ext. 184

