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## SMART GRID CONSUMER COLLABORATIVE GROWS TO 50 MEMBERS

*Four consumer advocacy groups, a business services vendor, and one of the nation's largest utilities help new non-profit reach membership milestone*

**ATLANTA - January 17, 2010** – Six new members of the [Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative](#) (SGCC) put the nonprofit over its goal of fifty members in its first year. The group, which last week announced its first permanent executive director in Patty Durand, continues to gain momentum with these new members:

- **San Diego Gas & Electric** is one of the nation's largest public electric utilities.
- The **Alliance to Save Energy**, the **Natural Resources Defense Council**, **Green DMV**, and the **Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance** are environmental and consumer advocacy groups.
- **Vertex Business Services** is a business process outsourcing and IT services company which promotes improved customer experience.

“The SGCC was formed to foster mutual understanding between industry and consumers regarding the creation of a next-generation energy infrastructure,” said SGCC Interim Director Jesse Berst. “We’ve grown rapidly by welcoming utilities, vendors, and consumer groups to listen, educate, and collaborate through research and forums for sharing best practices.”

Founded in February 2010, the SGCC's growth highlights a new trend toward collaborative efforts to build a modern electric grid that serves the needs of all stakeholders. SGCC Charter members include General Electric, IBM, and the GridWise Alliance. For a complete list of members, see <http://smartgridcc.org/members>. SGCC's newest members are:

The **Alliance to Save Energy** is a nonprofit coalition of prominent business, government, environmental and consumer leaders who promote the efficient and clean use of energy worldwide to benefit the environment, the economy and national security.

ASE Senior Vice President of Policy and Research Floyd DesChamps said, “The smart grid has the potential to unlock major energy efficiency opportunities for consumers,

empowering them to realize energy efficiency as the quickest, easiest and cheapest road to a new energy future. The Alliance to Save Energy promotes energy efficiency worldwide to achieve a healthier economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy security. We are pleased to work with the SGCC to ensure that consumers are able to realize the efficiency benefits of smart grid systems.”

[Green DMV](#) is a nonprofit promoting clean energy and green jobs in low-income communities across America as a pathway out of poverty. Their initial focus is on the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area to help influence policy change in the region that will spur sustainable green job growth and equitable environmental policies.

[Natural Resources Defense Council](#) (NRDC) is an international nonprofit environmental organization with more than 1.3 million members and online activists. Since 1970, its lawyers, scientists, and environmental specialists have worked to protect the world's natural resources, public health, and environment.

“NRDC is dedicated to advancing a clean energy economy in an environmentally sustainable manner,” NRDC Staff Attorney Brandi Colander said. “To that end, NRDC believes that it is time to consider the adoption of a cost effective smart grid initiative. The existence of an integrated communications infrastructure that corresponds with price signals in real time is potentially valuable to both energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies -- although adroit choices of implementation strategies will be crucial to success. NRDC is pleased to join SGCC to properly explore broader deployment of these technologies and clearly define the benefits that a smart grid can deliver and the extent to which it can facilitate a cost-effective transition to a more sustainable energy future.”

[San Diego Gas & Electric](#) (SDG&E) is a regulated public utility that provides safe and reliable energy service to 3.4 million consumers through 1.4 million electric meters and more than 845,000 natural gas meters in San Diego and southern Orange counties. The utility's area spans 4,100 square miles. SDG&E is a subsidiary of Sempra Energy (NYSE: SRE), a Fortune 500 energy services holding company based in San Diego.

[Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance](#) (SEEA) promotes energy efficiency for a cleaner environment, a more prosperous economy, and a higher quality of life in the Southeastern region of the United States. Based in Atlanta, and working in eleven states, SEEA brings together businesses, utilities, governments, public utility commissions, energy service companies, manufacturers, retailers, energy and environmental organizations, low-income energy advocates, large energy consumers, and universities to promote energy-efficient policies and practices.

[Vertex](#) is a leader in BPO (business process outsourcing), customer management outsourcing and IT Services, serving over 200 clients worldwide across many sectors. Vertex provides value-based solutions that deliver exceptional customer experience -- and do so cost effectively.

“Vertex Business Services is delighted to join the Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative,” said Ron Aberman, executive vice president of business development. “Collaborating with customers on behalf of utilities is the primary role of Vertex. We manage the meter-to-cash processes of 70 utilities in North America, all of which will have some level of customer care impacted by the changes coming from the era of smart grid and demand response. It is our belief that to obtain full value from the investments in the communication infrastructure of the smart grid that fundamental change in business processes around interacting with customers is critical. The SGCC represents an opportunity for Vertex to help move that change agenda forward. By partnering with other member companies, consumer advocacy groups, utilities and regulators, the capacity now exists to ensure that the industry delivers the benefits of a smarter grid.”

#### **About the Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative (SGCC)**

The SGCC is a consumer focused non-profit organization aiming to promote the understanding and benefits of modernized electrical systems among all stakeholders in the United States. Membership is open to all consumer and environmental advocates, technology vendors, research scientists, and electric utilities for sharing in research, best practices, and collaborative efforts of the group. Join @ [www.smartgridcc.org](http://www.smartgridcc.org).