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**Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative Announces Recipients of the 2017 CLEAR Awards**

*Winning organizations serve as role models in the development of smart grid consumer education programs*

**SAN DIEGO – Jan. 30, 2016** – The Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative (SGCC) today named Fort Collins Utilities, Illinois Citizens Utility Board (CUB) and Whisker Labs, a wholly owned subsidiary of Earth Networks, as the winners of its 2017 CLEAR Awards at the 2017 Consumer Symposium in San Diego.

The annual CLEAR Awards, now in their fifth year, recognize one utility, technology provider and non-profit who serve as role models within SGCC and the smart grid industry. The selections were based on the following five behaviors and how the organizations made smart grid CLEAR to consumers:

**Consumers first:** Organization has demonstrated a true, consumer-centric approach in the development and implementation of consumer education and awareness programs;

**Leadership:** Organization has exhibited initiative in the area of consumer education and is recognized as a consumer advocate and thought leader in the industry;

**Excellence:** Organization has demonstrated innovation and imagination in the creation of consumer-facing initiatives and programs;

**Authenticity:** Organization has demonstrated a high level of integrity in engaging with consumers and other key stakeholders in the industry; and

**Results:** Organization has been able to demonstrate, in a quantifiable way, a direct impact on consumer awareness and behavior.

Nominations were submitted by the industry through Jan. 5, 2017, and the following three winners were selected by a panel of SGCC member companies:

**Fort Collins Utilities** was selected for its commitment to providing its customers proven and innovative ways to save energy. Fort Collins Utilities believes that the power of the individual in conservation makes a big difference in protecting Fort Collins' quality of life and environmental health, now and for generations to come.

Fort Collins, Colorado, is a community focused on the environment, and Fort Collins Utilities makes every effort to provide programs that meet the needs of its customers. Those include Peak Partners, an integrated demand response and energy efficiency program, and Efficiency Works, which provides residential customers significantly discounted energy and water audits, efficiency adviser services and installation of energy- and water-saving products to help them reduce costs and increase the comfort of their homes.

“Peak Partners and Fort Collins Utilities are honored to receive this award. We strive to be a data-driven utility, and data can take many forms. By combining sensor telemetries and customer survey data, we are able to improve the technology used in the program and implement industry best practices,” said Pablo Bauleo, Peak Partners Program Manager.

SGCC recognizes the **Illinois Citizens Utility Board** for its advocacy for the rights of resident and small-business utility customers. Since 1984, the watchdog group has helped save Illinois consumers more than

\$20 billion by helping to block utility rate hikes and secure refunds.

In 2016, the consumer group played a key role in a coalition of 200 nonprofit and business groups that helped pass the Future Energy Jobs Bill, historic legislation that boosts efficiency to record levels to spark billions of dollars in consumer savings. Also in 2016, CUB worked with the Environmental Defense Fund and PJM to implement demand response options for buildings to keep energy costs down.

“CUB is proud to accept the CLEAR Consumer Education Award. After three decades of coalition building and consumer advocacy, we’ve learned that anybody who pays electric bills can easily grasp the logic of energy efficiency – that the cheapest, cleanest kilowatt-hour is the one you never use. It’s our honor to serve as a bridge for Illinois consumers, connecting them to cutting-edge policy, programs and smart technology that will usher in a cleaner, more affordable energy future,” said CUB Executive Director David Kolata.

Finally, SGCC acknowledges **Whisker Labs**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Earth Networks, for its focus on delivering quantifiable results for consumers in both demand response and energy efficiency programs. Whisker Labs’ Connected Savings platform is the first to integrate big weather data, connected thermostats and utility meter data – a fundamentally different smart home approach that provides consumers with unmatched value from automation and analytics that minimize the impact of weather on their energy usage.

“Whisker Labs’ Connected Savings platform – which includes the personalized Energy ScoreCard we deliver to consumers every month – enables significant energy savings and comfort by educating and engaging the consumer on their energy usage,” said Amena Ali, chief revenue officer, Whisker Labs. “We are thrilled that Connected Savings’ consumer-centric approach to demand response and energy efficiency programs has received this prestigious award from the Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative.”

The winning organizations were honored during an awards ceremony at SGCC’s 2017 Consumer Symposium at the San Diego Convention Center. Extended profiles of all three winners will be featured on [www.smartgridcc.org](http://www.smartgridcc.org) throughout the months of February and March 2017.