

## **PSC ANNOUNCES ANOTHER MAJOR ELECTRIC REFUND**

ATLANTA—Georgia Public Service Commission Chairman Stan Wise announced today that Georgia Power customers will receive approximately \$60-75 million in one-time refunds on their bills this summer because of a rate reduction agreement reached in the 1998 Georgia Power rate case.

The agreement cut residential and large business base bills by 5.73% and small business base bills by 16.1%. The agreement also included provisions to refund money to customers if Georgia Power exceeded pre-determined earnings levels due to extreme weather conditions.

"We had an unusually hot August, and that is exactly why we put these provisions in place," said Chairman Wise. "These provisions are revolutionary because before we had them, Georgia Power would profit from extreme weather. While the company does get one-third of these benefits, customers get the lion's share (two-thirds)." Although the exact amount is not finalized, the one-time refund will be approximately \$14 for the average residential customer.

Wise reiterated the Georgia Public Service Commission (Commission) last year lowered Georgia Power's rates, and over the three years (1999-2001) of the rate agreement, the total reduction will amount to \$834 million. This one-time refund will add to the overall savings proposed by this agreement.

"The Commission is proud that the rates of its largest regulated electric utility, Georgia Power Company, are significantly below the national average," Wise concluded.

The refund is expected to be a credit on bills to residential, small business and large business customers in the early summer of 2000, depending on final Commission action.

Georgia Power's overall average rate for kilowatt-hour of electricity is lower than it has been since 1987. The Commission last allowed Georgia Power to raise base rates in 1991.