

PG&E CORP
Form 424B5
March 09, 2009

Table of Contents

This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus relate to an effective registration statement under the Securities Act of 1933, but are not complete and may be changed. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell these securities and we are not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

**Filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
SEC File No. 333-149360**

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED MARCH 9, 2009

**PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To Prospectus dated March 9, 2009)**

**\$
% Senior Notes due**

We are offering \$ _____ principal amount of our _____ % Senior Notes due _____, which we refer to in this prospectus supplement as our _____ senior notes.

We will pay interest on our senior notes on each _____ and _____, commencing _____. The senior notes will be issued in denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess of \$2,000.

We may redeem the senior notes in whole or in part at any time at the redemption price set forth in this prospectus supplement.

The senior notes will be unsecured and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness from time to time outstanding. The senior notes will be structurally subordinated to all existing and future liabilities of our subsidiaries.

There is no existing public market for the senior notes. We do not intend to list the senior notes on any securities exchange or any automated quotation system.

Investing in these senior notes involves risks. See Risk Factors on page S-4.

Total

	Per Senior Note	
Public Offering Price ⁽¹⁾	%	\$
Underwriting Discount	%	\$
Proceeds to PG&E Corporation (before expenses) ⁽¹⁾	%	\$

⁽¹⁾ Plus accrued interest, if any, from and including original issuance of the senior notes which is expected to be March , 2009.

None of the Securities and Exchange Commission, any state securities commission or any other regulatory body has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The senior notes are expected to be delivered on or about March , 2009 through the book-entry facilities of The Depository Trust Company.

Joint Book-Running Managers

BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC

Citi

Goldman, Sachs & Co.

March , 2009

This prospectus supplement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying prospectus. You should rely only on the information contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the information incorporated by reference and any free writing prospectus prepared by us. Neither we nor any underwriter has authorized any other person to provide you with different or additional information. If anyone provides you with different or additional information, you should not rely on it. Neither we nor any underwriter is making an offer to sell the senior notes in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus prepared by us is accurate only as of the date hereof or thereof.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Prospectus Supplement	
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-4
<u>Our Company</u>	S-4
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	S-4
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-4
<u>Capitalization</u>	S-5
<u>Description of the Senior Notes</u>	S-6
<u>Certain United States Federal Income Tax Consequences</u>	S-10
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-13
<u>General Information</u>	S-16
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-16
Prospectus	
<u>About This Prospectus</u>	i
<u>PG&E Corporation</u>	1
<u>Risk Factors</u>	1
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	1
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	3
<u>Certain Ratios</u>	3
<u>Description of Securities</u>	4
<u>Description of the Senior Notes</u>	4
<u>Description of the Subordinated Notes</u>	10
<u>Description of Common Stock and Preferred Stock</u>	17
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	19
<u>Description of Securities Purchase Contracts and Securities Purchase Units</u>	21
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	23
<u>Global Securities</u>	26
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	28
<u>Legal Matters</u>	28
<u>Experts</u>	28
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	29
<u>Certain Documents Incorporated By Reference</u>	29

Unless otherwise indicated, when used in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, the terms we, our and us refer to PG&E Corporation and our consolidated subsidiaries. The term Utility refers to our subsidiary, Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

S-2

Table of Contents

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus contain forward-looking statements that are necessarily subject to various risks and uncertainties. Forward-looking statements in this prospectus supplement are based on current estimates, expectations and projections about future events, and assumptions regarding these events and management's knowledge of facts as of the date of this prospectus supplement. These forward-looking statements relate to, among other matters, estimated capital expenditures, our estimated rate base, estimated environmental remediation liabilities, the anticipated outcome of various regulatory and legal proceedings, future cash flows, and the level of future equity or debt issuances, and are also identified by words such as assume, expect, intend, plan, project, believe, estimate, predict, anticipate, aim, may, might, should, would, could, goal, potential. We are not able to predict all the factors that may affect future results. See Forward-Looking Statements in the accompanying prospectus, for some of the factors that could cause future results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, or from historical results.

S-3

Table of Contents**RISK FACTORS**

Investing in the senior notes involves risk. These risks are described under "Risk Factors" in Item 1A of our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2008, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. See "Where You Can Find More Information" in the accompanying prospectus. Before making a decision to invest in the senior notes, you should carefully consider these risks as well as other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

OUR COMPANY

We are a holding company whose primary purpose is to hold interests in energy-based businesses. We conduct our business principally through Pacific Gas and Electric Company, or the Utility, a public utility operating in northern and central California. The Utility engages in the businesses of electricity and natural gas distribution, electricity generation, procurement and transmission, and natural gas procurement, transportation and storage. The Utility was incorporated in California in 1905. We were incorporated in California in 1995 and became the holding company of the Utility and its subsidiaries on January 1, 1997.

The Utility served approximately 5.1 million electricity distribution customers and approximately 4.3 million natural gas distribution customers at December 31, 2008. The Utility had approximately \$40.5 billion of assets at December 31, 2008, and generated revenues of approximately \$14.6 billion in 2008. Its revenues are generated mainly through the sale and delivery of electricity and natural gas. The Utility is regulated primarily by the California Public Utilities Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Our principal executive office is located at One Market, Spear Tower, Suite 2400, San Francisco, California 94105, and our telephone number is (415) 267-7000. The principal executive office of the Utility is located at 77 Beale Street, P.O. Box 770000, San Francisco, California 94177, and its telephone number is (415) 973-7000.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table sets forth our historical ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the fiscal years indicated.

2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
3.20x	2.68x	2.86x	3.36x	9.69x

For the purpose of computing our ratio of earnings to fixed charges, "earnings" represent net income adjusted for the minority interest in losses of less than 100% owned affiliates, equity in undistributed income or losses of less than 50% owned affiliates, income taxes and fixed charges (excluding capitalized interest). "Fixed charges" include interest on long-term debt and short-term borrowings (including a representative portion of rental expenses), amortization of bond premium, discount and expense, interest on capital leases, allowance for funds used during construction debt, and earnings required to cover the preferred stock dividend requirements and preferred security distribution requirements of a majority-owned trust. Fixed charges exclude interest on Financial Accounting Standards Board Interpretation No. 48 (Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes) tax liabilities.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that the net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$ million, after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us. We intend to contribute the net proceeds from the sale of the senior notes to the Utility which will use the funds for general corporate purposes.

S-4

Table of Contents**CAPITALIZATION**

The following table sets forth our consolidated capitalization as of December 31, 2008, and as adjusted to give effect to the issuance and sale of the senior notes and the use of proceeds from this offering as set forth under "Use of Proceeds" above. This table should be read in conjunction with our consolidated financial statements and related notes as of and for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2008, incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. See "Where You Can Find More Information" in the accompanying prospectus.

	As of December 31, 2008	
	Actual	As Adjusted
	(in millions)	
Current Liabilities:		
Short-term borrowings(1)	\$ 287	\$ 0
Long-term debt, classified as current:		
Current portion of long-term debt(2)	600	600
Current portion of energy recovery bonds(3)	370	370
Total long-term debt, classified as current	\$ 1,257	\$ 970
Capitalization:		
Long-term debt(4)	\$ 9,321	\$
Energy recovery bonds(3)	1,213	1,213
Shareholders' equity(5)	9,629	9,629
Total capitalization	\$ 20,163	\$

- (1) Actual short-term borrowings consisted of \$287 million of commercial paper issued by the Utility, and as adjusted short-term borrowings takes into account the application of the net proceeds of the Utility's senior notes issued on March 6, 2009.
- (2) The entire \$600 million of current portion long-term debt matured on March 1, 2009.
- (3) PG&E Energy Recovery Funding LLC, or PERF, a legally separate but wholly-owned, consolidated subsidiary of the Utility, issued energy recovery bonds, or ERBs, supported by a dedicated rate component, or DRC, the proceeds of which were used to purchase from the Utility the right, known as recovery property, to be paid a specified amount from a DRC. DRC charges are collected by the Utility and remitted to PERF for payment of the ERBs' principal, interest and miscellaneous associated expenses. The ERBs are secured solely by the recovery property. Our creditors and the Utility's creditors have no recourse to the assets of PERF and its creditors have no recourse to our or the Utility's assets.
- (4) Actual long-term debt consisted of \$1,563 million of pollution control bonds issued for the benefit of the Utility, \$7,478 million of senior notes issued by the Utility and \$280 million of our convertible subordinated 9.50% notes due 2010, and as adjusted long-term debt also includes \$543 million of senior notes issued by the Utility on March 6, 2009 and the senior notes offered hereby, in each case, net of any discounts and premiums.
- (5) Includes \$252 million of preferred stock of the Utility.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF THE SENIOR NOTES

General

You should read the following information in conjunction with the statements under Description of the Senior Notes in the accompanying prospectus.

As used in this section, the terms we, us and our refer to PG&E Corporation, and not to any of our subsidiaries.

The senior notes are being offered in an initial aggregate principal amount of \$ and will mature on .

We will issue the senior notes under an indenture dated as of March , 2009, between us and Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas, as trustee, as supplemented by a supplemental indenture between us and the trustee. Please read the indenture because it, and not this description, defines your rights as holders of the senior notes. We filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 9, 2009 a copy of the form of indenture as an exhibit to a Form 8-K.

Pursuant to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, or the 1939 Act, if a default occurs on the senior notes, Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas may be required to resign as trustee under the indenture if it has a conflicting interest (as defined in the 1939 Act), unless the default is cured, duly waived or otherwise eliminated within 90 days.

We may without consent of the holders of the senior notes issue additional senior notes under the indenture, having the same terms in all respects to the senior notes (except for the public offering price and the issue date and, in some cases, the first interest payment date) so that those additional notes will be consolidated and form a single series with the other outstanding senior notes.

The senior notes will bear interest from , 2009 at % per annum, payable semiannually on each and , commencing on , to holders of record on the day prior to the interest payment date.

We will issue the senior notes in denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess of \$2,000.

The senior notes will be redeemable at our option, in whole or in part, at any time as described under Optional Redemption below.

Interest on the senior notes will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months. If any payment date falls on a day that is not a business day, the payment will be made on the next business day, but we will consider that payment as being made on the date that the payment was due to you. In that event, no interest will accrue on the amount payable for the period from and after the payment date.

We will issue the senior notes in the form of one or more global securities, which will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company, or DTC, and registered in the name of DTC's nominee. Information regarding DTC's book-entry system is set forth below under Book-Entry System; Global Notes.

Ranking

The senior notes will be our direct, unsecured and unsubordinated obligations and will rank equally with all our other existing and future unsecured and unsubordinated obligations. The senior notes will be effectively subordinated to all our secured debt. We are a holding company that conducts our business principally through the Utility. Thus, as a practical matter, the senior notes will be effectively subordinated to all existing and future obligations, including trade payable and other unsecured debt, of the Utility, as well as to all existing and future obligations of our other direct and indirect subsidiaries. As of March 9, 2009, our subsidiaries had approximately \$9.6 billion of long-term debt outstanding that effectively ranks senior to our senior notes.

As of December 31, 2008, we did not have any outstanding secured debt for borrowed money. The indenture contains no restrictions on the amount of additional indebtedness that may be incurred by us.

Table of Contents

Optional Redemption

We may, at our option, redeem the senior notes in whole or in part at any time at a redemption price equal to the greater of:

100% of the principal amount of the senior notes to be redeemed; or

as determined by the Quotation Agent, the sum of the present values of the remaining scheduled payments of principal and interest on the senior notes to be redeemed (not including any portion of payments of interest accrued as of the redemption date) discounted to the redemption date on a semiannual basis at the Adjusted Treasury Rate plus basis points,

plus, in either case, accrued and unpaid interest to the redemption date.

The redemption price will be calculated assuming a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months.

We will mail notice of any redemption at least 30 days but not more than 60 days before the redemption date to each registered holder of the senior notes to be redeemed.

Unless we default in payment of the redemption price, on and after the redemption date, interest will cease to accrue on the senior notes or portions of the senior notes called for redemption.

Adjusted Treasury Rate means, with respect to any redemption date, the rate per annum equal to the semiannual equivalent yield to maturity of the Comparable Treasury Issue, assuming a price for the Comparable Treasury Issue (expressed as a percentage of its principal amount) equal to the Comparable Treasury Price for the redemption date.

Business Day means any day that is not a day on which banking institutions in New York City are authorized or required by law or regulation to close.

Comparable Treasury Issue means the United States Treasury security selected by the applicable Quotation Agent as having a maturity comparable to the remaining term of the senior notes to be redeemed that would be used, at the time of selection and in accordance with customary financial practice, in pricing new issues of corporate debt securities of comparable maturity to the remaining term of the senior notes to be redeemed.

Comparable Treasury Price means, with respect to any redemption date:

the average of the Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations for that redemption date, after excluding the highest and lowest of the Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations; or

if we obtain fewer than four Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations, the average of all Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations so received.

Quotation Agent means the Reference Treasury Dealer appointed by us for the senior notes.

Reference Treasury Dealer means (1) each of BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC, Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Goldman, Sachs & Co. and their respective successors, unless any of them ceases to be a primary dealer in certain U.S. government securities (Primary Treasury Dealer), in which case we shall substitute another Primary Treasury Dealer; and (2) any other Primary Treasury Dealer selected by us.

Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations means, with respect to each Reference Treasury Dealer and any redemption date, the average, as determined by us, of the bid and asked prices for the Comparable Treasury Issue (expressed in each case as a percentage of its principal amount) quoted in writing to us by that Reference Treasury Dealer at 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on the third Business Day preceding that redemption date.

If we redeem only some of the senior notes, DTC's practice is to choose by lot the amount to be redeemed from the senior notes held by each of its participating institutions. DTC will give notice to these participants, and these participants will give notice to any street name holders of any indirect interests in the senior notes to be redeemed according to arrangements among them. These notices may be subject to statutory or regulatory requirements. We will not be responsible for giving notice of a redemption of the senior notes to

S-7

Table of Contents

be redeemed to anyone other than the registered holders of the seniors notes to be redeemed, which is currently DTC. If senior notes to be redeemed are no longer held through DTC and fewer than all the senior notes are to be redeemed, selection of senior notes for redemption will be made by the trustee in any manner the trustee deems fair and appropriate.

Subject to the foregoing and to applicable law (including, without limitation, United States federal securities laws), we or our affiliates may, at any time and from time to time, purchase outstanding senior notes by tender, in the open market or by private agreement.

No Sinking Fund

There is no provision for a sinking fund for the senior notes.

Covenants

The indenture restricts us from securing any indebtedness with a lien on any shares of the common stock of any of our significant subsidiaries, except in certain circumstances. The accompanying prospectus describes this covenant (see Limitation on Liens in the accompanying prospectus) and other covenants contained in the indenture in greater detail and should be read prior to investing.

Book-Entry System; Global Notes

Except as set forth below, the senior notes will initially be issued in the form of one or more global notes. The senior notes will be issued as fully-registered securities registered in the name of Cede & Co. (DTC's partnership nominee) or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. One fully-registered security certificate will be issued for the senior notes in the aggregate principal amount of such series, and will be deposited with DTC or the trustee on behalf of DTC. If, however, the aggregate principal amount of the senior notes exceeds \$500 million, one certificate will be issued with respect to each \$500 million of principal amount and an additional certificate will be issued with respect to any remaining principal amount of senior notes. Investors may hold their beneficial interests in a global note directly through DTC or indirectly through organizations which are participants in the DTC system.

Unless and until they are exchanged in whole or in part for certificated notes, the global notes may not be transferred except as a whole by DTC or its nominee.

DTC has advised us as follows:

DTC is a limited purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law, a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law, a member of the Federal Reserve System, a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code and a clearing agency registered under the provisions of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

DTC holds and provides asset servicing for over 3.5 million issues of U.S. and non-U.S. equity, corporate and municipal debt issues, and money market instrument from over 100 countries that DTC's direct participants deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the post-trade settlement among direct participants of sales and other securities transactions in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry transfers and pledges between direct participants' accounts. This eliminates the need for physical movement of securities certificates. Direct participants include both U.S. and non-U.S. securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations. DTC is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, or DTCC. DTCC is the holding company for DTC, National Securities Clearing

Corporation and Fixed Income Clearing Corporation, all of which are registered clearing agencies. DTCC is owned by the users of its regulated subsidiaries. Access to the DTC system is also available to others, such as both U.S. and non-U.S. securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies and clearing corporations that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant, either directly or indirectly. DTC has Standard & Poor's highest rating: AAA. The DTC rules applicable to its direct and indirect participants are on file with the SEC. More information about DTC can be found at www.dtcc.com and www.dtc.org.

Purchases of the senior notes under the DTC system must be made by or through direct participants, which will receive a credit for the senior notes on DTC's records. The ownership interest of each actual purchaser of each senior note, or the beneficial owner, is, in turn, to be recorded on the direct and indirect participants

Table of Contents

records. Beneficial owners will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchase. Beneficial owners are, however, expected to receive written confirmations providing details of the transaction, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the direct or indirect participant through which the beneficial owner entered into the transaction. Transfers of ownership interests in the senior notes are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of direct and indirect participants acting on behalf of beneficial owners. Beneficial owners will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in senior notes, except in the event that use of the book-entry system for the senior notes is discontinued.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all senior notes deposited by direct participants with DTC are registered in the name of DTC's partnership nominee, Cede & Co., or such other name as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. The deposit of senior notes with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. or such other DTC nominee do not effect any change in beneficial ownership. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the senior notes; DTC's records reflect only the identity of the direct participants to whose accounts the senior notes are credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The direct and indirect participants will remain responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participants, by direct participants to indirect participants, and by direct participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time. Beneficial owners of the senior notes may wish to take certain steps to augment the transmission to them of notices of significant events with respect to the senior notes, such as redemptions, tenders, defaults and proposed amendments to the senior note documents. For example, beneficial owners of senior notes may wish to ascertain whether the nominee holding the senior notes for their benefit has agreed to obtain and transmit notices to beneficial owners. In the alternative, beneficial owners may wish to provide their names and addresses to the registrar and request that copies of notices be provided directly to them.

Redemption notices shall be sent to DTC. If less than all of the senior notes are being redeemed, DTC's practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participant in the senior notes to be redeemed.

Neither DTC nor Cede & Co. (nor any other DTC nominee) will consent or vote with respect to senior notes unless authorized by a direct participant in accordance with DTC's MMI procedures. Under its usual procedures, DTC mails an omnibus proxy to the issuer as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus proxy assigns Cede & Co.'s consenting or voting rights to those direct participants to whose accounts senior notes are credited on the record date (identified in a listing attached to the omnibus proxy).

Redemption proceeds, distributions and dividend payments on the senior notes will be made to Cede & Co. or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC. DTC's practice is to credit direct participants' accounts upon DTC's receipt of funds and corresponding detail information from the issuer or the agent on payable date in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC's records. Payments by participants to beneficial owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of the participant and not of DTC nor its nominee, agent or the issuer, subject to any statutory or regulatory requirements as may be in effect from time to time. Payment of redemption proceeds, distributions and dividend payments to Cede & Co. (or such other nominee as may be requested by an authorized representative of DTC) is the responsibility of the issuer or agent, disbursement of the payments to direct participants will be the responsibility of DTC, and disbursement of such payments to the beneficial owners will be the responsibility of direct and indirect participants.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as depository with respect to the senior notes at any time by giving reasonable notice to the issuer or the agent. Under such circumstances, in the event that a successor depository is not obtained, senior note certificates are required to be printed and delivered.

We may decide to discontinue use of the system of book-entry transfers through DTC (or a successor securities depository). In that event, senior note certificates will be printed and delivered.

The information in this section concerning DTC and DTC's book-entry system has been obtained from sources that we believe to be reliable but we take no responsibility for the accuracy thereof.

Table of Contents

CERTAIN UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES

The following summary describes certain United States federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of the senior notes as of the date hereof. This summary is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, as well as final, temporary and proposed Treasury regulations and administrative and judicial decisions. Legislative, judicial and administrative changes may occur, possibly with retroactive effect, that could affect the accuracy of the statements described herein. This summary generally is addressed only to original purchasers of the senior notes, deals only with senior notes held as capital assets and does not purport to address all United States federal income tax matters that may be relevant to investors in special tax situations, such as insurance companies, tax-exempt organizations, financial institutions, dealers in securities or currencies, traders in securities that elect to mark to market, holders of senior notes that are held as a hedge or as part of a hedging, straddle or conversion transaction, certain former citizens or residents of the United States, or United States holders (as defined below) whose functional currency is not the United States dollar. **Persons considering the purchase of the senior notes should consult their own tax advisors concerning the application of United States federal income tax laws, as well as the laws of any state, local or foreign taxing jurisdictions, to their particular situations.**

If a partnership (including an entity treated as a partnership for United States federal income tax purposes) is a beneficial owner of a senior note, the treatment of a partner in the partnership will generally depend upon the status of the partner and upon the activities of the partnership. A beneficial owner of a senior note that is a partnership, and partners in such a partnership, should consult their tax advisors about the United States federal income tax consequences of holding and disposing of the senior notes.

United States Holders

This section describes the tax consequences to a United States holder. A United States holder is a beneficial owner of a senior note that is (i) a citizen or resident of the United States, (ii) a corporation (including an entity treated as a corporation for United States federal income tax purposes) created or organized in the United States or any state (including the District of Columbia), (iii) an estate whose income is subject to United States federal income tax on a net income basis in respect of the senior note, or (iv) a trust if a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust (or certain trusts that have made a valid election to be treated as a United States person).

If you are not a United States holder, this section does not apply to you. See **Non-United States Holders** below.

Payment of Interest

We do not believe that the senior notes will be issued with more than a *de minimis* amount of original issue discount, if any. Interest on a senior note will therefore be taxable to a United States holder as ordinary interest income at the time it accrues or is received, in accordance with the United States holder's method of accounting for United States federal income tax purposes.

Sale, Exchange or Retirement of Senior Notes

Upon the sale, exchange or retirement of a senior note, a United States holder will recognize taxable gain or loss equal to the difference between the amount realized from the sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition (other than amounts attributable to accrued interest not previously included in income, which will be taxable as ordinary interest income) and the United States holder's adjusted tax basis in the senior note. A United States holder's adjusted tax basis

in a senior note will generally equal the cost of the senior note to such holder (excluding amounts attributable to pre-issuance accrued interest) increased by the amount of any accrued but unpaid interest previously included in income. Such gain or loss generally will be capital gain or loss, and will be long-term capital gain or loss if the senior note has been held for more than one year. Capital losses are subject to certain limitations.

S-10

Table of Contents

Non-United States Holders

This section describes the tax consequences to a non-United States holder. You are a non-United States holder if you are the beneficial owner of a senior note (other than a partnership) and are not a United States holder for United States federal income tax purposes.

Payment of Interest

A non-United States holder generally will not be subject to United States federal withholding tax with respect to payments of principal and interest on the senior notes, provided that (i) the non-United States holder does not actually or constructively own 10 percent or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our stock entitled to vote, (ii) the non-United States holder is not for United States federal income tax purposes a controlled foreign corporation related to us (directly or indirectly) through stock ownership, and (iii) the beneficial owner of the senior notes certifies to us or the fiscal and paying agent (on Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN or applicable form) under penalties of perjury as to its status as a non-United States holder and complies with applicable identification procedures. Special rules apply to partnerships, estates and trusts and, in certain circumstances, certifications as to foreign status and other matters may be required to be provided by partners and beneficiaries thereof.

Sale, Exchange or Retirement of Senior Notes

A non-United States holder of a senior note generally will not be subject to United States federal income tax on any gain realized upon the sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition of a senior note, unless the non-United States holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year of sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition and certain other conditions are met. In such case, the non-United States holder generally will be subject to a 30% tax on any capital gain recognized on the disposition of the senior notes, after being offset by certain United States source capital losses.

United States Trade or Business

If a non-United States holder of a senior note is engaged in a trade or business in the United States and income or gain from the senior note is effectively connected with the conduct of such trade or business, the non-United States holder will be exempt from withholding tax if appropriate certification has been provided, but will generally be subject to regular United States federal income tax on such income and gain in the same manner as if it were a United States holder. In addition, if such non-United States holder is a foreign corporation, it may be subject to a branch profits tax equal to 30 percent (or lower applicable treaty rate) of its effectively connected earnings and profits for the taxable year, subject to adjustments.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

In general, payments of interest and the proceeds of sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition of the senior notes payable by a United States paying agent or other United States intermediary will be subject to information reporting. With respect to a non-United States holder, we must report annually to the Internal Revenue Service and to each non-United States holder the amount of any interest paid to such holder regardless of whether any tax was actually withheld. Copies of the information returns reporting such interest payments to a non-United States holder and the amount of any tax withheld also may be made available to the tax authorities in the country in which the non-United States holder resides under the provisions of an applicable income tax treaty. In addition, backup withholding at the then applicable rate (currently 28%) will generally apply to these payments if:

in the case of a United States holder, the holder fails to provide an accurate taxpayer identification number, fails to certify that the holder is not subject to backup withholding or fails to report all interest and dividends required to be shown on its United States federal income tax returns; or

S-11

Table of Contents

in the case of a non-United States holder, the holder fails to provide the certification on Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN described above or otherwise does not provide evidence of exempt status.

Certain United States holders (including, among others, corporations) are not subject to information reporting or backup withholding. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the holder's United States federal income tax liability and may entitle the holder to a refund, provided that the required information is timely furnished to the Internal Revenue Service. Holders of the senior notes should consult their tax advisors as to their qualification for exemption from backup withholding and the procedure for obtaining such an exemption.

S-12

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in an underwriting agreement between us and the underwriters named below, for whom BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC, Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Goldman, Sachs & Co. are acting as representatives, we have agreed to sell to each of the underwriters, and each of the underwriters has severally and not jointly agreed to purchase from us, the principal amount of senior notes set forth opposite its name below.

Underwriter	Principal Amount of Senior Notes
BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC	\$
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	
Goldman, Sachs & Co.	
Total	\$

The underwriters have agreed, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement, to purchase all of the senior notes if any of the senior notes are purchased. The offering of the senior notes by the underwriters is subject to receipt and acceptance of the senior notes from us and subject to the underwriters' right to reject any order in whole or in part.

The underwriters propose to offer the senior notes directly to the public at the public offering price specified on the cover page to this prospectus supplement and may also offer the senior notes to certain dealers at the public offering price less a concession not to exceed $\quad\%$ of the principal amount of the senior notes. The underwriters may allow, and these dealers may reallow, a concession not to exceed $\quad\%$ of the principal amount of the senior notes to certain brokers and dealers. After the initial offering of the senior notes, the underwriters may change the offering price and concession.

The senior notes have no established trading market. We currently have no intention to list the senior notes on any securities exchange or automated dealer quotation system. The underwriters may make a market in the senior notes after completion of the offering, but will not be obligated to make a market in the senior notes and may discontinue such market making at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market for the senior notes or that an active public market for the senior notes will develop. If an active public trading market for the senior notes does not develop, the market price and liquidity of the senior notes may be adversely affected.

We will agree to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or to contribute to payments which the underwriters may be required to make in respect thereof.

We estimate the expenses for this offering, other than the underwriting commission, to be approximately \$ \quad .

We will agree with the underwriters not to, during the period three days from the date of the underwriting agreement, sell, offer to sell, grant any option for the sale of, or otherwise dispose of any debt securities other than the senior notes, without the prior written consent of each of BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC, Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Goldman, Sachs & Co. This agreement will not apply to issuances of commercial paper or other debt securities with scheduled maturities of less than one year.

In order to facilitate the offering, the underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the senior notes. Specifically, the underwriters may over-allot in connection with the offering, creating short positions in the senior notes for their own accounts. In addition, to cover over-allotments or to stabilize the price of the senior notes, the underwriters may bid for, and purchase, senior notes in the open market. The underwriters may reclaim selling concessions allowed to an underwriter or dealer for distributing senior notes in the offering, if the underwriters repurchase previously distributed senior notes in transactions to cover short positions, in stabilization transactions or otherwise. Any of these activities may stabilize or maintain the market price of the senior notes above independent market levels. The underwriters are not required to engage in these activities, and may end any of these activities at any time without notice.

In general, purchases of a security for the purpose of stabilization or to reduce a short position could cause the price of the security to be higher than it might be in the absence of such purchases. The imposition

S-13

Table of Contents

of a penalty bid might also have an effect on the price of a security to the extent that it were to discourage resales of the security.

Neither we nor any underwriter makes any representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the price of the senior notes. In addition, neither we nor any underwriter makes any representation that the underwriters will engage in such transactions or that such transactions once commenced will not be discontinued without notice.

Certain of the underwriters and their affiliates have engaged and may in the future engage in transactions with, and, from time to time, have performed and may perform investment banking and/or commercial banking services for, us and certain of our affiliates in the ordinary course of business, for which they have received and will receive customary compensation.

Sales of the senior notes by BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC will be effected by Broadpoint Capital, Inc., as distribution agent.

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State), each underwriter has represented and agreed that with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that Relevant Member State (the Relevant Implementation Date) it has not made and will not make an offer of senior notes to the public in that Relevant Member State prior to the publication of a prospectus in relation to the senior notes which has been approved by the competent authority in that Relevant Member State or, where appropriate, approved in another Relevant Member State and notified to the competent authority in that Relevant Member State, all in accordance with the Prospectus Directive, except that it may, with effect from and including the Relevant Implementation Date, make an offer of senior notes to the public in that Relevant Member State at any time:

- (a) to legal entities which are authorised or regulated to operate in the financial markets or, if not so authorised or regulated, whose corporate purpose is solely to invest in securities;
- (b) to any legal entity which has two or more of (1) an average of at least 250 employees during the last financial year; (2) a total balance sheet of more than 43,000,000 and (3) an annual net turnover of more than 50,000,000, as shown in its last annual or consolidated accounts;
- (c) to fewer than 100 natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive) subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- (d) in any other circumstances which do not require the publication by the issuer of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an offer of notes to the public in relation to any senior notes in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the senior notes to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe the senior notes, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State and the expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State.

Each underwriter has represented and agreed that:

(a) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the senior notes in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to the issuer; and

(b) it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to the senior notes in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

The senior notes may not be offered or sold by means of any document other than (i) in circumstances which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), or (ii) to professional investors within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance

Table of Contents

(Cap.571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder, or (iii) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), and no advertisement, invitation or document relating to the senior notes may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to senior notes which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to professional investors within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder.

The securities have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law) and each underwriter has agreed that it will not offer or sell any senior notes, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

This prospectus has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the senior notes may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the senior notes be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA), (ii) to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

Where the senior notes are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 by a relevant person which is: (a) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or (b) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary is an accredited investor, shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or the beneficiaries rights and interest in that trust shall not be transferable for 6 months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the senior notes under Section 275 except: (1) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA; (2) where no consideration is given for the transfer; or (3) by operation of law.

Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION

The senior notes have been accepted for clearance through DTC and have been assigned the following identification number:

CUSIP Number

Senior notes

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the senior notes will be passed upon for us by Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, San Francisco, California. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, New York, New York represents the underwriters. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP has in the past performed, and continues to perform, legal services in connection with federal regulatory and transactional matters for us and our affiliates.

S-16

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

**Debt Securities, Common Stock, Preferred Stock,
Depositary Shares, Warrants to Purchase Debt Securities,
Common Stock and Preferred Stock,
Securities Purchase Contracts and Securities Purchase Units**

We may offer and sell an indeterminate amount of securities from time to time in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer.

Each time we sell securities, we will provide a supplement to this prospectus that contains specific information about the offering and the terms of the securities. The supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement before you invest in any of our securities.

See Risk Factors on page 1 for information on certain risks related to the purchase of our securities.

None of the Securities and Exchange Commission, any state securities commission or any other regulatory body has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

March 9, 2009

Table of Contents**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>About This Prospectus</u>	i
<u>PG&E Corporation</u>	1
<u>Risk Factors</u>	1
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	1
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	3
<u>Certain Ratios</u>	3
<u>Description of Securities</u>	4
<u>Description of the Senior Notes</u>	4
<u>Description of the Subordinated Notes</u>	10
<u>Description of Common Stock and Preferred Stock</u>	17
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	19
<u>Description of Securities Purchase Contracts and Securities Purchase Units</u>	21
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	23
<u>Global Securities</u>	26
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	28
<u>Legal Matters</u>	28
<u>Experts</u>	28
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	29
<u>Certain Documents Incorporated By Reference</u>	29

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may from time to time sell an indeterminate principal amount of securities in one or more offerings.

This prospectus provides you with only a general description of the securities that we may offer. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, as permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC. For additional information regarding us and the offered securities, please refer to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that contains specific information about the offering and the terms of the offered securities. The prospectus supplement also may add, delete, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should rely only on the information in the applicable prospectus supplement if this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement are inconsistent. Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described under the section of this prospectus titled Where You Can Find More Information. In particular, you should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described under the section titled Risk Factors or otherwise included in any applicable prospectus supplement or incorporated by reference in this prospectus before you decide whether to purchase the securities. These risks and uncertainties, together with those not known to us or those that we may deem immaterial, could impair our business and ultimately affect our ability to make payments on the securities.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any applicable prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. Neither we nor any underwriter, dealer or agent will make an offer to sell the securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not

permitted. You should assume that the information in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement is accurate only as of the dates on their covers. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

Table of Contents

PG&E CORPORATION

We are an energy-based holding company headquartered in San Francisco, California that conducts its business principally through Pacific Gas and Electric Company, a public utility operating in northern and central California. The Utility engages in the businesses of electricity and natural gas distribution, electricity generation, procurement and transmission, and natural gas procurement, transportation and storage.

Our executive offices are located at One Market Street, Spear Tower, Suite 2400, San Francisco, California 94105, and our telephone number is (415) 267-7000.

When used in this prospectus and unless otherwise specified, the term Utility refers to our subsidiary, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, and the terms we, our, us and the Company refer to PG&E Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risk. Please see risk factors described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K and other reports filed with the SEC, which are all incorporated by reference in this prospectus. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider these risks as well as other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or the applicable supplement to this prospectus. The risks and uncertainties described are not the only ones facing us. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also impair our business operations, financial results and the value of our securities.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement contain forward-looking statements that are necessarily subject to various risks and uncertainties. These statements are based on current estimates, expectations and projections about future events, and assumptions regarding these events and management's knowledge of facts as of the date of this report. These forward-looking statements relate to, among other matters, estimated capital expenditures, estimated Utility rate base, estimated environmental remediation liabilities, estimated tax liabilities, the anticipated outcome of various regulatory and legal proceedings, future cash flows, and the level of future equity or debt issuances, and are also identified by words such as assume, expect, intend, plan, project, believe, estimate, predict, anticipate, aim, may, might, should, would, could, expressions. We are not able to predict all the factors that may affect future results. Some of the factors that could cause future results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, or from historical results, include, but are not limited to:

the Utility's ability to manage capital expenditures and its operating and maintenance expenses within authorized levels;

the outcome of pending and future regulatory proceedings and whether the Utility is able to timely recover its costs through rates;

the adequacy and price of electricity and natural gas supplies, and the ability of the Utility to manage and respond to the volatility of the electricity and natural gas markets including the ability of the Utility and its counterparties to post or return collateral;

the effect of weather, storms, earthquakes, fires, floods, disease, other natural disasters, explosions, accidents, mechanical breakdowns, acts of terrorism, and other events or hazards on the Utility's facilities and operations, its customers, and third parties on which the Utility relies;

the potential impacts of climate change on the Utility's electricity and natural gas businesses;

Table of Contents

changes in customer demand for electricity and natural gas resulting from unanticipated population growth or decline, general economic and financial market conditions, changes in technology, including the development of alternative energy sources, or other reasons;

operating performance of the Utility's Diablo Canyon nuclear generating facilities, or Diablo Canyon, the availability of nuclear fuel, the occurrence of unplanned outages at Diablo Canyon, or the temporary or permanent cessation of operations at Diablo Canyon;

whether the Utility can maintain the cost savings it has recognized from operating efficiencies it has achieved and identify and successfully implement additional cost-saving measures;

whether the Utility incurs substantial expense to improve the safety and reliability of its electric and natural gas systems;

whether the Utility achieves the CPUC's energy efficiency targets and recognizes any incentives the Utility may earn in a timely manner;

the impact of changes in federal or state laws, or their interpretation, on energy policy and the regulation of utilities and their holding companies;

the impact of changing wholesale electric or gas market rules, including new rules of the California Independent System Operator to restructure the California wholesale electricity market;

how the CPUC administers the conditions imposed on us when we became the Utility's holding company;

the extent to which we or the Utility incurs costs and liabilities in connection with litigation that are not recoverable through rates, from insurance or from other third parties;

our ability and the ability of the Utility and counterparties to access capital markets and other sources of credit in a timely manner on acceptable terms, especially given the recent deteriorating conditions in the economy and financial markets;

the impact of environmental laws and regulations and the costs of compliance and remediation;

the effect of municipalization, direct access, community choice aggregation, or other forms of bypass; and

the impact of changes in federal or state tax laws, policies, or regulations.

For more information about the more significant risks that could affect the outcome of these forward-looking statements and our and the Utility's future financial condition and results of operations, you should read the sections of the documents incorporated herein by reference titled "Risk Factors," as well as the important factors set forth under the heading "Risk Factors" in the applicable supplement to this prospectus.

You should read this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplements, the documents that we incorporate by reference into this prospectus, the documents that we have included as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and the documents that we refer to under the section of this prospectus titled "Where You Can Find More Information" completely and with the understanding that our actual future results could be materially different from what we expect when making the forward-looking statement. We qualify all our forward-looking

statements by these cautionary statements. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this prospectus, the date of the document incorporated by reference or the date of any applicable prospectus supplement. Except as required by applicable laws or regulations, we do not undertake any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

Each prospectus supplement will describe the uses of the proceeds from the issuance of the securities offered by that prospectus supplement.

CERTAIN RATIOS

The following table sets forth our Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends for the periods indicated:

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	3.20x	2.68x	2.86x	3.36x	9.69x
Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends	3.13x	2.63x	2.81x	3.23x	9.21x

For the purpose of computing the ratios of earnings to fixed charges and ratios of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends, earnings represent net income adjusted for the minority interest in losses of less than 100% owned affiliates, equity in undistributed income or losses of less than 50% owned affiliates, income taxes and fixed charges (excluding capitalized interest). Fixed charges include interest on long-term debt and short-term borrowings (including a representative portion of rental expense), amortization of bond premium, discount and expense, interest on capital leases, allowance for funds used during construction debt, and earnings required to cover the preferred stock dividend requirements and preferred security distribution requirements of majority-owned trust.

Preferred stock dividends represent the deductible dividends and pre-tax earnings that are required to pay the dividends on outstanding preferred securities. Fixed charges exclude interest on FASB Interpretation No. 48 (Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes) tax liabilities.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

The following is a general description of the terms and provisions of the securities we may offer and sell by this prospectus. These summaries are not meant to be a complete description of each security. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms and conditions for each security. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update or change the terms and conditions of the securities as described in this prospectus.

Holding Company Structure

We conduct our operations primarily through our subsidiaries and substantially all of our consolidated assets are held by our subsidiaries. Accordingly, our cash flow and our ability to meet our obligations under the debt securities are largely dependent upon the earnings of our subsidiaries and the distribution or other payment of these earnings to us in the form of dividends or loans or advances and repayment of loans and advances from us. Our subsidiaries are separate and distinct legal entities and have no obligation to pay any amounts due on the debt securities or to make any funds available for payment of amounts due on these debt securities.

Because we are a holding company, our obligations under the debt securities will be structurally subordinated to all existing and future liabilities of our subsidiaries. Therefore, our rights and the rights of our creditors, including the rights of the holders of the debt securities and any debt securities guarantees, to participate in the assets of any subsidiary upon the liquidation or reorganization of the subsidiary will be subject to the prior claims of the subsidiary's creditors. To the extent that we may ourselves be a creditor with recognized claims against any of our subsidiaries, our claims would still be effectively subordinated to any security interest in, or mortgages or other liens on, the assets of the subsidiary and would be subordinated to any indebtedness or other liabilities of the subsidiary that are senior to the claims held by us. We expect the Utility will continue to incur substantial additional amounts of indebtedness in the future.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SENIOR NOTES

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the senior notes. The following description does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the senior note indenture to be entered into between us and Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas, as trustee (the Senior Note Indenture Trustee), as supplemented by supplemental indentures to the senior note indenture establishing the senior notes of each series. A form of the senior note indenture was filed as Exhibit 4.1 to the Form 8-K we filed on March 9, 2009. The senior note indenture, as supplemented from time to time, is referred to as the Senior Note Indenture. The terms of the senior notes will include those stated in the Senior Note Indenture and those made a part of the Senior Note Indenture by reference to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, which we refer to as the 1939 Act. Certain capitalized terms used in this prospectus are defined in the Senior Note Indenture.

General

The senior notes will be issued as unsecured senior debt securities under the Senior Note Indenture and will rank equally with all other unsecured and unsubordinated debt of the Company. The senior notes will be effectively subordinated to all secured debt of the Company. As of December 31, 2008, on an unconsolidated basis, our secured debt aggregated approximately \$0. The Senior Note Indenture does not limit the aggregate principal amount of senior notes that may be issued under the Senior Note Indenture and provides that senior notes may be issued from time to time in one or more series pursuant to a supplemental indenture to the Senior Note Indenture. The Senior Note

Indenture gives us the ability to reopen a previous issue of senior notes and issue additional senior notes of such series, unless otherwise provided.

Table of Contents

Provisions of a Particular Series

The prospectus supplement applicable to each series of senior notes will specify, among other things:

the title of such senior notes;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of such senior notes;

the date or dates on which the principal of such senior notes is payable, including the maturity date, or the method or means by which those dates will be determined, and our right, if any, to extend those dates and the duration of any such extension;

the rate or rates at which such senior notes shall bear interest, if any, or any method by which such rate or rates will be determined, the date or dates from which such interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which such interest shall be payable, the regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date, and the right, if any, to extend the interest payment periods and the duration of any such extension;

the place or places where the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on such senior notes shall be payable, the methods by which registration of transfer of senior notes and exchanges of senior notes may be effected, and by which notices and demands to or upon the Company in respect of such senior notes may be made, given, furnished, filed or served;

the period or periods within which, or date or dates on which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions on which the senior notes may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option;

our obligation, if any, to redeem, purchase or repay such senior notes pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of the holder and the terms and conditions upon which the senior notes will be so redeemed, purchased or repaid;

the denominations in which such senior notes shall be issuable;

the currency or currencies in which the principal, premium, if any, and interest on the senior notes will be payable if other than U.S. dollars and the method for determining the equivalent amount in U.S. dollars;

if the amount payable in respect of principal of or any premium or interest on any senior notes may be determined with reference to an index or formula, the manner in which such amount will be determined;

any deletions from, modifications of or additions to the Events of Default or covenants of the Company as provided in the Senior Note Indenture pertaining to such senior notes;

whether such senior notes shall be issued in whole or in part in the form of a global security and, if so, the name of the depository for any global securities;

any non-applicability of Section 1007 of the Senior Note Indenture (Limitation on Liens) to the senior notes of such series or any exceptions or modifications of such section with respect to the senior notes of such series; and

any other terms of such senior notes.

The Senior Note Indenture does not contain provisions that afford holders of senior notes protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving us.

Registration and Transfer

We shall not be required to (i) issue, register the transfer of or exchange senior notes of any series during a period of 15 days immediately preceding the date notice is given identifying the senior notes of such series called for redemption, or (ii) issue, register the transfer of or exchange any senior notes so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any senior note being redeemed in part.

Table of Contents

Payment and Paying Agent

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable prospectus supplement, payment of principal of any senior notes will be made only against surrender to the Paying Agent of such senior notes. Principal of and interest on senior notes will be payable, subject to any applicable laws and regulations, at the office of such Paying Agent or Paying Agents as we may designate from time to time, except that, at our option, payment of any interest may be made by wire transfer or by check mailed to the address of the person entitled to an interest payment as such address shall appear in the Security Register with respect to the senior notes. Payment of interest on senior notes on any interest payment date will be made to the person in whose name the senior notes (or predecessor security) are registered at the close of business on the record date for such interest payment.

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable prospectus supplement, the Senior Note Indenture Trustee will act as Paying Agent with respect to the senior notes. The Company may at any time designate additional Paying Agents or rescind the designation of any Paying Agents or approve a change in the office through which any Paying Agent acts.

All moneys paid by us to a Paying Agent for the payment of the principal of or interest on the senior notes of any series which remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal or interest shall have become due and payable will be repaid to the Company, and the holder of such senior notes will from that time forward look only to the Company for payment of such principal and interest.

Limitation on Liens

Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement for senior notes of a series, the following covenant shall apply to the senior notes of that series.

So long as any senior notes remain outstanding, we will not secure any indebtedness with a lien on any shares of the common stock of any of our Significant Subsidiaries, which shares of common stock we directly own from the date of the indenture or thereafter, unless we equally secure all senior notes. However, this restriction does not apply to or prevent:

- (1) any lien on capital stock created at the time we acquire that capital stock, or within 270 days after that time, to secure all or a portion of the purchase price for that capital stock, or
- (2) any lien on capital stock existing at the time we acquire that capital stock (whether or not we assume the obligations secured by the lien and whether or not the lien was created in contemplation of the acquisition), or
- (3) any extensions, renewals or replacements of the liens described in the two bullet points above, or of any indebtedness secured by those liens; provided, that,

the principal amount of indebtedness secured by those liens immediately after the extension, renewal or replacement may not exceed the principal amount of indebtedness secured by those liens immediately before the extension, renewal or replacement, and

the extension, renewal or replacement lien is limited to no more than the same proportion of all shares of capital stock as were covered by the lien that was extended, renewed or replaced, or

- (4) any lien arising in connection with court proceedings; provided, that, either

the execution or enforcement of that lien is effectively stayed within 60 days after entry of the corresponding judgment (or the corresponding judgment has been discharged within that 60-day period) and the claims secured by that lien are being contested in good faith by appropriate proceedings,

the payment of that lien is covered in full by insurance and the insurance company has not denied or contested coverage, or

so long as that lien is adequately bonded, any appropriate legal proceedings that have been duly initiated for the review of the corresponding judgment, decree or order have not been fully terminated or the periods within which those proceedings may be initiated have not expired.

Table of Contents

Liens on any shares of the common stock of any of our Significant Subsidiaries, other than liens described in (1) through (4) above, are referred to in this prospectus as Restricted Liens. The foregoing limitation does not apply to the extent that we create any Restricted Liens to secure indebtedness that, together with all of our other indebtedness secured by Restricted Liens, does not at the time exceed 10% of our Net Tangible Assets on a consolidated basis, as determined by us as of a month end not more than 90 days prior to the closing or consummation of the proposed transaction.

For this purpose, Net Tangible Assets means the total amount of our assets determined on a consolidated basis in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, or GAAP, less (i) the sum of our consolidated current liabilities determined in accordance with GAAP and (ii) the amount of our consolidated assets classified as intangible assets determined in accordance with GAAP, including but not limited to, such items as goodwill, trademarks, trade names, patents, and unamortized debt discount and expense and regulatory assets carried as an asset on our consolidated balance sheet.

For this purpose, Significant Subsidiary means any direct, majority owned subsidiary of us that is a significant subsidiary as defined in Regulation S-X promulgated by the SEC.

Any pledge of the Utility's common stock to secure the notes could require approval of the California Public Utilities Commission, or CPUC. In addition, even with a valid pledge of the Utility's common stock, foreclosure under the indenture may be subject to applicable regulatory requirements, including approval by the CPUC if it were determined that the foreclosure or the sale of the pledged Utility common stock would constitute a transfer of control of the Utility. California law gives the CPUC broad discretion to define control for these purposes and such a determination would depend upon the facts and circumstances existing at the time. Accordingly, the ability to foreclose on and dispose of the Utility common stock may be restricted or delayed by applicable regulatory requirements.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale

We shall not consolidate with or merge into any other corporation or convey, transfer or lease its properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless:

such other corporation or person is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state in the United States or the District of Columbia and such other corporation or person expressly assumes, by supplemental indenture executed and delivered to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, the payment of the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest on all the senior notes and the performance of every covenant of the Senior Note Indenture on the part of the Company to be performed or observed;

immediately after giving effect to such transactions, no Event of Default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an Event of Default, shall have happened and be continuing; and

we have delivered to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee an officer's certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that such transaction complies with the provisions of the Senior Note Indenture governing consolidation, merger, conveyance, transfer or lease and that all conditions precedent to the transaction have been complied with.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, we may merge or consolidate with or transfer all or substantially all of our assets to an affiliate that has no significant assets or liabilities and was formed solely for the purpose of changing our jurisdiction of organization or our form of organization; provided that the amount of our indebtedness is not increased; and provided, further that the successor assumes all of our obligations under the Senior Note Indenture.

Modification

The Senior Note Indenture contains provisions permitting us and the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding senior notes of

Table of Contents

each series that is affected, to modify the Senior Note Indenture or the rights of the holders of the senior notes of such series; provided, that no such modification may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding senior note that is affected:

change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal of or interest on, any senior note, or reduce the principal amount of any senior note or the rate of interest on any senior note or any premium payable upon the redemption of any senior note, or change the method of calculating the rate of interest of any senior note, or impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment on or after the stated maturity of any senior note (or, in the case of redemption, on or after the redemption date); or

reduce the percentage of principal amount of the outstanding senior notes of any series, the consent of whose holders is required for any such supplemental indenture, or the consent of whose holders is required for any waiver (of compliance with certain provisions of the Senior Note Indenture or certain defaults under the Senior Note Indenture and their consequences) provided for in the Senior Note Indenture; or

modify any of the provisions of the Senior Note Indenture relating to supplemental indentures, waiver of past defaults, or waiver of certain covenants, except to increase any such percentage or to provide that certain other provisions of the Senior Note Indenture cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each outstanding senior note that is affected.

In addition, we and the Senior Note Indenture Trustee may execute, without the consent of any holders of senior notes, any supplemental indenture for certain other usual purposes, including the creation of any new series of senior notes.

Events of Default

The Senior Note Indenture provides that any one or more of the following described events with respect to the senior notes of any series, which has occurred and is continuing, constitutes an Event of Default with respect to the senior notes of such series:

failure for 30 days to pay interest on the senior notes of such series, when due on an interest payment date other than at maturity or upon earlier redemption; or

failure to pay principal or premium, if any, or interest on the senior notes of such series when due at maturity or upon earlier redemption; or

failure for three Business Days to deposit any sinking fund payment when due by the terms of a senior note of such series; or

failure to observe or perform any other covenant or warranty of ours in the Senior Note Indenture (other than a covenant or warranty which has expressly been included in the Senior Note Indenture solely for the benefit of one or more series of senior notes other than such series) for 90 days after written notice to us from the Senior Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of at least 33% in principal amount of the outstanding senior notes of such series; or

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of the Company.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the senior notes of any series have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the

Senior Note Indenture Trustee with respect to the senior notes of such series. If a Senior Note Indenture Event of Default occurs and is continuing with respect to the senior notes of any series, then the Senior Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of not less than 33% in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the senior notes of such series may declare the principal amount of the senior notes due and payable immediately by notice in writing to us (and to the Senior Note Indenture Trustee if given by the holders), and upon any such declaration such principal amount shall become immediately due and payable. At any time after such a declaration of acceleration with respect to the senior notes of any series has been made and before

Table of Contents

a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained as provided in Article Five of the Senior Note Indenture, the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the senior notes of such series may rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences if the default has been cured or waived and the Company has paid or deposited with the Senior Note Indenture Trustee a sum sufficient to pay all matured installments of interest and principal due otherwise than by acceleration and all sums paid or advanced by the Senior Note Indenture Trustee, including reasonable compensation and expenses of the Senior Note Indenture Trustee.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the senior notes of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all the senior notes of such series, waive any past default with respect to such series, except (i) a default in the payment of principal or interest or (ii) a default in respect of a covenant or provision which under Article Nine of the Senior Note Indenture cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding senior note of such series affected.

Satisfaction and Discharge

Any senior note, or any portion of the principal amount thereof, will be deemed to have been paid for purposes of the Senior Note Indenture, and our entire indebtedness in respect of the senior notes will be deemed to have been satisfied and discharged, if certain conditions are satisfied, including an irrevocable deposit with the trustee or any paying agent (other than us) in trust of:

money in an amount which will be sufficient; or

in the case of a deposit made prior to the maturity of the senior notes or portions thereof, eligible obligations (as described below) which do not contain provisions permitting the redemption or other prepayment thereof at the option of the issuer thereof, the principal of and the interest on which when due, without any regard to reinvestment thereof, will provide monies which, together with the money, if any, deposited with or held by the trustee or the paying agent, will be sufficient; or

a combination of either of the two items described in the two preceding bullet points which will be sufficient;

to pay when due the principal of and premium, if any, and interest, if any, due and to become due on the senior notes or portions thereof.

This discharge of the senior notes through the deposit with the trustee of cash or eligible obligations generally will be treated as a taxable disposition for U.S. federal income tax purposes by the holders of those senior notes. Prospective investors in the senior notes should consult their own tax advisors as to the particular U.S. federal income tax consequences applicable to them in the event of such discharge.

For this purpose, eligible obligations for U.S. dollar-denominated senior notes, means securities that are direct obligations of, or obligations unconditionally guaranteed by, the United States, entitled to the benefit of the full faith and credit thereof, or depository receipts issued by a bank as custodian with respect to these obligations or any specific interest or principal payments due in respect thereof held by the custodian for the account of the holder of a depository receipt.

Information Concerning the Senior Note Indenture Trustee

The Senior Note Indenture Trustee, prior to an Event of Default with respect to senior notes of any series, undertakes to perform, with respect to senior notes of such series, only such duties as are specifically set forth in the Senior Note Indenture and, in case an Event of Default with respect to senior notes of any series has occurred and is continuing,

shall exercise, with respect to senior notes of such series, the same degree of care as a prudent individual would exercise in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to such provision, the Senior Note Indenture Trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers vested in it by the Senior Note Indenture at the request of any holder of senior notes of any series, unless offered reasonable indemnity by such holder against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by the Senior Note Indenture Trustee. The Senior Note Indenture Trustee is not required to expend or risk its own funds or otherwise incur

Table of Contents

any financial liability in the performance of its duties if the Senior Note Indenture Trustee reasonably believes that repayment or adequate indemnity is not reasonably assured to it.

We and certain of our subsidiaries may maintain deposit accounts and banking relationships with the Senior Note Indenture Trustee. The Senior Note Indenture Trustee and certain of its affiliates may also serve as trustee under other indentures pursuant to which securities of the Company and certain subsidiaries of the Company are outstanding.

Governing Law

The Senior Note Indenture and the senior notes will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

Miscellaneous

We will have the right at all times to assign any of our rights or obligations under the Senior Note Indenture to a direct or indirect wholly-owned subsidiary; provided, that, in the event of any such assignment, we will remain primarily liable for all such obligations. Subject to the foregoing, the Senior Note Indenture will be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties to the Senior Note Indenture and their respective successors and assigns.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBORDINATED NOTES

Set forth below is a description of the general terms of the subordinated notes. The following description does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to, the subordinated note indenture to be entered into between us and the trustee as named in the subordinated note indenture (the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee), as to be supplemented by a supplemental indenture to the subordinated note indenture establishing the subordinated notes of each series (the subordinated note indenture, as so supplemented, is referred to as the Subordinated Note Indenture). The form of the subordinated note indenture was filed as Exhibit 4.2 to the Form 8-K we filed on March 9, 2009. The terms of the subordinated notes will include those stated in the Subordinated Note Indenture and those made a part of the Subordinated Note Indenture by reference to the 1939 Act. Certain capitalized terms used in this prospectus are defined in the Subordinated Note Indenture.

General

The subordinated notes will be issued as unsecured junior subordinated debt securities under the Subordinated Note Indenture. The Subordinated Note Indenture does not limit the aggregate principal amount of subordinated notes that may be issued under the Subordinated Note Indenture and provides that subordinated notes may be issued from time to time in one or more series pursuant to an indenture supplemental to the Subordinated Note Indenture. The Subordinated Note Indenture gives us the ability to reopen a previous issue of subordinated notes and issue additional subordinated notes of such series, unless otherwise provided.

Provisions of a Particular Series

The prospectus supplement applicable to each series of subordinated notes will specify, among other things:

the title of such subordinated notes;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of such subordinated notes;

the date or dates on which the principal of such subordinated notes is payable, including the maturity date, or the method or means by which those dates will be determined, and our right, if any, to extend those dates and the duration of any such extension;

Table of Contents

the rate or rates at which such subordinated notes shall bear interest, if any, or any method by which such rate or rates will be determined, the date or dates from which such interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which such interest shall be payable, the regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date, and the right, if any, to extend the interest payment periods and the duration of any such extension;

the place or places where the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, on such subordinated notes shall be payable, the methods by which registration of transfer of subordinated notes and exchanges of subordinated notes may be effected, and by which notices and demands to or upon the Company in respect of such subordinated notes may be made, given, furnished, filed or served;

the period or periods within which, or date or dates on which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions on which the subordinated notes may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option;

our obligation, if any, to redeem, purchase or repay such subordinated notes pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of the holder and the terms and conditions upon which the subordinated notes will be so redeemed, purchased or repaid;

the denominations in which such subordinated notes shall be issuable;

the currency or currencies in which the principal, premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated notes will be payable if other than U.S. dollars and the method for determining the equivalent amount in U.S. dollars;

if the amount payable in respect of principal of or any premium or interest on any subordinated notes may be determined with reference to an index or formula, the manner in which such amount will be determined;

any deletions from, modifications of or additions to the Events of Default or covenants of the Company as provided in the Subordinated Note Indenture pertaining to such subordinated notes;

whether such subordinated notes shall be issued in whole or in part in the form of a global security and, if so, the name of the depositary for any global securities;

any other terms of such subordinated notes.

The Subordinated Note Indenture does not contain provisions that afford holders of subordinated notes protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction involving the Company.

Registration and Transfer

We shall not be required to (i) issue, register the transfer of or exchange subordinated notes of any series during a period of 15 days immediately preceding the date notice is given identifying the subordinated notes of such series called for redemption, or (ii) issue, register the transfer of or exchange any subordinated notes so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any subordinated note being redeemed in part.

Payment and Paying Agent

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable prospectus supplement, payment of principal of any subordinated notes will be made only against surrender to the Paying Agent of such subordinated notes. Principal of and interest on subordinated notes will be payable, subject to any applicable laws and regulations, at the office of such Paying Agent

or Paying Agents as we may designate from time to time, except that, at our option, payment of any interest may be made by wire transfer or by check mailed to the address of the person entitled to an interest payment as such address shall appear in the Security Register with respect to the subordinated notes. Payment of interest on subordinated notes on any interest payment date will be made to the person in whose name the subordinated notes (or predecessor security) are registered at the close of business on the record date for such interest payment.

Table of Contents

Unless otherwise indicated in an applicable prospectus supplement, the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee will act as Paying Agent with respect to the subordinated notes. The Company may at any time designate additional Paying Agents or rescind the designation of any Paying Agents or approve a change in the office through which any Paying Agent acts.

All moneys paid by the Company to a Paying Agent for the payment of the principal of or interest on the subordinated notes of any series which remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal or interest shall have become due and payable will be repaid to the Company, and the holder of such subordinated notes will from that time forward look only to the Company for payment of such principal and interest.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale

We shall not consolidate with or merge into any other corporation or convey, transfer or lease its properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless:

such other corporation or person is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state of the United States or the District of Columbia and such other corporation or person expressly assumes, by supplemental indenture executed and delivered to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, the payment of the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest (including Additional Interest) on all the subordinated notes and the performance of every covenant of the Subordinated Note Indenture on the part of the Company to be performed or observed;

immediately after giving effect to such transactions, no Event of Default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an Event of Default, shall have happened and be continuing; and

the Company has delivered to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee an officer's certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that such transaction complies with the provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture governing consolidation, merger, conveyance, transfer or lease and that all conditions precedent to the transaction have been complied with.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, we may merge or consolidate with or transfer all or substantially all of our assets to an affiliate that has no significant assets or liabilities and was formed solely for the purpose of changing our jurisdiction of organization or our form of organization; provided that the amount of our indebtedness is not increased; and provided, further that the successor assumes all of our obligations under the Subordinated Note Indenture.

Subordination

The subordinated notes are subordinated and junior in right of payment to all Senior Indebtedness (as defined below) of the Company. No payment of principal of (including redemption payments, if any), or premium, if any, or interest on (including Additional Interest (as defined below)) the subordinated notes may be made if:

any Senior Indebtedness is not paid when due and any applicable grace period with respect to such default has ended with such default not being cured or waived or otherwise ceasing to exist; or

the maturity of any Senior Indebtedness has been accelerated because of a default; or

notice has been given of the exercise of an option to require repayment, mandatory payment or prepayment or otherwise.

Upon any payment or distribution of our assets to creditors upon any liquidation, dissolution, winding-up, reorganization, assignment for the benefit of creditors, marshalling of assets or liabilities, or any bankruptcy, insolvency or similar proceedings of the Company, the holders of Senior Indebtedness shall be entitled to receive payment in full of all amounts due or to become due on or in respect of all Senior Indebtedness before the holders of the subordinated notes are entitled to receive or retain any payment or distribution. Subject to

Table of Contents

the prior payment of all Senior Indebtedness, the rights of the holders of the subordinated notes will be subrogated to the rights of the holders of Senior Indebtedness to receive payments and distributions applicable to such Senior Indebtedness until all amounts owing on the subordinated notes are paid in full.

The term "Senior Indebtedness" means, with respect to us:

any payment due in respect of our indebtedness, whether outstanding at the date of execution of the Subordinated Note Indenture or incurred, created or assumed after such date, (a) in respect of money borrowed (including any financial derivative, hedging or futures contract or similar instrument) and (b) evidenced by securities, debentures, bonds, notes or other similar instruments issued by us that, by their terms, are senior or senior subordinated debt securities including, without limitation, all such obligations under its indentures with various trustees;

all capital lease obligations;

all obligations issued or assumed as the deferred purchase price of property, all conditional sale obligations and all obligations of the Company under any title retention agreement (but excluding trade accounts payable arising in the ordinary course of business and long-term purchase obligations);

all obligations for the reimbursement of any letter of credit, banker's acceptance, security purchase facility or similar credit transaction;

all obligations of the type referred to in first four bullet points above of other persons the payment of which we are responsible or liable as obligor, guarantor or otherwise; and

all obligations of the type referred to in the first four bullet points above of other persons secured by any lien on any property or asset of the Company (whether or not such obligation is assumed by the Company), except for (1) any such indebtedness that is by its terms subordinated to or that ranks equally with the subordinated notes and (2) any unsecured indebtedness between or among us or our affiliates. Such Senior Indebtedness shall continue to be Senior Indebtedness and be entitled to the benefits of the subordination provisions contained in the Subordinated Note Indenture irrespective of any amendment, modification or waiver of any term of such Senior Indebtedness.

The Subordinated Note Indenture does not limit the aggregate amount of Senior Indebtedness that we may be issue. As of December 31, 2008, on an unconsolidated basis, our Senior Indebtedness aggregated approximately \$0.

Additional Interest

Additional Interest is defined in the Subordinated Note Indenture as (i) such additional amounts as may be required so that the net amounts received and retained by a holder of subordinated notes (if the holder is a Trust) after paying taxes, duties, assessments or governmental charges of whatever nature (other than withholding taxes) imposed by the United States or any other taxing authority will not be less than the amounts the holder would have received had no such taxes, duties, assessments or other governmental charges been imposed; and (ii) any interest due and not paid on an interest payment date, together with interest on such interest due from such interest payment date to the date of payment, compounded quarterly, on each interest payment date.

Certain Covenants

The Company covenants in the Subordinated Note Indenture, for the benefit of the holders of each series of subordinated notes, that:

if at such time the Company shall have given notice of its election to extend an interest payment period for such series of subordinated notes and such extension shall be continuing;

if at such time the Company shall be in default with respect to its payment or other obligations under the Guarantee with respect to the Trust Securities, if any, related to such series of subordinated notes; or

Table of Contents

if at such time an Event of Default under the Subordinated Note Indenture with respect to such series of subordinated notes shall have occurred and be continuing, (a) the Company shall not declare or pay any dividend or make any distributions with respect to, or redeem, purchase, acquire or make a liquidation payment with respect to, any of its capital stock, and (b) the Company shall not make any payment of interest, principal or premium, if any, on or repay, repurchase or redeem any debt securities (including guarantees other than the Guarantees) issued by the Company which rank equally with or junior to the subordinated notes.

None of the foregoing, however, shall restrict:

any of the actions described in the preceding sentence resulting from any reclassification of the Company's capital stock or the exchange or conversion of one class or series of the Company's capital stock for another class or series of the Company's capital stock;

the purchase of fractional interests in shares of the Company's capital stock pursuant to the conversion or exchange provisions of such capital stock or the security being converted or exchanged;

dividends, payments or distributions payable in shares of capital stock;

redemptions, purchases or other acquisitions of shares of capital stock in connection with any employment contract, incentive plan, benefit plan or other similar arrangement of the Company or any of its subsidiaries or in connection with a dividend reinvestment or stock purchase plan; or

any declaration of a dividend in connection with implementation of any stockholders' rights plan, or the issuance of rights, stock or other property under any such plan, or the redemption, repurchase or other acquisition of any such rights pursuant thereto.

Modification

The Subordinated Note Indenture contains provisions permitting us and the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding subordinated notes of each series that is affected, to modify the Subordinated Note Indenture or the rights of the holders of the subordinated notes of such series; provided, that no such modification may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding subordinated note that is affected:

change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of principal of or interest on, any subordinated note, or reduce the principal amount of any subordinated note or the rate of interest (including Additional Interest) of any subordinated note or any premium payable upon the redemption of any subordinated note, or change the method of calculating the rate of interest on any subordinated note, or impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment on or after the stated maturity of any subordinated note (or, in the case of redemption, on or after the redemption date); or

reduce the percentage of principal amount of the outstanding subordinated notes of any series, the consent of whose holders is required for any such supplemental indenture, or the consent of whose holders is required for any waiver (of compliance with certain provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture or certain defaults under the Subordinated Note Indenture and their consequences) provided for in the Subordinated Note Indenture; or

modify any of the provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture relating to supplemental indentures, waiver of past defaults, or waiver of certain covenants, except to increase any such percentage or to provide that certain

other provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each outstanding subordinated note that is affected; or

modify the provisions of the Subordinated Note Indenture with respect to the subordination of the subordinated notes in a manner adverse to such holder.

In addition, we and the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee may execute, without the consent of any holders of subordinated notes, any supplemental indenture for certain other usual purposes, including the creation of any new series of subordinated notes.

Table of Contents

Events of Default

The Subordinated Note Indenture provides that any one or more of the following described events with respect to the subordinated notes of any series, which has occurred and is continuing, constitutes an Event of Default with respect to the subordinated notes of such series:

failure for 30 days to pay interest on the subordinated notes of such series, including any Additional Interest (as defined in clause (ii) of the definition of Additional Interest in the Subordinated Note Indenture) on such unpaid interest, when due on an interest payment date other than at maturity or upon earlier redemption; provided, however, that a valid extension of the interest payment period by the Company shall not constitute a default in the payment of interest for this purpose; or

failure for 30 days to pay Additional Interest (as defined in clause (i) of the definition of Additional Interest in the Subordinated Note Indenture); or

failure to pay principal or premium, if any, or interest, including Additional Interest (as defined in clause (ii) of the definition of Additional Interest in the Subordinated Note Indenture), on the subordinated notes of such series when due at maturity or upon earlier redemption; or

failure for three Business Days to deposit any sinking fund payment when due by the terms of a subordinated note of such series; or

failure to observe or perform any other covenant or warranty of the Company in the Subordinated Note Indenture (other than a covenant or warranty which has expressly been included in the Subordinated Note Indenture solely for the benefit of one or more series of subordinated notes other than such series) for 90 days after written notice to the Company from the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of at least 33% in principal amount of the outstanding subordinated notes of such series; or

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of the Company.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the subordinated notes of any series have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee with respect to the subordinated notes of such series. If a Subordinated Note Indenture Event of Default occurs and is continuing with respect to the subordinated notes of any series, then the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee or the holders of not less than 33% in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the subordinated notes of such series may declare the principal amount of the subordinated notes due and payable immediately by notice in writing to the Company (and to the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee if given by the holders), and upon any such declaration such principal amount shall become immediately due and payable. At any time after such a declaration of acceleration with respect to the subordinated notes of any series has been made and before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained as provided in Article Five of the Subordinated Note Indenture, the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the subordinated notes of such series may rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences if the default has been cured or waived and the Company has paid or deposited with the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee a sum sufficient to pay all matured installments of interest (including any Additional Interest) and principal due otherwise than by acceleration and all sums paid or advanced by the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, including reasonable compensation and expenses of the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee.

The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate outstanding principal amount of the subordinated notes of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all the subordinated notes of such series, waive any past default with respect to

such series, except (i) a default in the payment of principal or interest or (ii) a default in respect of a covenant or provision which under Article Nine of the Subordinated Note Indenture cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding subordinated note of such series affected.

Table of Contents

Satisfaction and Discharge

Any subordinated note, or any portion of the principal amount thereof, will be deemed to have been paid for purposes of the indenture, and our entire indebtedness in respect of the subordinated notes will be deemed to have been satisfied and discharged if certain conditions are satisfied, including an irrevocable deposit with the trustee or any paying agent (other than us) in trust of:

money in an amount which will be sufficient; or

in the case of a deposit made prior to the maturity of the subordinated notes or portions thereof, eligible obligations (as described below) which do not contain provisions permitting the redemption or other prepayment thereof at the option of the issuer thereof, the principal of and the interest on which when due, without any regard to reinvestment thereof, will provide monies which, together with the money, if any, deposited with or held by the trustee or the paying agent, will be sufficient; or

a combination of either of the two items described in the two preceding bullet points which will be sufficient;

to pay when due the principal of and premium, if any, and interest, if any, due and to become due on the subordinated notes or portions thereof.

This discharge of the subordinated notes through the deposit with the trustee of cash or eligible obligations generally will be treated as a taxable disposition for U.S. federal income tax purposes by the holders of those subordinated notes. Prospective investors in the subordinated notes should consult their own tax advisors as to the particular U.S. federal income tax consequences applicable to them in the event of such discharge.

For this purpose, eligible obligations for U.S. dollar-denominated subordinated notes, means securities that are direct obligations of, or obligations unconditionally guaranteed by, the United States, entitled to the benefit of the full faith and credit thereof, or depository receipts issued by a bank as custodian with respect to these obligations or any specific interest or principal payments due in respect thereof held by the custodian for the account of the holder of a depository receipt.

Information Concerning the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee

The Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee, prior to an Event of Default with respect to subordinated notes of any series, undertakes to perform, with respect to subordinated notes of such series, only such duties as are specifically set forth in the Subordinated Note Indenture and, in case an Event of Default with respect to subordinated notes of any series has occurred and is continuing, shall exercise, with respect to subordinated notes of such series, the same degree of care as a prudent individual would exercise in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to such provision, the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers vested in it by the Subordinated Note Indenture at the request of any holder of subordinated notes of any series, unless offered reasonable indemnity by such holder against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee. The Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee is not required to expend or risk its own funds or otherwise incur any financial liability in the performance of its duties if the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee reasonably believes that repayment or adequate indemnity is not reasonably assured to it.

The Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee may serve as Senior Note Indenture Trustee, as Property Trustee and as Guarantee Trustee under the Trust Agreement relating to the Preferred Securities of a Trust. The Company and certain of its subsidiaries may maintain deposit accounts and banking relationships with the Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee. The Subordinated Note Indenture Trustee and certain of its affiliates may also serve as trustee under other

indentures pursuant to which securities of the Company and certain subsidiaries of the Company are outstanding.

Table of Contents

Governing Law

The Subordinated Note Indenture and the subordinated notes will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

Miscellaneous

We will have the right at all times to assign any of its rights or obligations under the Subordinated Note Indenture to a direct or indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of ours; provided, that, in the event of any such assignment, we will remain primarily liable for all such obligations. Subject to the foregoing, the Subordinated Note Indenture will be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties to the Subordinated Note Indenture and their respective successors and assigns.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK AND PREFERRED STOCK

Unless indicated differently in a prospectus supplement, this section describes the terms of our common stock and preferred stock. The following description is only a summary and is qualified in its entirety by reference to applicable law, our restated articles of incorporation and our bylaws. Copies of our restated articles of incorporation and bylaws are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

General

Our restated articles of incorporation authorize the issuance of 800,000,000 shares of common stock and 85,000,000 shares of preferred stock. As of February 20, 2009, there were approximately 365,764,340 shares of our common stock, no par value, outstanding and no shares of preferred stock outstanding. All outstanding shares of our common stock are fully paid and nonassessable.

Common Stock

We may issue our common stock from time to time upon such terms and for such consideration as may be determined by our board of directors. Such further issuances, up to the aggregate amounts authorized by our restated articles of incorporation, will not require approval by our shareholders. We may also issue common stock from time to time under dividend reinvestment and employee benefit plans.

Except as otherwise provided by law, holders of our common stock have voting rights on the basis of one vote per share on each matter submitted to a vote at a meeting of shareholders, subject to any class or series voting rights of holders of our preferred stock. Our shareholders may not cumulate votes in elections of directors. As a result, the holders of our common stock and (if issued) preferred stock entitled to exercise more than 50% of the voting rights in an election of directors can elect all of the directors to be elected if they choose to do so. In such event, the holders of the remaining common stock and preferred stock voting for the election of directors will not be able to elect any persons to the board of directors.

Holders of our common stock, subject to any prior rights or preferences of preferred stock outstanding, have equal rights to receive dividends if and when declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available therefor.

In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up and after payment of all prior claims, holders of our common stock would be entitled to receive any of our remaining assets, subject to any preferential rights of holders of outstanding shares of preferred stock.

Holders of our common stock have no preemptive rights to subscribe for additional shares of common stock or any of our other securities, nor do holders of our common stock have any redemption or conversion rights.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol PCG.

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Mellon Investor Services LLC.

Table of Contents

Preferred Stock

Our board of directors is authorized, pursuant to our restated articles of incorporation, to issue up to 85,000,000 shares of preferred stock in one or more series and to fix and determine the number of shares of preferred stock of any series, to determine the designation of any such series, to increase or decrease the number of shares of any such series subsequent to the issue of shares of that series, and to determine or alter the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions granted to or imposed upon any such series. Currently there are no shares of our preferred stock outstanding.

Prior to the issuance of shares of each series of our preferred stock, our board of directors is required to adopt resolutions and file a certificate of determination with the Secretary of State of the State of California. The certificate of determination will fix for each series the designation and number of shares and the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions of the shares including, but not limited to, the following:

the title and stated value of the preferred stock;

voting rights, if any, of the preferred stock;

any rights and terms of redemption (including sinking fund provisions);

the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s) or method(s) of calculation applicable to the preferred stock;

whether dividends are cumulative or non-cumulative and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends on the preferred stock will accumulate;

the relative ranking and preferences of the preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs;

the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which the preferred stock will be convertible into our common stock, including the conversion price (or manner of calculation) and conversion period;

the provision for redemption, if applicable, of the preferred stock;

the provisions for a sinking fund, if any, for the preferred stock;

liquidation preferences;

any limitations on issuance of any class or series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with the class or series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions of the preferred stock.

All shares of preferred stock will, when issued, be fully paid and nonassessable and will not have any preemptive or similar rights.

In addition to the terms listed above, we will set forth in a prospectus supplement the following terms relating to the class or series of preferred stock being offered:

the number of shares of preferred stock offered, the liquidation preference per share and the offering price of the preferred stock;

the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any, for the preferred stock;

any listing of the preferred stock on any securities exchange; and

a discussion of any material and/or special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock.

Table of Contents

Until our board of directors determines the rights of the holders of a series of preferred stock, we cannot predict the effect of the issuance of any shares of preferred stock upon the rights of holders of our common stock. However, the effect could include one or more of the following:

restricting dividends on our common stock;

diluting the voting power of our common stock;

impairing the liquidation rights of our common stock; or

delaying or preventing a change in control of us without further action by our shareholders.

Rank

If issued, the preferred stock would rank, with respect to dividends and upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up:

senior to all classes or series of our common stock and to all of our equity securities ranking junior to the preferred stock;

on a parity with all of our equity securities the terms of which specifically provide that the equity securities rank on a parity with the preferred stock; and

junior to all of our equity securities the terms of which specifically provide that the equity securities rank senior to the preferred stock.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

This section describes the general terms of the warrants that we may offer and sell by this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms and conditions for each warrant. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update or change the terms and conditions of the warrants as described in this prospectus. In this section, references to we, our and us mean PG&E Corporation excluding, unless otherwise expressly stated or the context otherwise requires, its subsidiaries.

General

We may issue warrants to purchase debt securities, preferred stock or common stock. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any securities and may be attached to or separate from those securities. The warrants will be issued under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, all of which will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants we are offering. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not have any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants. A copy of the warrant agreement will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the warrants.

Debt Warrants

We may issue warrants for the purchase of our debt securities. As explained below, each debt warrant will entitle its holder to purchase debt securities at an exercise price set forth in, or to be determinable as set forth in, the related

prospectus supplement. Debt warrants may be issued separately or together with debt securities.

The debt warrants are to be issued under debt warrant agreements to be entered into between us and one or more banks or trust companies, as debt warrant agent, as will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the debt warrants being offered by the prospectus supplement and this prospectus. A copy of the debt warrant agreement, including a form of debt warrant certificate representing the debt warrants, will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the debt warrants.

Table of Contents

The particular terms of each issue of debt warrants, the debt warrant agreement relating to the debt warrants and the debt warrant certificates representing debt warrants will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, including, as applicable:

the title of the debt warrants;

the initial offering price;

the title, aggregate principal amount and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants;

the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

the title and terms of any related debt securities with which the debt warrants are issued and the number of the debt warrants issued with each debt security;

the date, if any, on and after which the debt warrants and the related debt securities will be separately transferable;

the principal amount of debt securities purchasable upon exercise of each debt warrant and the price at which that principal amount of debt securities may be purchased upon exercise of each debt warrant;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum number of warrants that may be exercised at any one time;

the date on which the right to exercise the debt warrants will commence and the date on which the right will expire;

if applicable, a discussion of United States federal income tax, accounting or other considerations applicable to the debt warrants;

whether the debt warrants represented by the debt warrant certificates will be issued in registered or bearer form and, if registered, where they may be transferred and registered;

antidilution provisions of the debt warrants, if any;

redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the debt warrants; and

any additional terms of the debt warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the debt warrants.

Debt warrant certificates will be exchangeable for new debt warrant certificates of different denominations and, if in registered form, may be presented for registration of transfer and debt warrants may be exercised at the corporate trust office of the debt warrant agent or any other office indicated in the related prospectus supplement. Before the exercise of debt warrants, holders of debt warrants will not be entitled to payments of principal, premium, if any, or interest, if any, on the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants, or to enforce any of the covenants in the applicable indenture.

Equity Warrants

We may issue warrants for the purchase of our equity securities such as our preferred stock or common stock. As explained below, each equity warrant will entitle its holder to purchase equity securities at an exercise price set forth in, or to be determinable as set forth in, the related prospectus supplement. Equity warrants may be issued separately or together with equity securities.

The equity warrants are to be issued under equity warrant agreements to be entered into between us and one or more banks or trust companies, as equity warrant agent, as will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the equity warrants being offered by the prospectus supplement and this prospectus. A copy of the equity warrant agreement, including a form of equity warrant certificate representing the equity warranty, will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the equity warrants.

Table of Contents

The particular terms of each issue of equity warrants, the equity warrant agreement relating to the equity warrants and the equity warrant certificates representing equity warrants will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, including, as applicable:

the title of the equity warrants;

the initial offering price;

the aggregate number of equity warrants and the aggregate number of shares of the equity security purchasable upon exercise of the equity warrants;

the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the equity securities with which the equity warrants are issued, and the number of equity warrants issued with each equity security;

the date, if any, on and after which the equity warrants and the related equity security will be separately transferable;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum number of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;

the date on which the right to exercise the equity warrants will commence and the date on which the right will expire;

if applicable, a discussion of United States federal income tax, accounting or other considerations applicable to the equity warrants;

antidilution provisions of the equity warrants, if any;

redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the equity warrants; and

any additional terms of the equity warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the equity warrants.

Holders of equity warrants will not be entitled, solely by virtue of being holders, to vote, to consent, to receive dividends, to receive notice as shareholders with respect to any meeting of shareholders for the election of directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as a holder of the equity securities purchasable upon exercise of the equity warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND SECURITIES PURCHASE UNITS

This section describes the general terms of the securities purchase contracts and securities purchase units that we may offer and sell by this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms and conditions for each warrant. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update or change the terms and conditions of the securities purchase contracts and securities purchase units as described in this prospectus. In this section, references to we, our and us mean PG&E Corporation excluding, unless otherwise expressly stated or the context otherwise requires, its subsidiaries.

Securities Purchase Contracts and Securities Purchase Units

We may issue stock purchase contracts, representing contracts obligating holders to purchase from us, and obligating us to sell to the holders, a specified number of shares of common stock or preferred stock at a future date or dates, or a variable number of shares of common stock or preferred stock for a stated amount of consideration. The price per share and the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock may be fixed at the time the stock purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the stock purchase contracts. Any such formula may include antidilution provisions to adjust the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock issuable pursuant to the stock purchase contracts upon certain events.

Table of Contents

The stock purchase contracts may be issued separately or as a part of units consisting of a stock purchase contract and, as security for the holder's obligations to purchase the shares under the stock purchase contracts, either

our senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities or

our debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. Treasury securities.

The stock purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the stock purchase units or vice versa, and such payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis. The stock purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations in a specified manner and in certain circumstances we may deliver newly issued prepaid stock purchase contracts upon release to a holder of any collateral securing such holder's obligations under the original stock purchase contract.

Debt Purchase Contracts and Debt Purchase Units

We may issue debt purchase contracts, representing contracts obligating holders to purchase from us, and obligating us to sell to the holders, a specified principal amount of debt securities at a future date or dates. The purchase price and the interest rate may be fixed at the time the debt purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the debt purchase contracts.

The debt purchase contracts may be issued separately or as a part of units consisting of debt purchase contracts and, as security for the holder's obligations to purchase the securities under the debt purchase contracts, either

our senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities, or

debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. Treasury securities.

The debt purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the debt purchase units or vice versa, and such payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis. The debt purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations in a specified manner and in certain circumstances we may deliver newly issued prepaid debt purchase contracts upon release to a holder of any collateral securing such holder's obligations under the original debt purchase contract.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the general terms of any purchase contracts or purchase units and, if applicable, prepaid purchase contracts. The description in the prospectus supplement will not purport to be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to

the purchase contracts,

the collateral arrangements and depositary arrangements, if applicable, relating to such purchase contracts or purchase units and

if applicable, the prepaid purchase contracts and the document pursuant to which such prepaid purchase contracts will be issued.

Material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the purchase contracts and the purchase units will also be discussed in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

This section describes the general terms of the depositary shares we may offer and sell by this prospectus. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms and conditions for the depositary shares. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update, or change the terms and conditions of the depositary shares as described in this prospectus. In this section, reference to we, our and us mean PG&E Corporation excluding, unless otherwise expressly stated or the context requires, its subsidiaries.

General

We may, at our option, elect to offer depositary shares, each representing a fraction (to be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of preferred stock) of a share of a particular class or series of preferred stock as described below. In the event we elect to do so, depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares will be issued to the public.

The shares of any class or series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a deposit agreement among us, a depositary selected by us and the holders of the depositary receipts. The depositary will be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fraction of a share of preferred stock represented by such depositary share, to all the rights and preferences of the shares of preferred stock represented by the depositary share, including dividend, voting, redemption and liquidation rights.

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the deposit agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to those persons purchasing the fractional shares of the related class or series of preferred shares in accordance with the terms of the offering described in the related prospectus supplement.

Pending the preparation of definitive depositary receipts, the depositary may, upon our written order, issue temporary depositary receipts substantially identical to, and entitling the holders thereof to all the rights pertaining to, the definitive depositary receipts but not in definitive form. Definitive depositary receipts will be prepared without unreasonable delay, and temporary depositary receipts will be exchangeable for definitive depositary receipts without charge to the holder.

Dividends and Other Distributions

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received for the preferred stock to the entitled record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the number of depositary shares that the holder owns on the relevant record date; provided, however, that if we or the depositary is required by law to withhold an amount on account of taxes, then the amount distributed to the holders of depositary shares shall be reduced accordingly. The depositary will distribute only an amount that can be distributed without attributing to any holder of depositary shares a fraction of one cent. The depositary will add the undistributed balance to and treat it as part of the next sum received by the depositary for distribution to holders of the depositary shares.

If there is a non-cash distribution, the depositary will distribute property received by it to the entitled record holders of depositary shares, in proportion, insofar as possible, to the number of depositary shares owned by the holders, unless the depositary determines, after consultation with us, that it is not feasible to make such distribution. If this occurs, the depositary may, with our approval, sell such property and distribute the net proceeds from such sale to the holders.

The deposit agreement also will contain provisions relating to how any subscription or similar rights that we may offer to holders of the preferred stock will be available to the holders of the depositary shares.

Table of Contents

Withdrawal of Shares

Upon surrender of the depositary receipts at the corporate trust office of the depositary, unless the related depositary shares have previously been called for redemption, converted or exchanged into our other securities, the holder of the depositary shares evidenced thereby is entitled to delivery of the number of whole shares of the related class or series of preferred stock and any money or other property represented by such depositary shares. Holders of depositary receipts will be entitled to receive whole shares of the related class or series of preferred stock on the basis set forth in the prospectus supplement for such class or series of preferred stock, but holders of such whole shares of preferred stock will not thereafter be entitled to exchange them for depositary shares. If the depositary receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of whole shares of preferred stock to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to such holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing such excess number of depositary shares. In no event will fractional shares of preferred stock be delivered upon surrender of depositary receipts to the depositary.

Conversion, Exchange and Redemption

If any class or series of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares may be converted or exchanged, each record holder of depositary receipts representing the shares of preferred stock being converted or exchanged will have the right or obligation to convert or exchange the depositary shares represented by the depositary receipts.

Whenever we redeem or convert shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem or convert, at the same time, the number of depositary shares representing the preferred stock to be redeemed or converted. The depositary will redeem the depositary shares from the proceeds it receives from the corresponding redemption of the applicable series of preferred stock. The depositary will mail notice of redemption or conversion to the record holders of the depositary shares that are to be redeemed between 30 and 60 days before the date fixed for redemption or conversion. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share on the applicable class or series of preferred stock. If less than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary will select which shares are to be redeemed by lot on a pro rata basis or by any other equitable method as the depositary may decide.

After the redemption or conversion date, the depositary shares called for redemption or conversion will no longer be outstanding. When the depositary shares are no longer outstanding, all rights of the holders will end, except the right to receive money, securities or other property payable upon redemption or conversion.

Voting the Preferred Stock

When the depositary receives notice of a meeting at which the holders of the particular class or series of preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the particulars of the meeting to the record holders of the depositary shares. Each record holder of depositary shares on the record date may instruct the depositary on how to vote the shares of preferred stock underlying the holder's depositary shares. The depositary will try, if practical, to vote the number of shares of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares according to the instructions. We will agree to take all reasonable action requested by the depositary to enable it to vote as instructed.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement

We and the depositary may agree at any time to amend the deposit agreement and the depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares. Any amendment that (a) imposes or increases certain fees, taxes or other charges payable by the holders of the depositary shares as described in the deposit agreement or (b) otherwise materially adversely affects any substantial existing rights of holders of depositary shares, will not take effect until such amendment is approved by the

holders of at least a majority of the depositary shares then outstanding. Any holder of depositary shares that continues to hold its shares after such amendment has become effective will be deemed to have agreed to the amendment.

Table of Contents

We may direct the depositary to terminate the deposit agreement by mailing a notice of termination of holders of depositary shares at least 30 days prior to termination. The depositary may terminate the deposit agreement if 90 days have elapsed after the depositary delivered written notice of its election to resign and a successor depositary is not appointed. In addition, the deposit agreement will automatically terminate if:

the depositary has redeemed all related outstanding depositary shares;

all outstanding shares of preferred stock have been converted into or exchanged for common stock; or

we have liquidated, terminated or wound up our business and the depositary has distributed the preferred stock of the relevant series to the holders of the related depositary shares.

Reports and Obligations

The depositary will forward to the holders of depositary shares all reports and communications from us that are delivered to the depositary and that we are required by law, the rules of an applicable securities exchange or our amended and restated articles of incorporation to furnish to the holders of the preferred stock. Neither we nor the depositary will be liable if the depositary is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstances beyond its control in performing its obligations under the deposit agreement. The deposit agreement limits our obligations to performance in good faith of the duties stated in the deposit agreement. The depositary assumes no obligation and will not be subject to liability under the deposit agreement except to perform such obligations as are set forth in the deposit agreement without negligence or bad faith. Neither we nor the depositary will be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding connected with any depositary shares or class or series of preferred stock unless the holders of depositary shares requesting us to do so furnish us with a satisfactory indemnity. In performing our obligations, we and the depositary may rely and act upon the advice of our counsel or accountants, on any information provided to us by a person presenting shares for deposit, any holder of a receipt, or any other document believed by us or the depositary to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

Payment of Fees and Expenses

We will pay all fees, charges and expenses of the depositary, including the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary shares will pay taxes and governmental charges and any other charges as are stated in the deposit agreement for their accounts.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

At any time, the depositary may resign by delivering notice to us, and we may remove the depositary at any time. Resignations or removals will take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of the appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 90 days after the delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having a combined capital and surplus of at least \$50,000,000.

Table of Contents

GLOBAL SECURITIES

Book-Entry, Delivery and Form

Unless we indicate differently in a supplemental prospectus, the common stock, preferred stock, warrants, stock purchase contracts, stock purchase units or depositary shares (the securities) initially will be issued in book entry form and represented by one or more global notes or global securities (collectively, global securities). The global securities will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, as depositary (DTC), and registered in the name of Cede & Co., the nominee of DTC. Unless and until it is exchanged for individual certificates evidencing securities under the limited circumstances described below, a global security may not be transferred except as a whole by the depositary to its nominee or by the nominee to the depositary, or by the depositary or its nominee to a successor depositary or to a nominee of the successor depositary.

DTC has advised us that it is:

- a limited-purpose trust company organized under the New York Banking Law;
- a banking organization within the meaning of the New York Banking Law;
- a member of the Federal Reserve System;
- a clearing corporation within the meaning of the New York Uniform Commercial Code; and
- a clearing agency registered pursuant to the provisions of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

DTC holds securities that its participants deposit with DTC. DTC also facilitates the settlement among its participants of securities transactions, including transfers and pledges, in deposited securities through electronic computerized book-entry changes in participants' accounts, which eliminates the need for physical movement of securities certificates. Direct participants in DTC include securities brokers and dealers, including underwriters, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and other organizations. DTC is owned by a number of its direct participants and by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., the American Stock Exchange LLC and the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. Access to the DTC system is also available to others, referred to as indirect participants, that clear transactions through or maintain a custodial relationship with a direct participant either directly or indirectly. The rules applicable to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

Purchases of securities within the DTC system must be made by or through direct participants, which will receive a credit for those securities on DTC's records. The ownership interest of the actual purchaser of a security, which we sometimes refer to as a beneficial owner, is in turn recorded on the direct and indirect participants' records. Beneficial owners of securities will not receive written confirmation from DTC of their purchases. However, beneficial owners are expected to receive written confirmations providing details of their transactions, as well as periodic statements of their holdings, from the direct or indirect participants through which they purchased securities. Transfers of ownership interests in global securities are to be accomplished by entries made on the books of participants acting on behalf of beneficial owners. Beneficial owners will not receive certificates representing their ownership interests in the global securities except under the limited circumstances described below.

To facilitate subsequent transfers, all global securities deposited by Direct Participants with DTC will be registered in the name of DTC's partnership nominee, Cede & Co, or such other name as may be requested by an authorized

representative of DTC. The deposit of securities with DTC and their registration in the name of Cede & Co. or such other nominee do not affect any change in beneficial ownership. DTC has no knowledge of the actual beneficial owners of the securities. DTC's records reflect only the identity of the direct participants to whose accounts the securities are credited, which may or may not be the beneficial owners. The direct and indirect participants are responsible for keeping account of their holdings on behalf of their customers.

Table of Contents

Conveyance of notices and other communications by DTC to direct participants, by direct participants to indirect participants and by direct participants and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by arrangements among them, subject to any legal requirements in effect from time to time.

Redemption notices will be sent to DTC or its nominee. If less than all of the securities of a particular series are being redeemed, DTC's practice is to determine by lot the amount of the interest of each direct participant in such issue to be redeemed.

In any case where a vote may be required with respect to securities of a particular series, neither DTC nor Cede & Co. will give consents for or vote the global securities, unless authorized by a direct participant in accordance with DTC's procedures. Under its usual procedures, DTC will mail an omnibus proxy to us as soon as possible after the record date. The omnibus proxy assigns the consenting or voting rights of Cede & Co. to those direct participants to whose accounts the securities of such series are credited on the record date identified in a listing attached to the omnibus proxy.

Principal and interest payments on the securities will be made to Cede & Co., as nominee of DTC. DTC's practice is to credit direct participants' accounts upon receipt of funds and corresponding detail information from us or the paying agent in accordance with their respective holdings shown on DTC's records. Payments by direct and indirect participants to beneficial owners will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the account of customers in bearer form or registered in street name. Those payments will be the responsibility of participants and not of DTC, the paying agent or us, subject to any legal requirements in effect from time to time. Payment of principal and interest to Cede & Co. (or such other nominee as may otherwise be requested by an authorized representative of DTC) is our responsibility, disbursement of payments to direct participants is the responsibility of DTC and disbursement of payments to the beneficial owners is the responsibility of direct and indirect participants.

Except under the limited circumstances described below, purchasers of securities will not be entitled to have securities registered in their names and will not receive physical delivery of securities. Accordingly, each beneficial owner must rely on the procedures of DTC and its participants to exercise any rights under the securities and the applicable indenture.

The laws of some jurisdictions may require that some purchasers of securities take physical delivery of securities in definitive form. Those laws may impair the ability to transfer or pledge beneficial interests in securities.

DTC may discontinue providing its services as securities depository with respect to the securities at any time by giving us reasonable notice. Under such circumstances, in the event that a successor securities depository is not obtained, certificates representing the securities are required to be printed and delivered. Also, we may decide to discontinue use of the system of book-entry-only transfers through DTC (or a successor securities depository), in which event, certificates representing the securities will be printed and delivered to DTC.

We have obtained the information in this section and elsewhere in this prospectus concerning DTC and DTC's book-entry system from sources that are believed to be reliable, but we take no responsibility for the accuracy of this information.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the debt securities, the common stock, the preferred stock, the depositary shares, the warrants, the securities purchase contracts, and the securities purchase units (which we collectively refer to as the securities) in one or more of the following ways from time to time:

to underwriters for resale to the public or to institutional investors;

directly to institutional investors; or

through agents to the public or to institutional investors.

The prospectus supplement with respect to the securities we may sell will set forth the terms of the offering of such securities, including the name or names of any underwriters or agents, the purchase price of such securities, and the proceeds to us from such sale, any underwriting discounts or agency fees and other items constituting underwriters' or agents' compensation, any initial public offering price, any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers and any securities exchange on which such securities may be listed.

If underwriters participate in the sale, such securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale.

Unless otherwise set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase any series of the securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of such series of common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants, securities purchase contracts, and securities purchase units, if any are purchased.

Underwriters and agents may be entitled under agreements entered into with us to indemnification against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933. Underwriters and agents and their affiliates may engage in transactions with, or perform services for, us in the ordinary course of business.

Each series of preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants, securities purchase contracts, and securities purchase units will be a new issue of securities and will have no established trading market. Any underwriters to whom securities are sold for public offering and sale may make a market in such securities, but such underwriters will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. The preferred stock, depositary shares, warrants, securities purchase contracts, and securities purchase units may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters in connection with the offered securities will be passed upon for us by Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, San Francisco, California. Certain legal matters in connection with the offered securities will be passed on for any agents, dealers or underwriters by their counsel named in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements and the related financial statement schedules, incorporated in this prospectus by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008 and the effectiveness of PG&E Corporation and Pacific Gas and Electric Company's internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference (which reports (1) express an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting and include an explanatory paragraph related to the adoption of new accounting standards in 2008, 2007 and 2006 and (2) express an unqualified opinion on the financial statement schedules). Such financial statements and financial statement schedules have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, information statements and other information with the SEC under File No. 001-12609. These SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also read and copy any of these SEC filings at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on its public reference room.

CERTAIN DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

We have incorporated by reference into this prospectus certain information that we file with the SEC. This means that we can disclose important business, financial and other information in this prospectus by referring you to the documents containing this information.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings we make with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (other than information deemed to be furnished and not filed) before the termination of the offering of the securities offered hereby:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008; and

our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February 6, 2009, March 6, 2009 and March 9, 2009.

All information incorporated by reference is deemed to be part of this prospectus except to the extent that the information is updated or superseded by information filed with the SEC after the date the incorporated information was filed (including later-dated reports listed above) or by the information contained in this prospectus or the applicable prospectus supplement. Any information that we subsequently file with the SEC that is incorporated by reference, as described above, will automatically update and supersede as of the date of such filing any previous information that had been part of this prospectus or the applicable prospectus supplement, or that had been incorporated herein by reference.

You may request a copy of these filings at no cost by writing or contacting us at the following address:

The Office of the Corporate Secretary
PG&E Corporation
One Market, Spear Tower
Suite 2400
San Francisco, CA 94105-1126
Telephone: (415) 267-7070
Facsimile: (415) 267-7268

Table of Contents

\$

% Senior Notes due

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

March , 2009

Joint Book-Running Managers

BNY Mellon Capital Markets, LLC

Citi

Goldman, Sachs & Co.