

NEWS AROUND THE ECS

Power Cooperatives mulls 'Pantawid Liwanag' Program for the poor consumers affected by the lockdown extension

To help ease the burden of people in times of the health crisis, NEA said the ECs worked on a program of subsidizing the electricity needs of poor Filipino consumers following the two-week extension of the enhanced community quarantine.

Administrator Masongsong said the proposed electricity subsidy program, dubbed as 'Pantawid Liwanag,' targets poor Filipino electricity consumers in the countryside whose primary sources of income and livelihoods have been severely disrupted by the coronavirus crisis.



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"To show solidarity in dealing with this crisis, the electric cooperatives are exploring all means to continuously deliver electricity services to their respective consumers, as well as mitigate the cost of electric consumption by accessing funds for the design and implementation of 'Pantawid Liwanag,'" Masongsong said.

The 'Pantawid Liwanag' is a corporate social responsibility program led by the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, Inc. (PHILRECA) to be one with the government's efforts to curb the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the poorest of the poor.

This was in addition to the steps already taken by the power distribution utilities, such as the 30-day payment extension to electricity consumers and the cancellation of surcharges on late payments and power disconnections for consumers who failed to pay on time.

Over 90 ECs in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao have implemented the 30-day grace period for consumers to settle their electricity bills. ###



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payable to their power suppliers, the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management, and the Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines.

Masongsong said this is "to ease the burden [on] our industry players, as we fully understand that the generation and transmission sectors cannot be isolated from the economic consequences of this pandemic."

In a related development, the NEA administrator said the ECs were also looking into the possibility of subsidizing the electricity needs of poor families whose primary sources of income and livelihoods have been severely disrupted by the coronavirus crisis.###