

Hi, this is Chris Micheli with the Sacramento governmental affairs relations firm of Aprea & Micheli, and an adjunct professor at McGeorge School of Law. Today's podcast is a look at the California Energy Commission.

The CEC, as its often referred to, is charged with leading the state to a 100% clean energy future. It is the state's primary energy policy and planning agency, and the CEC states that it's committed to reducing energy costs and environmental impacts of energy use while ensuring a safe, resilient, and reliable supply of energy.

The CEC was established in 1974 by the Warren-Alquist Act. Basically, the California Energy Commission was established in response to the nation's energy crisis of the early 1970s. The CEC also recognized that state's unsustainable growing demand for energy resources.

You can find the CEC in state government, in the Public Resources Code, Division 15, Chapter 1. According to Section 25006 of the Public Resources Code, "It's the policy of the state and the intent of the Legislature to establish and consolidate the state's responsibility for energy resources, for encouraging, developing, and coordinating research and development into energy supply and demand problems, and for regulating electrical generating and related transmission facilities."

The CEC is comprised of multiple divisions and these different divisions run the day-to-day operations of the Commission. These include the following divisions: the Efficiency Division, which develops regulations, policies, and programs to help the state meet its clean energy goals; the Energy Assessment Division, which forecasts and assesses energy demands and supplies; the Fuels and Transportation Division, which administers the clean transportation program; the Office of Compliance Assistance and Enforcement, which leads the CEC's efforts to ensure conservation requirements are met; the Public Advisor's Office, which provides information on how to participate in the business meetings, workshops, and formal proceeding of the CEC; the Renewable Energy Division, which develops and administers the state's renewable energy programs; and then last but not least the Siting, Transmission, and Environmental Division, which maintains a staff of experts in more than twenty different engineering and environmental disciplines.

There are extensive provisions of the Public Resources Code that relate directly to the CEC, including the establishment of the state Energy, Resources, Conservation and Development Commission under Chapter 3; the designation of certain transmission corridors under Chapter 4.3. There's an entire chapter, 4.5, on petroleum supply and pricing. Chapter 5.1 deals with solar and photovoltaic systems. Chapter 5.3 is on the Energy Conservation Act of 2001.

There are a number of loan and grant programs, including for construction and retrofit projects, the Small Business Energy Efficient Refrigeration Loan Program, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants, there's the federal funding of energy-related projects and state energy programs, the Energy Efficient State Property Revolving Fund, as well as the Energy Efficiency Retrofit State Revolving Fund.

There's also a chapter on power facilities and site certifications, natural gas rating and tracking systems, research and development, public interest energy research and

development program, there's even the small business energy technology loan programs, as well as an agricultural energy industry program. There's also chapters dealing with energy shortage contingency planning, the strategic fuel reserve, state and local vehicle fleets. A chapter on renewable energy resources, California's solar initiative, insulation material standards, home energy and labeling programs, gas appliances ... you can see how extensive the Public Resources Code is for the CEC.

And then the CEC lists more than two dozen specific funding programs, including the Acceptance Test Technician Certification Provider Program, Appliance Efficiency Program, Bright Schools Program, the Building Energy Benchmarking Program, Building Energy Efficiency Standards, the Building Initiative for Low Emissions Development Program, and then Prop. 39 provided more than a billion dollars to K-12 schools for purchasing efficiency and renewable energy projects.

This is just a brief overview of California's Energy Commission. I hope you found it useful. Thanks for joining.