

PG&E CORP
Form 424B2
November 04, 2010

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

**Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)
Registration No. 333-149360**

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Maximum Aggregate Offering Price	Amount of Registration Fee(1)(2)
Common Stock, no par value	\$400,000,000	\$28,520

(1) Calculated in accordance with Rule 457(4) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

(2) This Calculation of Registration Fee table shall be deemed to update the Calculation of Registration Fee table in PG&E Corporation's Registration Statement on Form S-3 (Registration No. 333-149360).

\$400,000,000

Common Stock

PG&E Corporation may offer and sell shares of our common stock from time to time having an aggregate gross offering price of up to \$400,000,000 through the sales agents named below.

Our common stock is listed and traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol PCG. The last reported sale price of our common stock on the New York Stock Exchange on November 3, 2010 was \$47.88 per share.

The shares of our common stock to which this prospectus supplement relates may be offered and sold through one of the sales agents named below by means of ordinary brokers' transactions on the New York Stock Exchange or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale or at prices related to the prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices, in block transactions, or as otherwise agreed with the applicable sales agent pursuant to an equity distribution agreement that we have entered into with our sales agents. An indeterminate number of shares of our common stock may be sold up to the number of shares that will result in the receipt of gross proceeds of up to \$400,000,000. PG&E Corporation will pay each of the sales agents a commission equal to 1.00% of the gross sales price per share of shares sold through it as agent under the equity distribution agreement. The net proceeds that we will receive will be the gross proceeds from such sales, less the commissions and any other costs we may incur in issuing the shares. See "Use of Proceeds" and "Plan of Distribution" in this prospectus supplement for further information.

Investing in our common stock involves risks. For a description of these risks, see "Risk Factors" on page S-1 of this prospectus supplement and "Risk Factors" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009 as well as other information included or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

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.

Barclays Capital

Citi

Morgan Stanley

November 4, 2010

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 and the information incorporated by reference. Neither we nor any sales agent 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 sales agent is making an offer to sell our common shares in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is accurate only as of the date hereof.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Prospectus Supplement	
<u>Our Company</u>	S-1
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	S-1
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-1
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-3
<u>Common Stock Price Range And Dividends</u>	S-3
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	S-4
<u>Certain U.S. Federal Income Tax and Estate Tax Consequences to Non-U.S. Holders</u>	S-4
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	S-8
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-9
<u>Experts</u>	S-9
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 its subsidiaries.

Table of Contents

OUR COMPANY

PG&E Corporation, incorporated in California in 1995, is a holding company whose primary purpose is to hold interests in energy-based businesses. PG&E Corporation conducts its 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. PG&E Corporation became the holding company of the Utility and its subsidiaries on January 1, 1997.

The Utility served approximately 5.2 million electricity distribution customers and approximately 4.3 million natural gas distribution customers at September 30, 2010. The Utility had approximately \$45 billion of assets at September 30, 2010, and generated revenues of approximately \$13.4 billion in 2009. 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.

The principal executive office of PG&E Corporation is located at One Market, Spear Tower, Suite 2400, San Francisco, California 94105, and its 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.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

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, estimated Utility rate base, estimated environmental remediation liabilities, estimated tax liabilities, the anticipated outcome of various regulatory and legal proceedings, estimated 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, goal, potential and similar expressions. 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.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves risk. These risks are described below and under Risk Factors in Item 1A of Part II of our annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009 and our quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the three months ended September 30, 2010, which are 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 our common stock, you should carefully consider these risks as well as other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

Risks Relating to the Company's Common Stock

The price of the Company's common stock may fluctuate significantly, which could negatively affect the Company and holders of its common stock.

The market price of the Company's common stock may fluctuate significantly from time to time as a result of many factors, including:

investors' perceptions of the Company's and the Utility's prospects;

investors' perceptions of the Company's and/or the industry's risk and return characteristics relative to other investment alternatives;

S-1

Table of Contents

investors' perceptions of the prospects of the energy and commodities markets;

differences between actual financial and operating results and those expected by investors and analysts;

changes in analyst reports, recommendations or earnings estimates regarding the Company, the Utility, other comparable companies or the industry generally, and the Company's and the Utility's ability to meet those estimates;

actual or anticipated fluctuations in quarterly financial and operating results;

volatility in the equity securities market; and

sales, or anticipated sales, of large blocks of the Company's common stock.

S-2

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, including equity contributions to the Utility.

COMMON STOCK PRICE RANGE AND DIVIDENDS

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol PCG. The following table sets forth the range of intra-day high and low sale prices, as reported on the New York Stock Exchange and the cash dividends per share paid on the common stock for the periods indicated:

	Price Range of Common Stock		Dividend Paid per Share
	High	Low	
2008			
First Quarter	\$ 45.68	\$ 36.26	\$ 0.36
Second Quarter	41.74	37.00	0.39
Third Quarter	42.98	36.53	0.39
Fourth Quarter	39.79	26.67	0.39
2009			
First Quarter	\$ 41.06	\$ 34.50	\$ 0.39
Second Quarter	39.11	34.60	0.42
Third Quarter	41.97	36.588	0.42
Fourth Quarter	45.795	39.74	0.42
2010			
First Quarter	\$ 45.63	\$ 40.58	\$ 0.42
Second Quarter	45.00	34.95	0.455
Third Quarter	48.34	40.52	0.455
Fourth Quarter (through November 3, 2010)	48.23	45.38	0.455

We are a holding company with no revenue generating operations of our own. Our ability to pay dividends on our common stock, as well as satisfy our other financial obligations, primarily depends on the earnings and cash flows of the Utility and the ability of the Utility to distribute cash to us and reimburse us for the Utility's share of applicable expenses. The dividend policies of PG&E Corporation and the Utility are designed to meet the following three objectives:

Comparability: Pay a dividend competitive with the securities of comparable companies based on payout ratio (the proportion of earnings paid out as dividends) and, with respect to us, yield (i.e., dividend divided by share price);

Flexibility: Allow sufficient cash to pay a dividend and to fund investments while avoiding having to issue new equity unless our or the Utility's capital expenditure requirements are growing rapidly and we or the Utility can issue equity at reasonable cost and terms; and

Sustainability: Avoid reduction or suspension of the dividend despite fluctuations in financial performance except in extreme and unforeseen circumstances.

Our board of directors and the Utility's board of directors have each adopted a target dividend payout ratio range of 50% to 70% of earnings. Dividends paid by us and the Utility are expected to remain in the lower end of the target payout ratio range so that more internal funds are readily available to support each company's capital investment needs. Each board of directors retains authority to change the respective common stock dividend policy and dividend payout ratio at any time, especially if unexpected events occur that would change its view as to the prudent level of cash conservation. No dividend is payable unless and until declared by the applicable board of directors.

S-3

Table of Contents

In addition, the declaration of the Utility's dividends is subject to conditions imposed by the California Public Utilities Commission, or the CPUC, that the Utility maintain on average its CPUC-authorized capital structure and that the Utility's capital requirements, as determined to be necessary and prudent to meet the Utility's obligation to serve or to operate the Utility in a prudent and efficient manner, be given first priority.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

See "Description of Common Stock and Preferred Stock" in the accompanying Prospectus for a summary description of our common stock.

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

**CERTAIN U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX AND ESTATE
TAX CONSEQUENCES TO NON-U.S. HOLDERS**

The following is a summary of certain material U.S. federal income tax and estate tax consequences to non-U.S. holders relating to the ownership and disposition of our common stock, but does not purport to be a complete analysis of all the potential tax considerations relating thereto. This summary is based upon the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder, administrative rulings and judicial decisions, all as in effect on the date hereof. These authorities may be changed, possibly retroactively, so as to result in U.S. federal income or estate tax consequences different from those set forth below. We have not sought any ruling from the Internal Revenue Service, or the IRS, with respect to the statements made and the conclusions reached in the following summary, and there can be no assurance that the IRS will agree with such statements and conclusions.

This summary also does not address the tax considerations arising under the laws of any non-U.S., state or local jurisdiction or under U.S. federal gift and estate tax laws, except to the limited extent below. In addition, this discussion does not address tax considerations applicable to a non-U.S. holder's particular circumstances or to non-U.S. holders that may be subject to special tax rules, including, without limitation:

banks, insurance companies or other financial institutions;

persons subject to the alternative minimum tax;

tax-exempt organizations;

controlled foreign corporations, passive foreign investment companies and corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid U.S. federal income tax;

partnerships or other entities treated as pass-through entities for U.S. federal income tax purposes;

dealers in securities or currencies;

traders in securities that elect to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for their securities holdings;

persons that own, or are deemed to own, more than five percent of our common stock, except to the extent specifically set forth below;

real estate investment trusts or regulated investment companies;

certain former citizens or long-term residents of the U.S.;

persons who hold our common stock as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion, constructive sale, or other integrated security transaction; or

persons who do not hold our common stock as a capital asset (within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Internal Revenue Code).

S-4

Table of Contents

If a partnership or entity classified as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes holds our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner generally will depend on the status of the partner and upon the activities of the partnership. Accordingly, partnerships that hold our common stock, and partners in such partnerships, should consult their tax advisors.

You are urged to consult your tax advisor with respect to the application of the U.S. federal income tax laws to your particular situation, as well as any tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock arising under the U.S. federal estate or gift tax rules or under the laws of any state, local, non-U.S. or other taxing jurisdiction or under any applicable tax treaty.

Non-U.S. Holder Defined

For purposes of this discussion, a non-U.S. holder is a beneficial owner of shares of our common stock that is not, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

an individual citizen or resident of the U.S.;

a corporation (or other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the U.S., any state or political subdivision thereof, or the District of Columbia;

an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or

a trust (x) whose administration is subject to the primary supervision of a U.S. court and which has one or more U.S. persons who have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (y) which has made an election to be treated as a U.S. person.

Distributions

If we make a distribution of cash or other property (other than certain pro rata distributions of our common stock) in respect of our common stock, the distribution will be treated as a dividend to the extent it is paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits (as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles). If the amount of a distribution exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits, such excess first will be treated as a tax-free return of capital to the extent of the non-U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in our common stock, and thereafter will be treated as capital gain. Distributions treated as dividends on our common stock held by a non-U.S. holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax at a rate of 30%, or at a lower rate if provided by an applicable income tax treaty and the non-U.S. holder has provided the documentation required to claim benefits under such treaty. Generally, to claim the benefits of an income tax treaty, a non-U.S. holder will be required to provide a properly executed IRS Form W-8BEN.

If, however, a dividend is effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the U.S. by the non-U.S. holder (and, if an applicable tax treaty so provides, is attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the U.S.), the dividend will not be subject to the 30% U.S. federal withholding tax (provided the non-U.S. holder has provided the appropriate documentation, generally an IRS Form W-8ECI, to the withholding agent), but the non-U.S. holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax in respect of the dividend on a net income basis, and at graduated rates, in substantially the same manner as U.S. persons. Dividends received by a non-U.S. holder that is a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes and which are effectively connected with the conduct of a U.S. trade or business may also be subject to a branch profits tax at the rate of 30%

(or a lower rate if provided by an applicable tax treaty).

A non-U.S. holder that is eligible for a reduced rate of U.S. federal withholding tax under an income tax treaty may obtain a refund or credit of any excess amounts withheld by timely filing an appropriate claim for a refund together with the required information with the IRS.

S-5

Table of Contents

Gain on Disposition of Common Stock

Subject to the discussion below of FATCA and backup withholding, a non-U.S. holder generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax on any gain realized on the sale or other disposition of our common stock unless:

such non-U.S. holder is an individual who is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more in the taxable year of such sale or disposition, and certain other conditions are met;

such gain is effectively connected with the conduct by the non-U.S. holder of a trade or business in the U.S. (and, if an applicable tax treaty so provides, is attributable to a permanent establishment or a fixed base maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the U.S.); or

our common stock constitutes a U.S. real property interest by reason of our status as a United States real property holding corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, or a USRPHC, at any time within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition or the non-U.S. holder's holding period for our common stock.

A non-U.S. holder that is an individual and who is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more in the taxable year of such sale or disposition, if certain other conditions are met, will be subject to tax at a gross rate of 30% on the amount by which such non-U.S. holder's taxable capital gains allocable to U.S. sources, including gain from the sale or other disposition of our common stock, exceed capital losses allocable to U.S. sources, except as otherwise provided in an applicable income tax treaty.

Gain realized by a non-U.S. holder that is effectively connected with such non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the U.S. generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis, and at graduated rates, in substantially the same manner as a U.S. person (except as provided by an applicable tax treaty). In addition, if such non-U.S. holder is a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, it may also be subject to a branch profits tax at the rate of 30% (or a lower rate if provided by an applicable tax treaty).

Generally, a corporation is a USRPHC if the fair market value of its U.S. real property interests equals or exceeds 50% of the sum of the fair market value of its worldwide real property interests and its other assets used or held for use in a trade or business (all as determined for U.S. federal income tax purposes). There can be no assurances that we are not or will not become a USRPHC. If, however, we were a USRPHC during the applicable testing period, as long as our common stock is regularly traded on an established securities market (such as the New York Stock Exchange), our common stock will be treated as U.S. real property interests only for a non-U.S. holder who actually or constructively holds (at any time within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition or the non-U.S. holder's holding period) more than 5% of such regularly traded stock. Please note, though, that we can provide no assurance that our common stock will remain regularly traded.

Federal Estate Tax

Our common stock beneficially owned by an individual who is not a citizen or resident of the U.S. (as defined for U.S. federal estate tax purposes) at the time of death will generally be includable in the decedent's gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes, unless an applicable estate tax treaty provides otherwise. However, it is uncertain how the U.S. estate tax will be implemented and administered in 2010.

Recently Enacted Legislation Affecting Taxation of Our Common Stock Held By or Through Foreign Entities

Recently enacted legislation as part of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, or FATCA, generally will impose a U.S. federal withholding tax of 30% on dividends and the gross proceeds of a disposition of our common stock paid after December 31, 2012 to a foreign financial institution unless such institution enters into an agreement with the U.S. government to withhold on certain payments and to collect and provide to the U.S. tax authorities substantial information regarding U.S. account holders of such institution (which includes certain equity and debt holders of such institution, as well as certain account holders that are foreign entities

S-6

Table of Contents

with U.S. owners). The legislation also will generally impose a U.S. federal withholding tax of 30% on dividends and the gross proceeds of a disposition of our common stock paid after December 31, 2012 to a non-financial foreign entity unless such entity provides the withholding agent with a certification (i) that such entity does not have any substantial United States owners or (ii) provides certain information regarding the entity's substantial United States owners, which we will in turn provide to the U.S. tax authorities. Under certain circumstances, a non-U.S. holder might be eligible for refunds or credits of such taxes. Prospective investors are encouraged to consult with their own tax advisors regarding the possible implications of this legislation on their investment in our common stock.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

Generally, we must report annually to the IRS the amount of dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder, the non-U.S. holder's name and address, and the amount of tax withheld, if any. A similar report is sent to the non-U.S. holder. Pursuant to applicable income tax treaties or other agreements, the IRS may make these reports available to tax authorities in the non-U.S. holder country of residence.

Payments of dividends or of proceeds on the disposition of stock made to a non-U.S. holder may be subject to information reporting and backup withholding unless the non-U.S. holder establishes an exemption, for example by properly certifying the non-U.S. holder's status on a Form W-8BEN or another appropriate version of IRS Form W-8. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding and information reporting may apply if either we or our paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that the non-U.S. holder is a U.S. person.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax; rather, the U.S. income tax liability of persons subject to backup withholding will be reduced by the amount of tax withheld. If withholding results in an overpayment of taxes, a refund or credit may generally be obtained from the IRS, provided that the required information is furnished to the IRS in a timely manner.

The preceding discussion of U.S. federal tax considerations is for general information only. It is not tax advice. Each prospective investor should consult its own tax advisor regarding the particular U.S. federal, state and local and non-U.S. tax consequences of purchasing, holding and disposing of our common stock, including the consequences of any proposed change in applicable laws.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We have entered into an equity distribution agreement with Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Morgan Stanley & Co. Incorporated as our sales agents under which we may offer and sell over time, and from time to time, shares of our common stock having an aggregate gross offering price not to exceed \$400,000,000. Subject to the terms and conditions of the equity distribution agreement, the applicable sales agent will use its commercially reasonable efforts to sell, as our sales agent and on our behalf, all of the designated shares of common stock on any trading day or as otherwise agreed upon by us and the applicable sales agent.

From time to time, we will submit orders to a sales agent relating to the shares of common stock to be sold through such sales agent, which orders may specify any price, time or size limitations relating to any particular sale. We will submit orders to only one sales agent relating to the sale of shares of the common stock on any given day. We may instruct any sales agent not to sell shares of common stock if the sales cannot be effected at or above a price designated by us in any such instruction. We or any sales agent may suspend the offering of shares of the common stock by notifying the other.

Each sales agent will receive from us a commission of 1.00% of the gross sales price per share of the common stock for any shares sold through it as our sales agent under the equity distribution agreement with us. The remaining sales proceeds, after deducting transaction fees imposed by any governmental, regulatory or self-regulatory organization in connection with the sales, will equal our net proceeds for the sale of such shares.

Settlement for sales of our common stock will occur, unless we and the applicable sales agent agree otherwise, on the third trading day following the date on which any sales were made against payment to us. There is no arrangement for funds to be received in an escrow, trust or similar arrangement.

As sales agents, Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Morgan Stanley & Co. Incorporated will not engage in any transactions that stabilize the price of our common stock.

Under the terms of the equity distribution agreement, we also may sell shares to one or more of the sales agents as principal for their own account at a price agreed upon at the time of sale. A sales agent may offer the shares of common stock sold to it as principal from time to time through public or private transactions at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at fixed prices, at negotiated prices, at various prices determined at the time of sale or at prices related to prevailing market prices. If we sell shares to one or more of the sales agents as principal, we will enter into a separate terms agreement with such sales agent(s) and will describe this agreement in a separate prospectus supplement.

The shares of common stock offered hereby may be sold on the New York Stock Exchange or otherwise, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to the prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices.

In addition, if agreed by us and the relevant selling sales agents, some or all of the shares of common stock covered by this prospectus supplement may be sold through:

ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which a broker solicits purchasers;

purchases by a broker-dealer, as principal, and resale by the broker-dealer for its account; or

a block trade in which a broker-dealer will attempt to sell as agent, but may position or resell a portion of the block, as principal, in order to facilitate the transaction.

We will deliver to the New York Stock Exchange copies of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus pursuant to the rules of the New York Stock Exchange. Unless otherwise required, we intend to report on a quarterly basis the number of shares of common stock sold through the sales agents under the equity distribution agreement, the net proceeds to us and the compensation paid by us to the sales agents in connection with the sales of common stock.

S-8

Table of Contents

The sales agents will act as sales agents on a reasonable efforts basis. In connection with the sale of the common stock on our behalf, each of the sales agents may be deemed to be an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the 1933 Act), and the compensation paid to the sales agents may be deemed to be underwriting commissions or discounts. We have agreed in the equity distribution agreement to indemnify each of the sales agents against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the 1933 Act.

We estimate that total expenses of the offering payable by us, excluding commissions payable to the sales agents under the equity distribution agreement, will be approximately \$400,000.

We have agreed to reimburse the sales agents for certain of their reasonable expenses, including legal fees not to exceed \$100,000 in connection with the equity distribution agreement.

The offering of common stock pursuant to the equity distribution agreement will terminate upon the termination of the equity distribution agreement, pursuant to its terms, by each respective sales agent or us.

We have agreed not to directly or indirectly sell, offer to sell, contract to sell, grant any option to sell or otherwise dispose of, shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable for shares of our common stock, warrants or any rights to purchase or acquire shares of our common stock for a period beginning on the first trading day of a period during which any sales agent is making sales and ending on the related settlement date, without the prior written consent of the applicable sales agent after notice to such agent. The applicable sales agent may give this consent at any time without public notice. The restriction described in this paragraph does not apply to sales of:

shares of our common stock and options to purchase shares that we issue, in either case, pursuant to any employee or director stock option or benefit plan, stock purchase or ownership plan (whether currently existing or adopted hereafter), dividend reinvestment plan or direct purchase plan, including, without limitation, the PG&E Corporation 2006 Long-Term Incentive Plan and the PG&E Corporation 2005 Deferred Compensation Plan;

shares of our common stock issued upon conversion of securities, or the exercise of warrants, options or other rights disclosed in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission; or

shares of common stock that we issue in connection with acquisitions of businesses, assets or securities of others.

The sales agents and their affiliates have engaged in and may in the future engage in transactions with, and, from time to time, have performed commercial banking, investment banking and advisory services for, us and our affiliates in the ordinary course of business, for which they have received and will receive customary compensation. Affiliates of the sales agents are lenders under our revolving credit facilities.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters in connection with this common stock offering 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 sales agents. 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.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements, and the related financial statement schedules, incorporated in this Prospectus Supplement and the accompanying Prospectus by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009 and the effectiveness of the 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. Such financial statements and financial statement schedule 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

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 depositary 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

\$400,000,000

Common Stock

Prospectus Supplement
November 4, 2010

Barclays Capital
Citi
Morgan Stanley