

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

CENTURYLINK COMMUNICATIONS, LLC,

Respondent.

DOCKET UT-181051

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF SAMANTHA HOVEY
ON BEHALF OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
PUBLIC COUNSEL UNIT**

EXHIBIT SH-1T

December 15, 2021

1 **Q. Please state your name, age, city of residence, and occupation.**

2 A. My name is Samantha Hovey. I am over 18 years old, and I live in rural Skagit
3 Valley, Washington. I am currently employed by Fox Transportation as a driver.

4 **Q. On whose behalf are you testifying?**

5 A. I am testifying on behalf of the Public Counsel Unit of the Attorney General's
6 Office. I was asked to testify about my experience during the more than two-day
7 outage of 911 service that occurred in December 2018.

8 **Q. What happened on December 27, 2018?**

9 A. Around 9 or 10 pm on December 27, 2018, my husband and I returned home after
10 an evening at my parents' house. Our house is on a five-acre rural property that
11 once was my grandfather's farm. The house is at the end of a 900-foot driveway,
12 and as is our custom, my husband and I drove directly into our garage and entered
13 the house from the connecting door. Ours is a three-story house on a slope. From
14 the garage entry, we went downstairs to our bedroom, on the ground floor in back,
15 where a sliding glass door leads to a backyard with a woodpile.

16 **Q. What happened next?**

17 A. My husband changed his clothes and exited the sliding glass door to chop wood
18 for our bedroom stove. I heard him shout that he heard something, and then I also
19 heard the sounds of something moving around from the back to the side of the
20 house through the shrubbery. My husband called out to bring him a gun, but I
21 called 911 first. I got a busy signal from 911, so I called again, dialing a total of
22 four or five times. During that time my husband grabbed a long gun from the
23 house and went out to see if he could find the prowler.

1 **Q. Were you aware that there was a widespread 911 outage?**

2 A. No, I was not. I do not recall receiving any notice of a 911 outage until the next
3 day.

4 **Q. Were you able to reach help without 911?**

5 A. Yes. Using my cell phone I called my mother, who lives in neighboring
6 Snohomish County, on her cell phone, to see if she could call 911 for us. After a
7 few moments my mother called back to say she reached Snohomish 911 who said
8 they were sending Skagit officers after both. She said the 911 operator
9 complained that she should not be calling them for Skagit County assistance, and
10 attempted to hang up before getting the details, requiring my mother to shout at
11 them not to disconnect. The first officer arrived between 10 and 15 minutes later,
12 joined soon by two more in additional cars. My husband returned from his search
13 around the property and reported the person appeared to have gone through the
14 fence to the neighboring cow pasture. The officers didn't seem very interested in
15 what had happened, scolded us for having used Snohomish to dispatch them
16 instead of their own department's non-emergency line, and even made fun of my
17 husband for having gone after the prowler himself. The officers stood around
18 pointing their flashlights this way and that from where they stood, said they would
19 put out an alert to be on the lookout, and drove away. My husband and I looked
20 around the property ourselves since the police had not. We noticed several
21 Hondas we kept parked alongside the house appeared to have been rummaged
22 through, but found no damage or evidence of theft.

1 **Q. Describe how you feel the outage affected your experience of these events.**

2 A. I feel so lucky I had my mom in a neighboring county at a location where it
3 turned out no 911 outage was going on. I was surprised no one knew there was a
4 broad outage. I am very glad I did not need police help more urgently thanks to
5 that particular prowler fleeing rather than trying to rob us.

6 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

7 A. Yes.