

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Dockets UE-170033 and UG-170034
Puget Sound Energy
2017 General Rate Case**

PUBLIC COUNSEL DATA REQUEST NO. 025

PUBLIC COUNSEL DATA REQUEST NO. 025:

Re: Direct Testimony of Greg J. Zeller, Exhibit No. GJZ-1T.

Provide any information relied upon by the Company to inform customers about their ability to obtain a Customer Service and Restoration Service Guarantee. In your response, provide any information provided to customers at the time of setting up an appointment, communicating about missing or needing to change an appointment, or responding to an electric outage, as well as any information generally provided to all customers through the Company's website, newsletters, bill messages, or other means of communication about these programs.

Response:

Puget Sound Energy ("PSE") objects to Public Counsel Data Request No. 025 as overbroad, unduly burdensome, vague and ambiguous as it requests "any information." Without waiving these objections and subject thereto:

PSE has various methods of informing customers about their ability to obtain a Customer Service and Restoration Service Guarantee ("Service Guarantee").

In 2016, every newly-hired PSE Customer Care Center and Customer Service Office representative received training about the Service Guarantee. An online job aid that explains the circumstances for notifying customers about the Service Guarantee is available to all representatives and field employees.

In conversations with customers, representatives as well as field employees who meet with customers for scheduled appointments, follow this script:

If we miss your customer service guarantee appointment under normal operating conditions, we will automatically credit your energy account with \$50—guaranteed.

Attached as Attachment A to PSE's Response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 025 are examples of information generally provided through PSE's website, newsletters, bill messages or other means of communication about these programs.

Please see Attachment B to PSE's Response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 025, for information provided to customers at the time of setting up an appointment, communicating about missing or needing to change an appointment, or responding to an electric outage.

Note: When a large storm event occurs PSE activates a recorded message on the VRU that informs the customers about the 120-hour service guarantee.

Please see Attachment C to PSE's Response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 025 for the Interactive Voice Response Service Guarantee script.

ATTACHMENT A to PSE's Response to PUBLIC COUNSEL Data Request No. 025

ATTACHMENT B to PSE's Response to PUBLIC COUNSEL Data Request No. 025

March 2, 2017

2016 Awareness: Customer Service Guarantee

In 2016, with the creation of a third service guarantee—24-hour outage guarantee—Puget Sound Energy broadened awareness about the new guarantee as well as all three guarantees through the use of photographs and multimedia channels, including the news media.

A representation of the 2016 service guarantee awareness efforts includes:

1. News Stories

KING 5 / Dec. 30, 2016

<http://www.king5.com/news/local/puget-sound-energys-24-hour-power-restoration-guarantee-starts-january-1/380450636>

Puget Sound Energy's 24-hour power restoration guarantee starts January 1

Puget Sound Energy's new 24-hour power restoration guarantee takes effect on January 1st. It says the public utility company will restore power within 24 hours or pay customers a \$50 credit.

A PSE spokesperson said the new policy was created because reliability is important to PSE, and the company hopes to show people just how serious they take power outages.

KING 5 went to one of King County's most power outage plagued neighborhoods to ask what people think about the change.

"I'm cashing in on that one, you bet I am," said Kathy Myers, whose home on 65th Avenue Northeast in Kenmore has lost power more times than she can count over the last few years.

"It can go for days," she said of the outages. "One month, back in September or October, it was off for several days, several times through that three or four week period. And it's not always storm related."

Homeowners in Myers' Kenmore neighborhood often joke that they are the first to lose power and the last to get it back.

It's a known trouble spot that Puget Sound Energy refers to as Circuit 26, and an area the company is actively working on, to improve service. Kenmore city leaders have also met with PSE, to express concerns about the frequent outages there.

In the meantime, Myers said she appreciates the 24-hour restoration guarantee. She hopes it will serve as motivation for PSE and its power crews to work quickly when the power goes out.

"If they're willing to put that offer for money out then they're willing to put the work out to prevent them having to pay that money," she said. "Because otherwise, it would cost them big time, it happens too often."

There are a few important qualifications and conditions that must be met for a customer to receive the \$50 credit.

Those conditions are outlined in the policy's fine print, but first and foremost, PSE says customers must either report their outage to PSE, or request the credit within seven calendar days following restoration. Outages can be reported by phone or on Puget Sound Energy's app.

The 24-hour restoration guarantee is not applicable during a major storm or event. PSE must also have safe access to its facilities to perform the needed repair within 24 hours.

The new policy takes effect on January 1st, 2017. All of Puget Sound Energy's 1.1 million electric customers are eligible to apply for the \$50 credit, during non-storm related outages that last more than 24 hours.

KOMO News / Dec. 30, 2016

<http://komonews.com/news/local/pses-50-power-outage-rebate-starts-sunday>

PSE's \$50 power outage rebate starts Sunday

Dec. 30, 2016

By Jon Humbert, KOMO News

The Christmas lights are coming down at Peter Schultz's house.

He says he's lucky they stayed lit this December.

"The grid that PSE has up here is a little behind the times," the Kenmore resident said as he wrapped multicolored coils around one another. Schultz said he loses power a few times every winter and says Puget Sound Energy's upgrades have helped only slightly.

There could be help on the way and something for PSE customer pocketbooks.

Starting Jan. 1, PSE will start a \$50 rebate program for any customer who has lost power for 24 hours. The program is modeled after an existing program for power losses of 120 hours or more.

The Utilities and Transportation Commission came to a settlement with PSE over possible fines from failed benchmark tests. The rebate program was a way to offset fines according to the UTC.

The rules state that to qualify, you must notify PSE about the outage because notification in its system isn't automatic. Crews must be able to access your property.

But here's the kicker: You cannot be paid when the outage is due to a major weather event. That decision is made by a PSE mathematical formula when approximately 5 percent of customers are affected.

Schultz just wants steady power at the flip of a switch.

"So, \$50 in my pocket versus \$50 to actually fix the system? I'd pay 50 bucks to fix it."

KGMI Radio/ Dec. 30, 2016

[New PSE program pays you for outages longer than 24 hours](#)

Puget Sound Energy starts a new program to pay you \$50 if you lose power for 24 hours.

The rules for the program that started Sunday state you must tell PSE about the outage and crews must be able to get to your property.

But, the fine print says you cannot be paid when the outage is due to a major weather event. Some customers like Peter Schultz aren't sure it's worth it.

"\$50 in my pocket versus \$50 to actually fix the system, I'd pay \$50 to fix it," Schultz says. PSE says customers have seven days from the outage to report the power failure. The rebates will be sent out after about two billing cycles.

2. PSE News Release

November 2016 PSE news release announcing 24-hour outage restoration service guarantee

<http://pse.com/aboutpse/PseNewsroom/NewsReleases/Pages/24-hour%20power%20outage%20restoration%20in%20effect%20January%201.aspx>

3. PSE Bill Package

Link to October 2016 bill package with customer newsletter and page 1 bill message in blue bubble.

http://pse.com/accountsandservices/YourAccount/monthlyPromotions/Documents/Customer_bill_2016-10.PDF

October 2016 bill-print blue-bubble message appearing on all PSE statements

Customer service, guaranteed

We stand behind our service, from keeping scheduled appointments to restoring power outages as soon as we can. We'll credit your bill if we fail to meet our service guarantees. pse.com/guarantees

[January 2016 "Voice" customer newsletter article](#)

You have our guarantee

If you're having difficulty paying your PSE bill, consider setting up a payment arrangement, making smaller, multiple payments over time. A payment arrangement

allows you to keep your PSE account in good standing. To learn more about payment arrangements, please call us or sign in to your myPSE account. pse.com/mypse

[May 2016 "Voice" customer newsletter article](#)

You have our guarantee

We are committed to keeping scheduled appointments and to restoring power outages as soon as we can. If we don't keep an appointment or if electric service is out for 120 consecutive hours or longer, subject to certain conditions, we'll credit your account \$50.

pse.com/guarantees

[October 2016 "Voice" customer newsletter, page 1](#)



Customer service guarantees

We stand behind our service to you. We're continually tracking how we're doing and using your feedback to improve. And we'll credit your bill if we fail to meet our service guarantees.

- Appointment service guarantee
- 24-hour power outage restoration guarantee*
- 120-hour power outage restoration guarantee**

Qualifications apply. pse.com/guarantees

* Effective Jan. 1, 2017. Excludes major storm or other events.

** Electric service must be out for 120 consecutive hours or longer.

[January 2017 "Voice" customer newsletter article](#)



Customer service guarantees

We stand behind our service to you. We're continually tracking how we're doing and using your feedback to improve. And we'll credit your bill if we fail to meet our service guarantees.

- Appointment service guarantee
- 24-hour power outage restoration guarantee*
- 120-hour power outage restoration guarantee**

Qualifications apply. pse.com/guarantees

* Effective Jan. 1, 2017. Excludes major storm or other events.

** Electric service must be out for 120 consecutive hours or longer.

Mailing envelope for bills

1101 01/16

**Customer service — guaranteed.**

We commit to keeping scheduled appointments and to restoring power outages as soon as we can. For more information, visit pse.com/guarantees.



This envelope is recyclable

4. PSE.com, posted year-round

<http://pse.com/accountsandservices/NewToPSE/Pages/Service-Guarantees.aspx>

**Customer service guarantees**

We stand behind our service to you. We're continually tracking how we're doing and using your feedback to improve. And we'll credit your bill if we fail to meet our service guarantees.

Appointment service guarantee

We'll credit your bill \$50 if we don't keep an appointment to install new service, reconnect existing service or inspect natural gas equipment. [Learn more.](#)

24 hour power outage restoration guarantee

You may be eligible for a \$50 credit if your power is out for longer than 24 hours, barring a major storm or other event. Conditions apply and you must either report your outage to PSE or request the credit within seven (7) calendar days following restoration. [Learn more.](#)

120 hour power outage restoration guarantee

You may be eligible for a \$50 credit if your power is out for 120 consecutive hours or longer. Qualifications apply and you must either report your outage to PSE or request the credit within seven (7) calendar days following restoration. [Learn more.](#)

Tracking our performance

Every year we set goals for improving our service. These performance report cards show how we're doing in areas such as customer satisfaction, appointment scheduling, response time, field services and more. We also track the effectiveness of our energy efficiency programs.

[2015 Service Quality report card](#)

pse.com/guarantees .. explains the conditions

Detail in the /guarantees link**24 hour power outage restoration guarantee**

You may be eligible for a \$50 credit if your power is out for longer than 24 hours, barring a major storm or other event. Conditions apply and you must either report your outage to PSE or request the credit within seven (7) calendar days following restoration. [Learn more.](#)

Guarantee effective as of Jan. 1, 2017

- The consecutive 24-hour period begins when PSE is first notified of the outage. In the event PSE cannot safely access its facilities, the consecutive 24-hour period begins when safe access is made available for the company's personnel and standard equipment
- The guarantee is not applicable in the following circumstances:
 - The outage is associated with a major storm or event, which includes subsequent days;
 - Restoration is prevented by an action or default by someone outside PSE's control (other than a company employee or agent);
 - PSE does not have safe access to its facilities in order to perform the needed repair;
 - PSE verifies that there was no outage as reported by the customer;

- The customer's equipment has caused the outage; or
 - The customer's system has not received the proper electrical inspections and certifications.
- [All qualifications and conditions](#)

PSE Customer Care Internal Knowledge Management Site –
Agent instructions for Service Guarantees

Service Guarantees*

120 Hour Service Guarantee*

Per [Electric Tariff Schedule 131](#), PSE offers a \$50 credit to eligible customers who experience an outage lasting 120 hours or more.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Customer must be affected by an outage of their electric service that extends for at least 120 *consecutive* hours
- The 120 hours begins from the time PSE is first notified of the outage until Electric Service is restored to the eligible customer
- PSE must have safe access to our facilities to perform needed repairs. If safe access to PSE facilities is not possible, the 120 hour period begins when safe access is established for PSE's personnel and standard equipment
- Customer must report their outage or request the Guarantee within seven (7) calendar days following the restoration of the Electric Service
- PSE must be able to validate the customers claim
- If the customer's equipment has caused the outage, they will not be eligible.
- If the customer's system has not received the proper electrical inspections and certifications they will not be eligible.
- Customers with non-AMR meters must report their outage to enable PSE to establish an outage start time.

For the customers that meet the above criteria, a one-time credit of \$50 will be issued per single geographic location affected by the outage that the customer reported and PSE validated. The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) has defined "geographic location" as per Contract Account in SAP. The credit will appear on their bill, normally within two months following the service restoration.

Agent Call Handling Process:

For customers requesting the service guarantee credit within 7 days after service has been restored:

1. Explain the criteria for the credit to the customer
2. If the customer is reporting that their outage is eligible for the credit, the CCC agent will report the outage in SAP so that the system will recognize their account as being eligible for the credit
3. Once verified that the customer reported their outage, create an interaction record
 1. In the Class Field, select Outage
 2. In the Activities Field, select Duration
 3. Use the following template to create a note in the interaction record: *"120 HOUR SERVICE GUARANTEE: [Customer name] [Contract Account number] has requested the 120 Hour Service Guarantee Credit. Explained criteria for the credit and advised it may take up to 2 months for the credit to apply if eligible. Verified and updated. J. Doe 81-4321"*

4. Advise the customer that their request has been received and will be reviewed to determine eligibility
 1. Inform the customer that if they are found to be eligible that the credit will appear on their bill within two months. If they do not see the credit on their bill, it was determined that they were not eligible to receive it

For customers calling after the 7-day window:

1. Verify that the customer reported their outage prior to the call
2. Check Interaction Records to verify whether the 120 Hour Service Guarantee request was already processed
 1. If already processed, advise the customer that it can take up to two months for the credit to be applied to their account
 2. If no request was processed, create an Interaction Record:
 1. In the Class Field, select Outages
 2. In the Activities Field, select Duration
 3. Use the following template to create a note in the interaction record: *"120 HOUR SERVICE GUARANTEE: [Customer name] [Contract Account number] has requested the 120 Hour Service Guarantee Credit. Explained criteria for the credit and advised it may take up to 2 months for the credit to apply if eligible. Verified and updated. J. Doe 81-4321"*
 3. Advise the customer that if they are determined to be eligible to receive the credit they will receive a letter informing them when the credit will appear on their bill.
3. If the outage was not previously reported:
4. Politely inform the customer that in order to be eligible for the credit, the tariff requires that they report their outage within 7 days of service restoration, and that they are ineligible for the credit

Customer requests to give their 120 Hour Service Guarantee to the Warm Home Fund:

1. Thank the customer for their generosity
2. Ask the customer to pay the full amount of their bill and advise them that the next month they can make a \$50 donation to the Warm Home Fund
3. Add a comment to the Interaction Record: *120 Hour Service Guarantee Request Credit Donated to the Warm Home Fund: [name of caller] Customer requested their \$50 Service Guarantee Credit be donated to the Warm Home Fund. Advised customer to pay full amount and then make a \$50 donation on their next bill. Account verified. J. Doe 81-4321*
4. Using this process, the customer will receive a letter that fulfills the IRS requirement serving as a receipt for their charitable donation. It is important to explain to the customer that doing it this way allows the customer to still receive tax credit for their donation. If PSE changes the credit on our end the customer receives no tax credit for the donation.

If a customer indicates that they qualify for the credit, but do not see it:

1. Review the customer's account to verify whether the credit has been applied to their account

2. If the credit has posted to the customer's account, advise them of when it will appear on their statement
3. If the credit has not posted yet, advise the customer that if they are eligible for the credit, they will receive it on their account within the next two months
 1. If the customer was determined to be eligible to receive the credit but has not received it in the promised two-month period, escalate the call following the normal escalation process

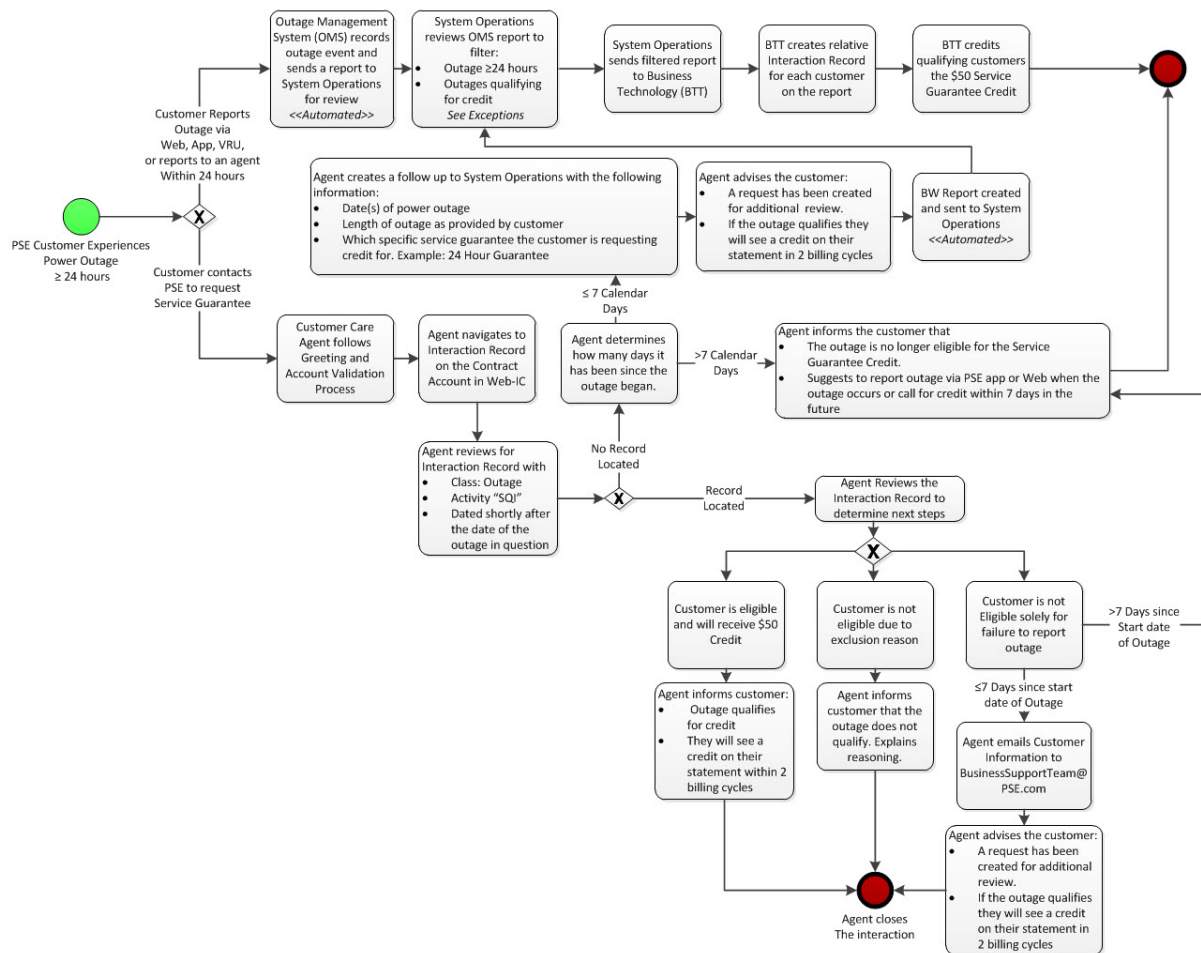
24 Hour Service Guarantee*

PSE electric customers experiencing an outage greater than or equal to 24 hours are eligible for a 24 Hour Service Guarantee credit of \$50 after either:

1. Reporting their outage to PSE
2. Requesting the guarantee credit within 7 calendar days following restoration of the customer's electric service, including holidays.

Exceptions: Outages greater than or equal to 24 hours in duration that fall under the criteria listed below will not be eligible for the service guarantee credit.

- If the outage is associated with a Major Event Day as defined by the tariff, this will be declared by System Operations.
- PSE was prevented from restoring electric service by an action by someone outside the control of the Company.
- Unsafe access to the facilities needed to perform the repair (e.g. a road washed out)
- No actual outage occurred as reported by the customer
- The customer's equipment caused the outage
- The customer's system has not received proper electrical inspections and certifications.



Appointment Service Guarantee

It is an expectation that every customer be verbally notified every time they could be eligible for the \$50.00 Service Guarantee. Those instances are missed appointments for the following:

- Reconnecting or connecting natural gas or electric services (Reconnect Notification)
- Natural gas equipment Service Appointments (Inspect/Adjust Notification)
- New permanent services (Customer Construction – SAP Notification)
- Please use the following script to inform customers who have a scheduled reconnect, connection or Inspect/Adjust service Notification:

"If we miss your customer service appointment under normal operating conditions, we will automatically credit your energy account with \$50- guaranteed!"

Use the following guidelines to advise customer of the date and time:

Electric reconnects or connections – 24 hours from the mutually agreed upon date
 Natural Gas reconnects or connections

- Anytime 8:00 am – up to midnight
- AM 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
- PM 1:00 pm – up to midnight

Natural Gas appliance Repair – AM, PM or anytime (see above)

It is important to quote the Guarantee exactly. This is monitored by the WUTC for compliance.