

February 4, 2016

Utilities and Transportation Commission
P O Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Re: PSE Petition/Docket UE-072300

Members of the UTC:

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FEB 08 2016
WASH. UT. & TP. COMM.

2016 FEB - 8 AM 8:04

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REGULATORY MANAGEMENT

I write to urge that you not modify PSE’s service quality index and instead, hold them to a higher standard of reliability and customer service.

Those of us who were Thurston County residents in 1996 are not likely to forget the ice storm and the power outage chaos that followed. We were without power for 11 days without any information or updates. The UTC subsequently held hearings and angry crowds of PSE customers packed the room. There were announcements of rulings that would mandate better customer communication and information. What resulted was a façade – a fancy phone system that recognizes your phone number, confirms your address, confirms your outage and that a crew has been dispatched to determine the problem . . . and then no meaningful information. It wouldn’t be quite as frustrating if after 24 hours the message was at least changed to say that they had dispatched a crew to look for yesterday’s crew that they apparently have never heard back from.

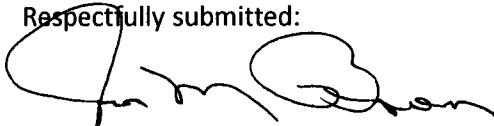
This past summer of 2015, during the nicest weather on record, our neighborhood lost power 9 times – not our idea of “reliability”. Throughout those power outages we never once able to obtain any information as to the cause or estimated time of restoration. As the number of outages climbed, no one from PSE acknowledged them or reached out to discuss a cause and/or solution. The work crews offered that “our lines were shot and PSE refuses to replace them.” As we hit outages 8 and 9, the neighborhood began reaching out in all directions for a solution. I filed a complaint with you, the UTC. To add insult, PSE refused to respond, but instead ordered a clerk at one of their sub- contractor’s to call and simply acknowledge my complaint had been received.

Yes, our lines were eventually replaced and for that we are grateful. PSE waited until the height of winter storm season, which resulted in the project being abandoned for many long breaks. The contractor had left us an information sheet listing a website for the project and the opportunity to sign up for updates, but we quickly learned that they were following the PSE “façade” model. We had two notices of planned outages – for which my husband stayed home and had the generator ready to go for the 8AM power outage start, and then no outage and no notification. I contacted the “Communication Director” named on the introductory letter to find her somewhere between dismayed and outraged that I would expect some communication that the outage had been cancelled. She acknowledged that the

project website hadn't been updated in weeks and the idea that our sign-ups could be grouped into one email blast that simply said "no outage today" was revolutionary.

No one should have been surprised a few years ago when a local ballot initiative called for the replacement of PSE. The UTC bears some responsibility for that measure for not holding PSE to higher performance standards. It was only because of that ballot measure that I learned that PSE has an Olympia office – because PSE spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in a campaign to defeat the initiative and touted the wonderful customer service provided by that Olympia office in their television ads. I wonder where they were throughout our 9 power outages last summer.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joan M Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Joan M Brown
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