

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

CENTURYLINK COMMUNICATIONS, LLC,

Respondent.

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DOCKET UT-181051

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

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**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.