

# **Mutual Confidentiality Agreement**

**Request for Proposals for Electric and Gas Demand-Side Resources**

**January, 2008**

# Exhibit E. Mutual Confidentiality Agreement

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## MUTUAL CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

This Agreement, dated as of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008, is entered into between Puget Sound Energy, Inc., ("PSE") and \_\_\_\_\_ ("\_\_\_\_\_"). PSE and \_\_\_\_\_ are sometimes referred to in this Agreement as "Party," and collectively as "Parties."

1. The Parties intend to enter into discussions regarding one or more potential transactions between the Parties involving the acquisition of electric energy efficiency resources or pilot projects or both. In the course of these discussions, each Party may disclose Confidential Information to the other. For the purposes of this Agreement, "Confidential Information" means any information or data disclosed in connection with such discussions in any form or media whatsoever by either Party (the "Disclosing Party") to the other Party (the "Receiving Party") which (a) if in tangible form, or other media that can be converted to readable form, is clearly and conspicuously marked as proprietary, confidential or private on each page thereof when disclosed; or (b) if oral or visual, is identified in writing as proprietary, confidential or private at the same time it is disclosed. "Confidential Information" includes all originals, copies, notes, correspondence, conversations and other manifestations, derivations and analysis of the foregoing.

2. Confidential Information shall not include information that (a) is or becomes generally available to the public other than by reason of the Receiving Party's breach of this Agreement; (b) the Receiving Party can reasonably demonstrate (i) was known by the Receiving Party, prior to its disclosure by the Disclosing Party, without any obligation to hold it in confidence, (ii) is received from a third party free to disclose such information without restriction, (iii) is independently developed by the Receiving Party without the use of Confidential Information of the Disclosing Party; (c) is approved for release by written authorization of the Disclosing Party, but only to the extent of such authorization; or (d) is related to the transmission of power, including but not limited to, any information which must be disclosed to the transmission function of a Party as part of any transmission request or information exchange that is required to be made public pursuant to FERC rules and regulations. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary set forth in this Agreement, the Receiving Party shall not be obligated to keep confidential any Confidential Information that (A) is required by law or regulation to be disclosed (including, without limitation, any summary or ranking of any proposal by the Disclosing Party constituting Confidential Information that PSE is required by law to make available to the public), but only to the extent and for the purposes of such required disclosure or (B) is disclosed in response to a valid order or request of a court or other governmental authority having jurisdiction or in pursuance of any procedures for discovery or information gathering in any proceeding before any such court or governmental authority, but only to the extent of and for the purposes of such order, provided that the Receiving Party, who is subject to such order or discovery, give the Disclosing Party reasonable advance notice (e.g., so as to afford the Disclosing Party an opportunity to appear, object and obtain a protective order or other appropriate relief regarding such disclosure). The Receiving Party, who is subject to such order or discovery, shall, at the Disclosing Party's expense, use reasonable efforts to assist the Disclosing Party's efforts to obtain a protective order or other appropriate relief; provided, that the Disclosing Party acknowledges and agrees that the Receiving Party shall have no obligation or responsibility to appear before, or to make any showing to, any court or any other governmental authority in connection with protecting any Confidential Information from disclosure by such court or governmental authority, and such responsibility shall be solely that of the Disclosing Party.

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3. The Parties acknowledge that PSE is a public utility regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (“Commission”) and that its decisions regarding one or more potential transactions between the Parties involving the acquisition of electric energy efficiency resources or pilot projects, together with related Confidential Information, may be subject to review by the Commission. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 2, in the event that such PSE decisions are at issue in a proceeding before the Commission, PSE will seek, at its own expense, a protective order from the Commission with “highly confidential provisions” to protect against the disclosure of Confidential Information to competitors and the public. Disclosure of Confidential Information by either of the Parties to the Commission, its staff or its advisors in connection with any such proceeding will not violate this Agreement.

4. The Parties further acknowledge that PSE has been assessing and developing conservation resource opportunities in consultation with PSE's Conservation Resource Advisory Group (CRAG), which was formally established as part of the settlement of PSE's 2001 general rate case that the Commission approved in its Twelfth Supplemental Order in Docket Nos. UE-11570 and UG-011571. The Parties acknowledge that PSE intends to share information with the CRAG about PSE's acquisition of electric energy efficiency resources or pilot projects, which information may include details about potential transactions between the Parties involving such acquisitions, together with related Confidential Information. Disclosure of Confidential Information by PSE to members of the CRAG will not violate this Agreement, provided that PSE first obtains the agreement of such CRAG members to maintain the confidentiality of that information.

5. Each party acknowledges and agrees that it has no proprietary or exclusive right to any tax matter, tax idea, tax structure or tax treatment related to any potential transaction or transaction between the Parties and that no such tax matter, tax idea, tax structure or tax treatment shall be deemed to be the Confidential Information of either Party.

6. The Receiving Party shall, subject to the other provisions of this Agreement, (a) use the Confidential Information only for purposes of evaluating one or more potential transactions between the Parties involving electric energy efficiency resources or pilot projects; (b) restrict disclosure of the Confidential Information to employees, advisors and active or potential investors or lenders of the Receiving Party and affiliates with a “need to know” and not disclose it to any other person or entity without prior written consent of the Disclosing Party; (c) advise such employees, advisors, investors and lenders who access the Confidential Information of their obligations with respect thereto; and (d) copy the Confidential Information only as necessary for those employees or advisors who are entitled to receive it, and ensure that all confidential notices are reproduced in full on such copies. A “need to know” means that the employee or advisors require the Confidential Information to perform their responsibilities in evaluating or pursuing one or more potential transactions between the Parties involving electric energy efficiency resources or pilot projects.

7. Confidential Information shall be deemed to be the property of the Disclosing Party. This Agreement shall not be interpreted or construed as granting any license or other right under or with respect to any patent, copyright, trademark, trade secret or other proprietary right. The Receiving Party shall, within 30 days of a written request therefor by the Disclosing Party, either return all of the Disclosing Party's Confidential Information (or any designated portion thereof) to the Disclosing Party or destroy all such Confidential Information (or any designated portion thereof) and provide an officer's certificate as to the destruction of such Confidential Information; provided, that PSE, as a Receiving Party, shall not be obligated to return to the Disclosing Party any proposal by the Disclosing Party, or any information related thereto, constituting Confidential

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Information, and PSE may retain all such proposal and information for a period of at least 4 years or until PSE concludes its next general electric rate case, whichever is later.

8. Neither this Agreement nor any discussions or disclosure hereunder shall (a) be deemed a commitment to any business relationship or contract for future dealing with another Party or (b) prevent either Party from conducting similar discussions with any third party, so long as such discussions do not result in the use or disclosure by the Receiving Party of Confidential Information protected by this Agreement. If the Parties elect to proceed with any transaction, then all agreements, representations, warranties, covenants and conditions with respect thereto shall be only as set forth in a separate written agreement to be negotiated and executed by the Parties.

9. Each of the Parties acknowledges that the Confidential Information received from another Party constitutes valuable confidential, commercial, business and proprietary information of the Disclosing Party and serious commercial disadvantage or irreparable harm may result for the Disclosing Party if the Receiving Party breaches its nondisclosure obligations under this Agreement. In such event or the threat of such event, the Disclosing Party shall be entitled to injunctive relief, specific performance and other equitable relief without proof of monetary damages. In any action to enforce this Agreement or on account of any breach of this Agreement, the prevailing Party shall be entitled to recover, in addition to all other relief, its reasonable attorneys' fees and court costs associated with such action.

10. This Agreement may not be assigned by either Party without the prior written consent of the other Party. No permitted assignment shall relieve the Receiving Party of its obligations hereunder with respect to Confidential Information disclosed to it prior to such assignment. Any assignment in violation of this Paragraph 10 shall be void. This Agreement shall be binding upon the Parties' respective successors and assigns.

11. This Agreement shall be deemed to be effective as of the date first above written, and shall continue thereafter for a period of four (4) years or, if later, upon the conclusion of PSE's next general electric rate case.

12. No Party shall be liable to another Party for any consequential, indirect, incidental, special, exemplary or punitive damages arising out of or related to this Agreement.

13. This Agreement shall be interpreted, construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the state of Washington, without regard to such state's choice of law principles to the contrary. Each of the Parties irrevocably consents to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of any state or federal court located in King County, Washington, with regard to any legal or equitable action or proceeding related to this Agreement.

14. This Agreement represents the entire understanding between the Parties with respect to the confidentiality, use, control and proprietary nature of any information disclosed by the Disclosing Party to the Receiving Party and the subject matter hereof and supersedes all prior communications, agreements and understandings relating thereto. The provisions of this Agreement shall not be modified, amended or waived, except by a written instrument duly executed by both of the Parties.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Agreement as of

\_\_\_\_\_, 2008.

PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC.

By \_\_\_\_\_

Its \_\_\_\_\_

[OTHER PARTY]

By \_\_\_\_\_

Its \_\_\_\_\_