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January 20, 2005

VIA FAX and First Class Mail

Carole Washburn, Secretary

WUTC

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PO Box 47250

Olympia, WA 98504-7250

STATE OF WASH.
UTILITY AND TRANSP.
COMMISSION

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**RE: PacifiCorp's Advice No. 04-13 – Docket No. UE-981627
Rule 25 – Customer Guarantees
Schedule 300 – Charges as Defined by the Rules and Regulation**

Dear Ms. Washburn:

The expiring Customer Guarantee program has been an important element of the merger settlement in providing quality electric service to PacifiCorp's Washington customers. Public Counsel is pleased PacifiCorp is filing a voluntary Customer Guarantee program. Public Counsel recognizes that PacifiCorp's standards under the settlement agreement are generally higher than the current standards of the industry and of other utilities in Washington State. PacifiCorp has been operating under these standards in a cost effective manner with minimal penalties to the company under the current Customer Guarantee structure. For these reasons, Public Counsel believes it would be preferable from a consistency and predictability stand point for a continued program to simply maintain or strengthen PacifiCorp's current standard. Indeed, we would advocate eventually consideration of raising the standards for all electric utilities in the State of Washington to comparable levels.

Public Counsel recognizes that several of the changes in the Customer Guarantees in PacifiCorp's filing are improvements from the merger settlement. One particular improvement in the Customer Guarantee which is very useful to the customer is the availability of AM or PM appointments. This raises PacifiCorp's appointment guarantee to the standard used by Puget Sound Energy in their tariff.


Public Counsel also recognizes that the continuation of the Customer Guarantee Program is voluntary on PacifiCorp's part and therefore the Commission may be hesitant to decide to order changes to PacifiCorp's filing. Once approved, however, the program will have the same force and effect as any other tariff, and the Commission must still be satisfied it is in the public interest.

As a condition of approval of the program, Public Counsel requests that the Commission not allow two of the Customer Guarantees to be weakened.

1. We recommend the \$100 missed appointment non-residential credit under Customer Guarantee 1 (restoration of supply after an outage) be extended under the voluntary program. This gives a slightly higher compensation to businesses in recognition of the economic impact of not having electric service return within 24 hours after a power outage.
2. Public Counsel also recommends that no customer that has met the requirements to have power switched on be excluded from Customer Guarantee 3 (switching on power within 24 hours) except those customers that have been disconnected for subterfuge or theft/diversion of service. Public Counsel does not believe the public interest is served by a two tiered service standard on this issue. Customers who are having power switched on should be treated equivalently, regardless of whether a customer is new or has qualified for service after a disconnect for nonpayment. The Commission has considered what a customer must do to qualify for reconnection after nonpayment and has provided procedures the customer must use to regain electric service. Public Counsel believes it is in the public interest that these customers obtain the same standard of service as other customers after they have met the requirements to be reconnected.

Public Counsel reiterates that it supports the continuation of the Customer Guarantee Program, a proposal which is voluntary on PacifiCorp's part. However, we ask the Commission to consider our recommendations as improving the plan in the public interest.

Sincerely,


Steve Johnson
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