



Utility and Customer Winter Weather Preparedness

House Emergency Management and
Veterans Committee

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Today's Presentation

Introduction to the PUC

PUC's safety and emergency
management role

Relevant customer programs

Oregon Public Utility Commission (OPUC)

Economic regulator of investor-owned utilities

- Electric – PGE, PacifiCorp, and Idaho Power
- Natural Gas – NW Natural, Cascade, and Avista
- Select landline phone and small water companies

Broad role in utility safety and emergency support, including for COUs

Quasi-judicial and policy functions; 3 full-time Commissioners

Our mission is to ensure Oregonians have access to **safe, reliable and fairly priced** utility services that advance **state policy** and promote the **public interest**.

We use an **inclusive process** to evaluate differing viewpoints and visions of the public interest and arrive at **balanced, well-reasoned, independent decisions** supported by fact and law.

PUC Role in Emergency Preparedness

The PUC works proactively to ensure utilities invest in critical energy infrastructure, emergency response, and system recovery

Goal = energy infrastructure that continues to provide service, or can be quickly restored to customers, in the event of natural or manmade disasters

PUC Role in Emergency Situations

Liaison between energy and telecommunication utilities and Office of Emergency Management

Gather and report information on utility status, e.g. outages and restoration estimates

Coordinate, communicate, and escalate restoration priorities for critical services

Conduit to the state when utilities need state assets or assistance



ESF 2 - Communications



ESF 12 - Energy

Efforts stem from role supporting two state Emergency Support Functions

Power Outage Readiness

- Be 2 Weeks Ready – Gather food, medical supplies, batteries, pet supplies, among other things, needed by family members during an outage or evacuation for up to two weeks.
- Individuals with medical conditions that require power, can contact utilities ahead of an outage to register a Medical Certificate for additional outage communications and programs to access backup power options.
- Keep cell phones fully charged in anticipation of an outage. Consider a car-charger for cell phones and other electronics.
- Keep vehicle gas tanks at least half full, as power outages may impact fuel pumps at gas stations.
- Make sure your utility service provider has current contact information for notifications by updating your account online



Relevant Consumer Programs

Energy Efficiency

Energy Trust of Oregon offers incentive programs for home weatherization, which can help keep homes warm longer during an outage

Disconnection Protection

The PUC is working to adopt formal rules preventing vulnerable customers from disconnection during extreme weather



Questions

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