



Oregon Citizens'
Utility Board

Home Cooling, Heat Resilience, & *Energy Security*

Presentation for House Interim Committee on Housing and Homelessness - June 16, 2026

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Oregon Citizens' Utility Board

About Oregon Citizens' Utility Board (CUB)

CUB is an independent membership-based, nonprofit organization that advocates for residential utility consumers. For over 42 years, we have worked to keep Oregon's regulated energy utilities affordable, accessible, reliable, and clean.



To date, we have saved Oregon families nearly \$11 billion dollars.



Our Homes Can Leave Us More Vulnerable to Energy Insecurity

- Energy inefficient homes are more likely to have evictions and foreclosures
- Housing infrastructure and income determines a family's energy behaviors
- Families who cannot afford energy bills have been forced to prioritize housing costs, food, healthcare costs
- Sacrificing energy means sacrificing safe and comfortable indoor temperatures, and risking health & safety



People die in their homes from heat exposure and lack of cooling.

Energy Insecurity: Summer 2025

Nearly $1/3$ of 2025 household disconnections in investor-owned utility territory happened in the summer.

**In June, July and August 2025,
21,306 households* had their power shut off
because they could not afford their energy bills**

*Households, number of people impacted is even greater



PGE's Low-Income Customers* with High Energy Use

Month	Avg Residential Usage (kWh)	Avg Low Income High Usage (kWh)	Avg Residential Bill	Avg Low Income High Usage Energy Bill (after discount)	Total # of Low Income, High Usage Households
January 2025	936	2,721	\$181	\$385	8,895
February 2025	744	2,858	\$144	\$415	9,182
August 2025	701	1,869	\$139	\$256	9,984

Source: PGE Data from OPUC Docket RO 16, Energy Burden Metric Reports

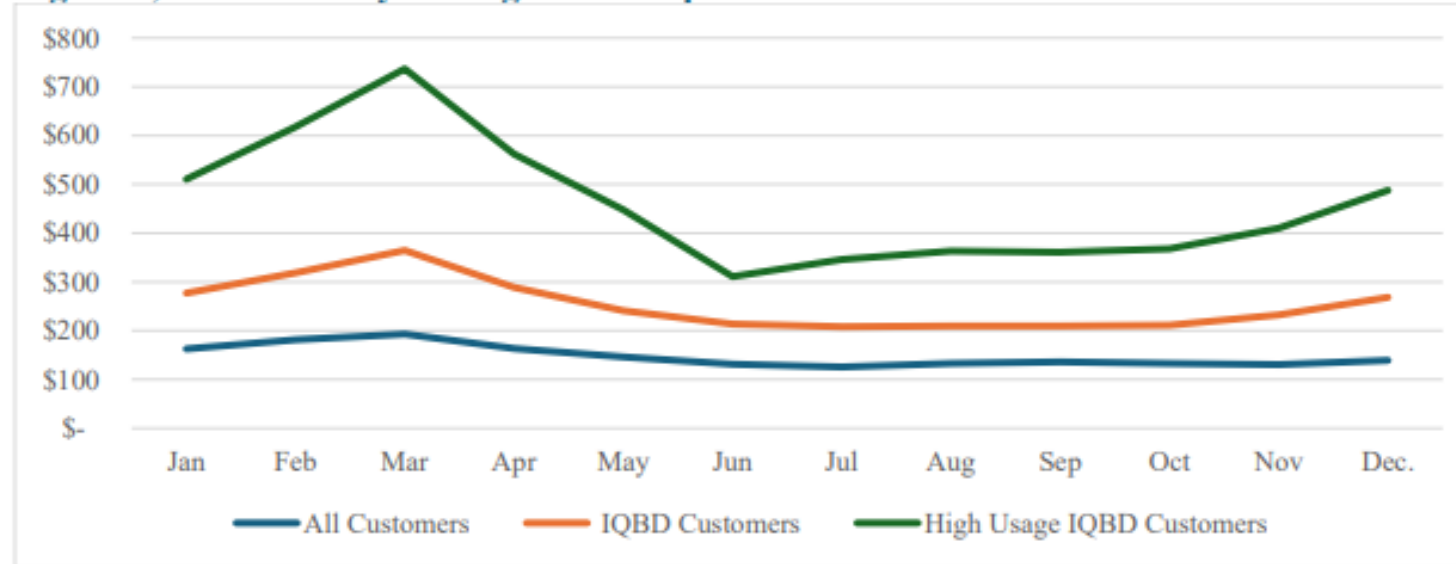
- In February 2025, PGE low-income families with high energy usage used nearly 4x the energy as the avg PGE household, and their bill was almost \$300 more, even with their monthly discount.
- In August 2025, PGE low-income families with high usage used more than 2x the energy as the avg PGE household, and their bill was over \$100 more, even with their monthly discount.



* These are customers we know are low-income, they do not capture all actual low-income families

PGE's Low-Income Customers with High Energy Use

Figure 1, 2025 Monthly Average Arrears per Customer



IQBD= Income Qualified Bill Discount Program

“PGE suspects a significant driver is energy inefficient buildings and appliances. These drivers are likely beyond the control of IQBD customers. While bill assistance remains undoubtedly necessary we must look toward more durable and sustainable solutions.”



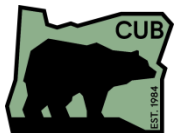
Pacific Power's Low-Income* Customers with High Energy Use

Month	Avg Residential Usage (kWh)	Avg Low Income High Usage (kWh)	Avg Residential Bill	Avg Low Income High Usage Bill (after discount)	Total # of Low Income, High Usage Households
January 2025	1,185	5,700	\$266	\$634	549
February 2025	1,089	5,872	\$212	\$662	548
August 2025	864	4,087	\$146	\$470	406

Source: Pacific Power Data from OPUC Docket RO 16, Energy Burden Metric Reports

In February 2025, Pacific Power low-income families with high energy usage used over 5x the energy as the avg Pacific Power household, and their bill was \$450 more, even with their monthly discount.

In August 2025, Pacific Power low-income families with high usage used nearly 5x the energy as the avg Pacific Power household, and their bill was over \$300 more, even with their monthly discount.



* These are customers we know are low-income, they do not capture all actual low-income families

Source: PGE Data from OPUC Docket RO 16

Energy Resiliency “Math”

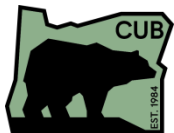
- Summer resilience solutions = winter resilience solutions
- Resistance heating = very inefficient = more costly to heat
- Resistance heating + leaky home = even more costly to heat = even more detrimental coping mechanisms
- Targeting hard-to-reach individual household insecurity at scale = more reliable grid = resilience for all



Our Homes Can Support Grid Reliability

- **Problem:** Data Centers threaten grid reliability, can increase energy emergencies during extreme weather. This can result in rolling blackouts during extreme weather puts our health & safety at risk
- **One Solution:** Invest in reducing energy needs of households living with energy insecurity from inefficient homes by intentionally targeting and serving low income households who need critical repairs and weatherization, which includes renters* and families living in mobile and manufactured homes

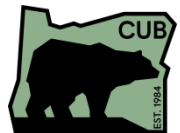
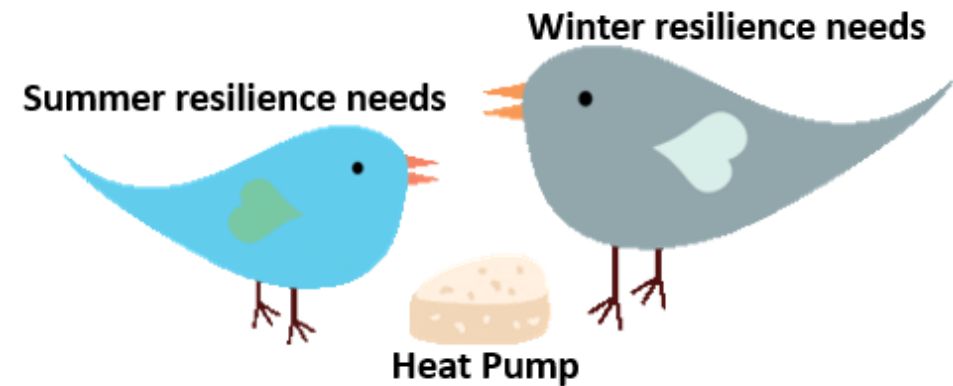
*with protections against displacement from “green gentrification”



Energy Insecurity & Grid Reliability Solutions

- Heat pumps for cooling: use less energy than AC, save money to use cooling*
- Heat pumps for heating: cold weather heat pumps 150-200% more efficient than resistance heating*
- *Ex:* a 5°F day, cold weather heat pump uses half the energy to heat compared to resistance heating*

Feed two
birds with
one scone



*Source: RMI, *Lower Bills, Better Grids: Heat Pump Benefits for Electric Resistance-Heated Homes* (April 2026)

Investing in making homes more efficient, for the families who can least afford it, is an investment in resiliency for all of us.

- Helps keep people housed, healthy and safe in their homes
- Helps keep energy costs down – for everyone
- Helps families make room for costs of other essentials like housing, food, healthcare, and transportation
- Increases grid capacity and reliability
- Reduces emissions and improves air quality



Our homes can be the first line of defense against energy insecurity, an increasingly strained energy grid, and more extreme weather.



Contact:

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CUB Newsletter

[Oregoncub.org/news/blog](https://oregoncub.org/news/blog)

Want to Learn More?

Fri. 6/26

Oregon Data Center Advisory Committee Meeting

Bob Jenks, Executive Director of Oregon CUB will be a speaker providing more color to these issues

Meeting 5: Data Centers, Energy Affordability, Revenue, and Incentives

June 26, 2026 | 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Join [online via Zoom](#)

- [📎 Agenda and Meeting Notice](#)

