



## News Release

### Puget Sound Energy offers customers convenient online billing

#### Puget Sound Energy, Microsoft and TransPoint join forces to offer leading-edge service to customers

REDMOND, Wash., and BELLEVUE, Wash., (Aug. 30, 2000/PRNewswire/) -- TransPoint LLC and Puget Sound Energy (NYSE: PSD) have teamed up to significantly increase the number of Seattle-area residents who can receive and pay their energy bills online. Until today, only a few thousand people in the Puget Sound area have been able to receive energy bills online. The e-bills service was developed and implemented by TransPoint, Microsoft's (Nasdaq: MSFT) joint venture with First Data Corp. and Citibank. Through the online TransPoint(TM) bill payment service, consumers can view and pay bills that arrive electronically through TransPoint, pay bills online that arrive in the U.S. mail, and initiate a payment online to anyone else with a U.S. mailing address.

"With Microsoft's extensive family of products and expertise in delivering solutions including online billing and payment through TransPoint, PSE can now deliver another easy and convenient way for our 1.2 million customers to pay their bills. Also, we will be able to reduce billing costs as a result of implementing this new technology," said Penny Gullekson, vice president of customer service at Puget Sound Energy.

"TransPoint, Microsoft and Puget Sound Energy are working together to bring more than a million customers in the greater Puget Sound region a new level of ease and convenience in their bill-pay experience and unparalleled, interactive customer service," said Lewis Levin, CEO of TransPoint and Microsoft vice president.

Puget Sound Energy is the largest energy utility based in Washington State. The company provides electricity, natural gas and energy-related services to 1.2 million homes and businesses in communities of the greater Puget Sound Region and beyond.

"Working closely with TransPoint and Microsoft, we have implemented a state-of-the-art Internet billing service that will offer PSE customers, a new level of customer service," added Gullekson. "Microsoft is one of our largest corporate customers, and Microsoft employees represent a large core group of consumers. We are very pleased to be working so closely with Microsoft on this project, and we believe our customers will appreciate the speed with which they can pay their energy bill, while receiving the same amount of detail as on their paper bill."

With one convenient service, consumers with Internet access can pay all their bills with a few clicks of a mouse. Customers can check the status of their TransPoint online payment account via their computers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If more help is needed, the TransPoint online payment service includes Web-based customer support and a fully staffed customer-service team.

The TransPoint e-bills service is available to consumers through the MSN(R) MoneyCentral(TM) online personal finance service (<http://www.moneycentral.msn.com/>), TransPoint (<http://www.transpoint.com/>), Prodigy Internet service (<http://www.prodigy.com/>), the Go2Net Network (<http://www.go2net.com/>), Compass Bank (<http://www.compassweb.com/>) and InterWest Bank (<http://www.interwestbank.com/>).

#### About TransPoint

TransPoint, established in June 1997, is a joint venture of Microsoft Corp. and First Data Corp., with Citibank Corp. as a minority equity investor. TransPoint is a leader in the emerging electronic bill presentment and payment industry with a completely new, seamless e-bills service built from the ground up. The TransPoint system uses innovative technology and integrates easily with billers' and banks' existing payment systems.

Launched commercially in April 1999, the TransPoint service is designed to be the fast, easy way for consumers with Internet access to make all of their payments online from a single, secure Web site. Consumers can pay their bills at multiple Internet locations, including the MSN MoneyCentral personal finance online service and directly through the TransPoint Web site. TransPoint e-bills are also scheduled to be available at the Web sites of many leading financial institutions in the coming months. TransPoint is based in Englewood, Colo. More information about e-bills is available at <http://www.transpoint.com/>.

#### About Puget Sound Energy

Puget Sound Energy (<http://www.pugetsoundenergy.com/>) is Washington State's largest energy utility and serves natural gas and electricity to 1.2 million customers. As part of its goal to be the industry leader in the energy distribution business, Puget Sound Energy is deploying a new generation of technologies that provide energy consumers with choices and convenience never before possible.

#### About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft is the worldwide leader in software, services and Internet technologies for personal and business computing. The company offers a wide range of products and services designed to empower people through great software -any time, any place and on any device.

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