



News Release

Puget Sound Energy Crews Ready If Wind Storm Causes Thanksgiving Outages

BELLEVUE, Wash.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 21, 2001--Puget Sound Energy (the utility subsidiary of Puget Energy (NYSE:PSD)) said today its crews are prepared to respond immediately -- night or day -- if a predicted rain and wind storm causes power outages over the Thanksgiving holiday.

"We hope our customers will be able to enjoy a peaceful Thanksgiving dinner with their families and friends, but if strong winds topple trees and knock out power, our crews will respond without delay," said Sue McLain, Puget Sound Energy vice president operations-delivery.

The National Weather Service reported this morning that a storm front is expected to move into the Puget Sound region by midday Thursday, possibly bringing wind gusts of up to 60 miles per hour. Sustained winds of 30 miles per hour and wind gusts of 60 miles per hour can be expected to cause power outages, according to PSE.

McLain said PSE has worked aggressively in recent years to reduce storm-related power outages within the utility's nine-county electric-service territory. The company's \$43 million TreeWatch program, McLain noted, has lowered the number of tree-related outages by more than 57 percent over the past three years. Under the ongoing program, PSE crews identify and remove trees or tree limbs that threaten to fall into power lines.

The utility has approximately 20,000 miles of power lines within its service area.

Other outage-reduction efforts by PSE include the systematic replacement of aging high-voltage transmission lines and, in heavily wooded areas more prone to storm-related outages, the installation of extra-strength "tree wire." In addition, the utility has placed about 41 percent of its power-distribution lines underground, significantly more than average among Northwest utilities.

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