



News Release

Puget Sound Energy Assesses Extent of Power Outages; Natural Gas System is Stable

BELLEVUE, Wash.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 28, 2001--With the epicenter of today's earthquake occurring where Puget Sound Energy (NYSE: PSD) serves electricity and natural gas, it appears the natural gas system sustained little or no damage, but some transmission lines that tripped off initially left more than 200,000 customers without electricity.

By 1:30 p.m., power was restored to more than 80 percent of those customers.

The outages, stemming from substation breakers tripping because of shock waves, occurred in parts of King County, Pierce County and Thurston County. Puget Sound Energy crews are surveying the substations for possible system damage. If no damage is found, they are quickly restarting the lines. The company anticipates that almost all of the outages caused by the temblor will be restored by late afternoon today.

It is recommended that Puget Sound Energy customers with natural gas service check their gas pipes and appliances for damage, and be alert for the smell or sound of escaping natural gas. If you do not smell or hear any natural gas leaking, then natural gas service does not need to be shut off. If you do smell the odor of escaping natural gas inside your home or outside near the meter, do NOT turn any electrical switches on or off, use the telephone or do anything that might create a spark. All occupants should evacuate the house or building and phone Puget Sound Energy from another location at 1-888/225-5773.

Puget Sound Energy serves 924,000 electricity customers in nine counties, and 591,000 natural gas customers in six counties, mostly in Western Washington.

MEDIA ADVISORY

Earthquake Preparedness for Natural Gas

What should natural gas customers do in case of an earthquake?

- First, check the gas pipes and appliances for damage, and be alert for the smell or sound of escaping gas.
- IF YOU DO NOT SMELL OR HEAR ANY NATURAL GAS LEAKING, THEN YOU DO NOT NEED TO SHUT OFF YOUR GAS. To do so could deprive you of service unnecessarily, since it may be some time until company personnel are available to reset meters and check appliances.
- If you smell the odor or hear the sound of escaping natural gas inside your home or outside near the meter, do NOT turn any electrical switches on or off, use the telephone or do anything that might create a spark. All occupants should evacuate the house or building and phone Puget Sound Energy -- 1-888/225-5773 -- from another location.
- If a gas odor is detected or if natural gas is escaping, customers should turn off their gas meter.
- The meter shut-off valve is located at the first fitting on the gas supply pipe coming out of the ground. Using a Crescent or open-ended adjustable wrench, shut off the meter with a quarter-turn of the valve from a vertical to a horizontal or crosswise position to the pipe.
- Once the gas is off, customers must not turn their meters back on themselves. Puget Sound Energy personnel need to be contacted.
- Even if you do not smell or hear natural gas leaking, check your gas appliances to make sure there is a free flow of air to the equipment. Also be sure that the vent ducts are intact and not blocked before operating any gas equipment.
- At least once a year, Puget Sound Energy includes instructions in its bills for turning off a gas meter.

Puget Sound Energy 24-Hour Media Line: 1-888/831-7250

CONTACT: Puget Sound Energy

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