



News Release

PSE Sees 25 Percent Jump in Customers Using Online Services in 2008

Winter months prompt twice as many customers to use bill analyzer tool

BELLEVUE, Wash.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 12, 2008--Faced with chilly weather and the economic downturn, budget-savvy Puget Sound Energy customers are tackling higher energy bills this winter heating season by turning to the Internet to pay their bills online and compare their daily energy use to determine ways to be more energy-efficient.

"While twice as many PSE customers during the winter months use the utility's bill analysis tool to take energy-saving measures, a steadily growing number go to PSE.com year-round to manage their account and pay their monthly electric and natural gas utility bill," said Agnes Barard, director of Customer Care for PSE.

In 2008 PSE has experienced considerable growth in new sign ups for Web services, with nearly 100,000, or a 25 percent jump, in the number of customers choosing online transactions.

"This year's economic slowdown may be among several factors motivating our customers to seek convenience and pocketbook savings in postage to manage their bills online," said Barard. "There's no question we serve a technologically savvy region; it's evident in how quickly our customers have embraced PSE's online services."

According to the 2008 J.D. Power and Associates Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study,SM which earlier this year reported improved customer satisfaction among PSE customers, scores come in higher with utilities offering online services and automatic payment options.

"With consumers expecting convenience-oriented services, the appeal of alternative methods for paying bills and managing utility accounts online cannot be underestimated," said Chris Oberle, Senior Director, at J.D. Power and Associates.

PSE has offered customers online access to their accounts since 2000, when it automated more than 1.6 million natural gas and electric meters. With an inserted computer chip, the meters record energy-use data daily and provide customers with access to information about how much energy they use every day. In 2005, the utility expanded this service with MY PSE Account, which allows customers to sign up online to view and pay their bills electronically.

As of December 2008, nearly 400,000, or a quarter, of all PSE customers now access the Web to track their energy use, view their statements and pay their monthly utility bills online.

The utility has discovered it attracted 20 percent more customers to the Web when it added the MY PSE Account online tools, such as viewing their energy use in a graphic form, either by a bar graph or pie chart, and analyzing their energy use and charges from month to month.

While paperless billing and online use are rapidly growing, PSE is also focused on making it easy for customers to connect with the utility in person with customer service offices that provide energy efficiency and traditional bill payment services. PSE opened offices this year in Port Townsend, Vashon Island and Whidbey Island and a service center in Burlington to compliment the utility's existing customer service offices in Bellingham, Olympia, Ellensburg, Oak Harbor, and a service center in Port Townsend.

"Providing our customers with the control and speed that the Internet offers is just as important as bringing our customers together, which we are doing through eight community-based customer service offices in Whatcom, Skagit, King, Jefferson, Thurston and Kittitas counties," added Barard.

For more information about PSE's online services, please visit PSE.com.

About Puget Sound Energy

Washington state's oldest and largest energy utility, with a 6,000-square-mile service area stretching across 11 counties, Puget Sound Energy serves more than 1 million electric customers and nearly 750,000 natural gas customers, primarily in Western Washington. PSE, a subsidiary of Puget Energy (NYSE: PSD), meets the energy needs of its growing customer base through incremental, cost-effective energy conservation, low-cost procurement of sustainable energy resources, and far-sighted investment in the energy-delivery infrastructure. PSE employees are dedicated to providing great customer service to deliver energy that is safe, reliable, reasonably priced, and environmentally responsible. For more information, visit PSE.com.

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