

January 16, 2004

Public Service Commission
160 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing with regard to the recent power outage and my frustration at the situation. My power went out at approximately 2:30pm on Saturday, December 27, 2003, along with a group of my neighbors. The transformer behind my neighbor's house blew up. There was a giant spark, a loud boom that everyone in the neighborhood heard, and then the power went out. The power was not restored until sometime on Tuesday, December 30th. That is 3 days in freezing cold temperatures without any heat or power. For them not to be held accountable for this is really, really really frustrating!!!

I called Utah Power numerous times, immediately to report the outage and later to get updated information as to when the power would be restored. I felt that their message that 'if you've already reported an outage to not call again,' was really inappropriate and frustrating. I called them several times over the next few days, as I really needed to know what to expect as to when power would be restored, as it was very, very cold in my house and I needed to know if I should leave and find housing elsewhere. The wait (response) time for those calls kept getting longer and longer. At first, it was 14 minutes, and it went up to a 48 minute wait to find out information. This was an extraordinarily long time to wait on the phone to check on the status of when power would be restored. I was very frustrated at the lack of customer service and assistance that this company gave.

My 6 year old and I roughed it out the first night, but after waking up to 40 degrees in the house, I knew we could not continue to stay there. During that Sunday, the temperatures inside the house kept going down, until they finally reached 32 degrees. At this time, I decided we had no option but to go to a hotel for the night. In fact, we ended up at a hotel for two nights because of the outage. I was forced to pay for a hotel at a time that I could not afford such expenses, but I had no other option. This was not the only expense I incurred as a result of the power outage. I ended up throwing away several hundred dollars worth of food, and I lost most of my fish as the temperature in my aquarium reached below 30 degrees. It was the most inconvenient time for this power outage with the holidays just passed and those bills needing to be paid.

After I heard the news reports that Utah Power was saying it was an "act of nature" that the power went out, I got extremely angry. I am still extremely outraged. Our power outage was **NOT** an act of nature, but a result of inadequate, old equipment. It was totally equipment failure that caused our outage. We experience power surges every week, when I come home and have to reset my electronic equipment. It is an ongoing problem, not an "act of nature."