
SUNDAY January 04, 2004
Hold Utah Power accountable

I want to thank the crews of UtahPower who worked hard in the face of very difficult weather conditions.

We lost our power at 5 a.m. on Dec. 26. We and our neighbors began calling Utah Power to report the outage all day Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning. Each call took approximately 30 minutes because of time spent on hold. Each time I spoke with a customer service representative they were cordial and assured me crews were informed.

On Sunday I went out for coffee and saw a Utah Power crew working several blocks from my house. I stopped to ask when they would respond to the outage. They said they had been given no information about it. I gave them my address and described the area affected. They immediately responded and power was restored within 15 minutes. Utah Power's telecommunications and dispatch systems were incapable of dealing with the outage. It is painfully obvious that my power would probably still be out if I hadn't taken matters into my own hands.

Utah Power is a regulated monopoly that has apparently been underfunding its infrastructure spending and computer information systems. Utah Power should be held accountable for the disorganized manner in which the outage was handled and for the utter failure of its customer service systems.

Thank goodness for the dedicated line and tree crews who actually fulfilled their responsibilities to rate-paying customers.

Brett W. Christiansen
Holladay

MONDAY January 05, 2004
Must someone die?

As I write this, a live electrical service line continues to lie across a residential parking lot, as it has for seven days and 15 hours. Despite numerous telephone calls, it would appear that Utah Power does not consider it much of a priority simply because there is power to the apartments involved.

As sympathetic as I am to those still without electricity, I have a rather simple question for Utah Power: Must someone die before you decide to repair this threat?

Michael Shelby
Salt Lake City

IN THE ABOVE EXAMPLES I HAVE ADDED THE BOLD PRINT.

ADDITIONALLY FROM MY OWN RECENT EXPERIENCE- MY HOME IS AT 3327 S. CRESTWOOD DR.(3700 E.) AND WHILE MY WIFE DIANE AND I WERE FORTUNATE NOT TO EXPERIENCE THE OUTAGES THAT MANY OF OUR NEIGHBORS DID ON DEC. 26 AND FOLLOWING WE DID HAVE A POWER OUTAGE ON SUNDAY JANUARY 4 AT APPROXIMATELY 4:50 PM. I CALLED UTAH POWER AND DID THEIR AUTOMATIC PHONE TRICK AND FOLLOWED THAT UP BY TALKING TO A LIVE PERSON IN PORTLAND. A SUPERVISOR ASKED ME TO CONTACT MY NEIGHBORS AND HAVE THEM CALL IN ALSO. I WONDERED IF THEY WERE GOING TO PUT ME ON THE PAYROLL ? APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR AFTER MY FIRST CALL - I CALLED AGAIN AND DISCOVERED THAT 160 HOMES WERE AFFECTED BY THIS OUTAGE. I DID THE DRILL TO SPEAK TO A LIVE PERSON AND THEN ASKED TO SPEAK TO A SUPERVISOR. I WAS GIVEN THE VOICE MAIL OF A SUPERVISOR WHO WORKED 8-5 MONDAY THRU FRIDAY - THIS BEING SUNDAY I HUNG UP AND WENT THRU THE DRILL AGAIN - AND GUESS WHAT ? - THE SAME THING HAPPENED - I GOT THE VOICE MAIL OF A SUPERVISOR WHO WASN'T COMING TO WORK FOR ALMOST 14 HOURS. SO I CALLED AGAIN - DID THE DRILL - A GOT THE VOICE MAIL OF A SUPERVISOR WHO WAS APPARENTLY (?) AT WORK AND I ASKED TO BE CALLED BACK AND GAVE MY NAME AND PHONE NUMBER. TO DATE NO ONE HAS RETURNED THE CALL. THE POWER CAME BACK ON AT APPROXIMATELY 6:55 PM. THE QUESTION I HAD FOR THE SUPERVISOR - THE LIVE OPERATOR IN PORTLAND COULDN'T ANSWER THIS QUESTION AND SUGGESTED HIS SUPERVISOR - WAS: "HAVE YOU COMMUNICATED VERBALLY WITH REPAIR PEOPLE IN SALT LAKE CITY OR ONLY SENT A MESSAGE BY COMPUTER?" I WANTED TO KNOW IF REPAIR CREWS HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THE MESSAGE. SINCE THE POWER CAME BACK ON AN HOUR LATER I GUESS THEY HAD .

IT'S ABOUT COMMUNICATIONS - NOT SNOW ! WHEN WILL PACIFICORP / SCOTTISH POWER GET IT?

THANK YOU,
RICHARD D. ARNER

From: "DandD" <danddarner@darnfastnet.com>
To: <lmathie@utah.gov>
Date: 1/8/04 4:34PM
Subject: COMMUNICATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

UTAH PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TO WHO IT MAY CONCERN:

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES FROM RECENT LETTERS PUBLISHED IN THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE PLUS MY OWN EXPERIENCE ILLUSTRATE A MAJOR PROBLEM THAT UTAH POWER IS NOT ADEQUATELY ACKNOWLEDGING. THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HEAVY SNOW OR BROKEN TREE LIMBS - BUT ADEQUATE DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION WITHIN UTAH POWER'S OWN BUREAUCRACY. UNTIL IT IS FIXED - WE WILL SUFFER MORE OF THE SAME POWER OUTAGES THAT OCCURRED OVER THE RECENT HOLIDAYS.

SATURDAY January 03, 2004
Utah deserves better

I yearn for the days when Utah Power & Light was a Utah company. In Utah's worst power outage in years, my home went more than 100 hours without heat. PacificCorp thought our entire neighborhood had been restored when, in fact, there were still five homes without power.

The infuriating thing is that we couldn't tell anyone. Repeated calls to the Utah Power/PacificCorp/Scottish Power customer service line, located in Portland, Ore., were a complete waste of time. On three separate occasions, crews came into our neighborhood only to leave the same five homes without power. The out-of-state customer service personnel had no contact with local crews working hard to restore power. On their fourth visit to our area, a group of neighbors literally begged a crew member to let us drive him to our street. Once he looked at our power lines he had our power restored in less than 10 minutes. Four visits to our street and five days without power took less than 10 minutes to resolve.

The wonderful crew members of Utah Power told us they had no idea our power was out, yet we had called the customer service line 14 times. They were as frustrated as we were with the lack of organization. I have a great idea for PacificCorp: Let Utahns run the customer service center for Utah. Their long-distance customer service strategy was a dismal failure and we in Utah deserve better.

J. Kevin Bischoff
Salt Lake City