

January 16, 2004

Utah Public Service Commission  
160 East 300 South, Fourth Floor  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Attention: Rick Campbell, Constance White, and Ted Boyer

Dear Commissioners:

This letter is to express my frustration and disappointment in the lack of timely and professional response by Utah Power during our recent snowstorm of December 26, 2003. Moreover, I am requesting that you do not grant "force majeure" status to Utah Power for this event.

When I awoke at 3:30 a.m on the morning of December 26<sup>th</sup> to discover we had lost power, I immediately called Utah Power. For the nearly three full days that followed, my neighbors and I were unable to make hot meals and struggled to keep warm. I called Utah Power at least once each day to check on the status of when power might be returned. The phone system, when you could get through, was not working properly. I was unable to access information on estimated times that power might be restored. When I could get through, I was told that my report did not exist and that there was no report of a power outage at my address. Clearly, Utah Power's system was not working and efforts to handle the call load were made too late.

Beyond this, there were too few people actually working in the community to restore power. My neighbors and I would walk to local businesses that did have power to stay warm and for hot meals. Not once did I see a Utah Power vehicle or any utility vehicles in the nearly three days we were without power. Where was everyone? Were there any Utah Power employees in the field?

I realize it was a holiday weekend; but utility companies that provide basic services should be fully staffed or able to call out a full staff quickly for *any* inevitable event. Three days is too long and I know that others were without power even longer. As I am sure you are aware, an article in the January 11<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Salt Lake Tribune*, provided quantifiable data to verify my and many people's experience. Only 149 personnel were working around the clock to restore power and during a similar event in 1984, there were 500 personnel dispatched. This means *we had less than 1/3 of the field personnel* working during the recent outage as compared to 1984! This is ridiculous. No doubt these numbers reflect attempts to save costs and allegedly hold utility bills down -- but at what price?

At some point utility and other companies, but particularly utility companies, need to be held accountable for business practices that do not serve their customers nearly as well as they serve