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Utah Power announces good will gesture for customers impacted by December winter storm

SALT LAKE CITY—Utah Power will make a goodwill gesture to customers who were out of service 48 hours consecutively or longer as a result of a severe winter storm that hit the Salt Lake area beginning December 26. A credit will be applied to customer bills based on the number of consecutive hours customers were out of service:

48-71 hours	\$100 (2-3 days)
72-95 hours	\$150 (3-4 days)
96+ hours	\$200 (more than 4 days)

The company has been tracking all previous customer claims by account number, so customers do not need to make another claim in order to receive the goodwill credit. However, the company has set up a special phone line to answer questions about the plan: 1-800-523-3433. This number will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

“The company is providing this billing credit because the quality of service we provided to customers during this storm was not up to our usual standards for communications and information,” said Rich Walje, Executive Vice President, for Utah.

Walje explained that the payment for this storm is not related to the company’s Customer Service Guarantees program, which is directed at service issues within the company’s control, not major weather events. Still, he said, certain failures of the company’s communications and information systems impaired the ability of the company to supply timely, accurate information to customers. The credits, therefore, apply to these unique, one-time events stemming from the severe storm of December 2003, and do not represent an ongoing program for events of this type.

Utah Power will begin providing credits to customers as early as February 3. The utility asks customers who have not previously registered a claim to call the number listed above by February 26.

“The company’s formal inquiry is now analyzing company data on the storm, according to the terms previously agreed with our regulators,” said Walje. “We are examining the outage in an effort to better understand all aspects of this event, the company’s response, and what improvements can be made.”

The number of claims for the goodwill credit that may be received is still uncertain, but the company estimates the total dollar value could be in excess of \$2 million. These funds will be charged to shareholders.

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