



Energizing Life in Our Communities

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SnoPUD's Community Support Plan to Help Those Affected by COVID

*Residential and small business customers experiencing hardships may be eligible for bill credits*

EVERETT, Wash. – In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Snohomish County PUD has developed a COVID Community Support Plan to help customers struggling to pay their electric and water bills. The plan makes funds available for both residential and small business customers affected by the COVID outbreak.

“We know these are challenging times for some of our customers and we want to ensure that we are helping support those that need help,” said John Haarlow, Snohomish PUD CEO/GM. “We are all in this together and as a provider of a critical service we play an important role, one which we take seriously.”

The PUD's plan not only allows for residential customers who have suffered sudden job loss to get immediate help, but also small business owners who have experienced rapid loss of business as well. **Customers experiencing hardships due to the COVID outbreak can call the PUD's Customer Service at 425-783-1000 to get help.**

“This is an evolving situation and we see this as a needs-based plan that can quickly serve our customers who have had their lives turned upside down,” said Pam Baley, PUD Assistant General Manager of Customer & Energy Services. “For customers in need now, we want to help with their utility bill so they can take care of what really matters.”

According to initial estimates, the PUD could see customer bill impacts up to \$2 million. The PUD's Customer Support Plan will be regularly evaluated by PUD leadership in order to best serve its customers.

The PUD's Community Support Plan allows for:

- Bill credit up to \$200 for residential customers who are behind on their bill due to the COVID outbreak.
- Bill credit up to \$500 for small business customers who have had their operations limited or closed due to the COVID outbreak.

The new Community Support Plan is in addition to what the PUD has already done to help customers keep their lights on and water running in these extraordinary times, including:

- Pause disconnections for non-payments
- Pause late fees
- Made Budget Payment Plan availability more flexible
- Increased retail energy efficiency measures and savings through the [SnoPUD Marketplace](#)
- Enhancements to the PUD's Income Qualified Assistance Program and Discount Program



PUD customers can also help families or individuals struggling to pay their bills through the PUD's Project PRIDE (Providing Relief for Individuals Dependent on Energy) program. Donations to Project PRIDE are used to provide one-time grant for customers who need help paying their PUD bill. Customers can donate using an [online donation form](#), use the Project PRIDE donation slip included on their bill or send a check payable to Project PRIDE.

Customers can also save money by conserving energy. With more people remaining home, that can be difficult. The PUD offers several free and easy energy saving strategies to help customers reduce usage and expenses, including:

- **Practice zoned heating and lighting.** A simple way to reduce energy usage is zone heating, or just heating occupied rooms. Customers who have existing baseboard or wall heating should turn down thermostats in any unused rooms and close the door. The same goes for lights. They should be turned off any in rooms not being used.
- **Layer up and lower the thermostat.** During the day, customers should set their thermostat at 68 degrees. At night or when they're away, customers should drop their thermostat to 55 to save as much as 10% on their heating costs.
- **Let the sun shine in.** Using the natural warmth of the sun can help heat customers' homes and give furnaces a break. Customers should open their shades on south-facing windows during the day to let the sun in and close them at night to keep the warmth inside.
- **Small business conservation tips.** If locations are closed, adjust thermostats to at least 60 degrees or as low as 55 degrees to save money on heating costs and turn off hot water tanks. Also combine items into as few refrigerators as possible and turn off what is not needed.

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