



LIVING *with Energy*

When an Outage Occurs: How PSNH Responds

Your lights are out and you want to know why. And, even more importantly, you would like to know when they will come back on.

To help you better understand what PSNH is doing when your power is out and why, here are the basic steps of our power restoration process:

- 1. You report the outage.** When an outage occurs, PSNH's first priority is to restore power as efficiently and effectively as possible. You can help us by reporting an outage either by phone (1-800-662-7764) or, if you have access to a working computer, through our website at psnh.com.
- 2. A PSNH line crew is sent.** Once PSNH is notified that your power is out, we send a line crew to your neighborhood. This can happen quickly or take more time, depending on whether a crew is already working in your area or needs to be called in from home (during evening or weekend hours) or from another location.
- 3. The source of the outage is identified.** Some problems are easier to find than others. Our line workers study circuit maps and patrol the area where outages are reported to try to pinpoint the problem.



In some cases, the problem can be fixed quickly, such as replacing a fuse. Unfortunately, the problem sometimes requires more work, such as when a pole or wires have been broken and need to be replaced.

How Long Until My Lights Are Back On?

Our line crews keep our customer service team informed as they work so that we can update customers as to when their power will be restored. When there are many different outages around the state, it becomes much more difficult to predict when the power will come back on. And, there may be more than one problem along the circuit supplying electricity to your home and business. We work hard to keep your lights on, and we appreciate your patience when they're not.

For more information about PSNH's power restoration process, please visit our website at psnh.com.

Possible Reasons for a Higher-than-Normal Bill

Does your bill seem higher than normal? The first step toward reducing your bill is figuring out how much energy you use now – or how much you will use if you add new appliances. The PSNH Energy Calculator is available to help you accurately determine the monthly cost of operating an individual appliance – or everything in your home. Registering with psnh.com Online Services provides you access to our secure Energy Calculator. When you do experience a bill that is higher than normal, here are some factors to consider:

Increased Fuel Costs Drive PSNH Rate Adjustment

PSNH'S 'ENERGY' RATE WILL INCREASE ON FEBRUARY 1 TO 6.49 CENTS/kWh FOR ALL CUSTOMERS, IF APPROVED BY THE NEW HAMPSHIRE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION. THIS WILL RESULT IN AN AVERAGE RATE INCREASE OF ABOUT 5.7 PERCENT. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THIS CHARGE OF 6.49 CENTS/kWh FOR ENERGY IS STILL ONE OF THE LOWEST IN NEW ENGLAND.

TO PUT THIS IN PERSPECTIVE, A MONTHLY BILL FOR A RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER USING 500 kWh WILL INCREASE BY ABOUT \$3.50 PER MONTH. THE 'ENERGY' RATE REFLECTS PSNH'S ACTUAL COST OF PRODUCING OR PURCHASING THE ENERGY WE PROVIDE TO OUR CUSTOMERS. RECENT INCREASES IN THE PRICE OF OIL AND NATURAL GAS HAVE PUSHED ENERGY PRICES UP.

Billing Days: In a billing cycle, the number of days may range anywhere from 28 to 33. That's a possible difference of five days from one billing cycle to the next. Also, the billing cycle may include five weekends, a time of increased electrical use for many households. The 'billing period' can be found on your bill.

Faulty Appliances: A leaky water heater, a well pump that's running constantly, a faulty thermostat, a refrigerator or freezer with a poor door seal, all of these appliance defects can lead to a high electric bill.

Seasonal Items: Appliances and other equipment used during the coldest and warmest months of the year (air conditioners, dehumidifiers, hot air furnaces, etc.) can make a significant difference in your electricity usage.

A Full House: Times of higher occupancy and activity, like holidays and school vacations, can cause your energy use to be higher than normal.

Previous Estimated Bill: There are times when PSNH cannot read or access your electric meter. Sometimes this is due to bad weather, and sometimes it's because the meter reader is unable to get to your meter. (Please call PSNH at 1-800-662-7764 to work out a solution if this is the case). If your past bill or bills have been estimated, your current bill may be adjusted to reflect the actual usage. Examine your previous bills to see if they say "estimated."

That Forgotten Item: Did you use an electric leaf blower, do more computer work and printing than normal or purchase a larger refrigerator, a water bed, or a large-screen TV? Any of these things could cause an increase in your electric bill.

ENERGY STAR **Shines Bright** in NH

New Hampshire residents are more aware, compared to those in other states, of ENERGY STAR® appliances, and, in fact, are purchasing the energy efficient air conditioners, clothes washers, dishwashers and refrigerators at a greater per capita rate than other states in the nation. Those are among the findings of recent national studies which sought to establish the familiarity and understanding consumers have about the ENERGY STAR label.

About 77 percent of the NH population is aware of the ENERGY STAR label, compared to the national average of 62 percent, according to the studies. And, the state is the leader in sales of ENERGY STAR appliances as a percentage of total sales, ranking first in clothes washers and refrigerators, second in air conditioners, and fifth in dishwashers.

"Most important is that the ENERGY STAR appliances rebated in 2004 alone will save millions of kilowatt hours of electricity over their lifetime," notes Gil Gelineau, PSNH Manager – Marketing Support.

As part of the process of deregulating the state's electric utilities, PSNH began in 2002 to offer a variety of energy efficiency programs which benefit residents, business and municipalities. Under the ENERGY STAR Appliance Program, customers can receive rebates from the purchase of certain energy saving appliances.

Level Payment Plan Evens Out Your Bills

IF YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BUDGET FOR YOUR ELECTRIC PAYMENT, PSNH'S LEVEL PAYMENT PLAN MIGHT BE FOR YOU. THIS POPULAR BILLING METHOD ALLOWS YOU TO PAY A FIXED AMOUNT EACH MONTH, RATHER THAN THE SOMETIMES HIGH OR LOW BILLS THAT CAN COME WITH THE CHANGING SEASONS.

WITH THE LEVEL PAYMENT PLAN, A MONTHLY BUDGET AMOUNT IS DETERMINED BY AVERAGING YOUR ELECTRICITY COSTS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR. ADJUSTMENTS ARE MADE TWICE EACH YEAR TO ACCURATELY REFLECT YOUR ENERGY USAGE.

If you're interested in enrolling or learning more about the Level Payment Plan, log onto psnh.com and select Your Account.

PSNH **Donates** 340 Computers to Nonprofits in 2004

During 2004, PSNH donated more than 340 computers to a variety of New Hampshire nonprofit agencies. When organizations replace their equipment, Donation Networks of Manchester, an organization that helps provide nonprofit agencies and other community groups with used office equipment, assists those donating organizations with their replaced equipment.

Groups that received PSNH computers in 2004 include the Keene and Portsmouth chambers of commerce; New Hampshire Doberman Rescue League; Milford Main Street Program; the Veterans Administration Nursing Home and The Farnum Center.

For more information about Donation Networks visit DonationNetworks.org.



Construction Needs ?

PSNH has just made your construction projects that much easier! You can now contact the PSNH Construction Services Support Center (CSSC) for information on electrical installation requirements, or to submit and check the status of a service request for electrical construction, such as a service upgrade, detach a meter for home siding, or installation of permanent or temporary power.

CSSC technicians will personally assist you between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. They can be reached by dialing 1-800-362-7764 – or email them at PSDesk@psnh.com.

For around-the-clock convenience, visit psnh.com and click on Contractors and Inspectors, or submit and manage your service request and to access electrical construction requirements, references and resources.



Visit Us at the NH State Home Show March 11 - 13

PSNH WILL BE ONE OF OVER 325 EXHIBITORS AT THE UPCOMING NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE HOME SHOW, MARCH 11 – 13, 2005 AT THE RADISSON HOTEL/CENTER OF NH CONVENTION COMPLEX IN MANCHESTER. THE NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE HOME SHOW IS PRODUCED BY THE HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE AS A SERVICE TO ITS MEMBERS, THE BUILDING INDUSTRY AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC. ITS PURPOSE IS TO MARKET HOME-RELATED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO EDUCATE CONSUMERS TO MAKE BETTER CHOICES WHEN BUILDING OR REMODELING – SO BE SURE TO STOP BY THE PSNH BOOTH!



Login for Tax Time Account Information

LOOKING FOR TAX TIME ACCOUNT INFORMATION? REGISTERING FOR PSNH.COM'S ONLINE SERVICES GIVES YOU FAST, EASY ACCESS TO YOUR ELECTRIC ACCOUNTS. YOU CAN VIEW UP TO FIFTEEN MONTHS OF BILLING HISTORY AND EVEN HAVE THE INFORMATION EMAILED TO YOU!

There are many other online services available by visiting psnh.com.

Supporting Your Life in Every Moment.



**Public Service
of New Hampshire**

The Northeast Utilities System

 **psnh.com**

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