

✓ Hon. Ack
sent 8/15/08

✓ To A.V.

✓ To Commis
: H

To Whom it May Concern, 8-14-08
Case # IPCE0810

I'm writing today regarding
my Idaho Power bill.

My bill in May was \$28.36,
in June it was \$24. In
July it rose to \$41.21 and increase
of \$16.68. Then in August it
jumped to 61.53 and increase of 20.32.

Needless to say, I called Idaho
Power to complain. They told
me that your company sets the
rates.

I spoke with Curtis today, and
he said I should write to you.
I was told that 3 men on
the commission make the decision
to raise the rates. How can
3 men decide for thousands of
people?

We are senior citizens on a
fixed income and when my
↓

Bill rises 16.68 + 20.32, I ⁽²⁾
~~cannot~~ wonder what it's going
to be in August. Since our social
security doesn't give us an increase
until Jan of 2009, each month of
increase affects both myself
and my husband.

I was told that Idaho Power has
asked for a 6.31% increase possibly
effective in Jan 2009. I also learned
that they (Idaho Power) can ask for 2
increases per year. There is some-
thing called "Price cost adjustment",
where they do not have to approach
your company for yet another
increase in rates. I sure would
like to have a "Price cost adjustment" and
decrease your/the rates.

Why should we as Senior
Citizens (on a fixed income) have to
be continually hassled with price
rate increase?

New people moving into areas
should have to pay their "fair share".

We have lived in Twin Falls for 3
6 years. We have to pay for
Idaho Power rate increases, equipment,
poles, lines etc, etc.

Stop the madness!! Give
Senior Citizens a break!!

We've paid for all of our
working years and we deserve
a break. Keep our rates low!

Again for the last time, we seniors
on a "fixed income" cannot tolerate
the continual rate increases.

I'm sure by now you get
the message/picture. Increase
those who can afford it - Not
Senior! Thanks

coe#
IPCE0810
Mrs. Char DeRoche

590 Sarah Ave

Twin Falls, Id 83301

✓ Gen Ack sent 8/15/08 (Consumer Section is responding, also)
✓ To Commis. : H
Jean Jewell

From: ghservice@rtci.net
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2008 6:45 AM
To: Jean Jewell; Beverly Barker; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell
Subject: PUC Comment Form

A Comment from Gary Hickenlooper follows:

Case Number: IPC-E-08-10
Name: Gary Hickenlooper
Address: 590 W. Ladd Circle
City: Hammett
State: ID
Zip: 83627
Daytime Telephone: 208-366-2928
Contact E-Mail: ghservice@rtci.net
Name of Utility Company: Idaho Power
Add to Mailing List: no

Please describe your comment briefly:

Idaho Power's stated justification for a rate increase by their own statement includes providing reliable power to its customers. Is there a metric for assessing their performance in this area? Do they provide information to the IPUC showing areas of their service territory having reliability issues and also showing how they are addressing those areas? Are all problem areas disclosed or only select ones?

Unless things have changed over the years, Idaho Power can not log power losses that automatically reclose. What effort do they expend attempting to determine service areas that have such events? How much do they solicit input from customers in those areas and how easy is it to make such input? When input is received, how much effort is applied toward improving the situation?

A number of years ago (I'm guessing about 15 years ago) Hammett experienced frequent short power events that were not logged due to automatic reclosure. It was bad enough that all digital clocks would need to be reset at least weekly and sometimes more than once in a day. After some investigation by IPUC, a short time after IPUC requests for information from Idaho Power, the situation changed dramatically. The power in Hammett was rarely off for even short periods of time. I have no idea what they did but whatever it was it took care of the issues for many years. That is up until this year. Over the last month or two we have been without power in Hammett for more than 38 hours. Those hours include one event that had us off for over 24 hours. Two more recent events comprise another 14 or more hours. There is some question in my mind as to whether or not Idaho Power has cut back on emergency service capability to save money. Hammett appears to be low on the priority list in the case of large area outages. In fact, this is usually the last area they bring back on line. While I can understand their priority to get the larger areas back on line first I still question whether they have cut back too far on emergency capabilities. I do know that they have outside contract crews they call in to offset their lack of manpower in larger events, however considering the relatively small size of service area affected with our 24 plus hour outage it leaves me wondering about what would happen in a truly large outage situation.

The most recent event, comprising over 4 hours of outage in Hammett, I had an opportunity to find out the cause. This is rare because generally Idaho Power's recorded message addressing an affected area do not specify what the cause was. If they do give any information as to the cause it is very limited. Today their recorded message indicated a pole needed to be replaced

due to a range fire. I contacted Elmore County Sheriff Dispatch to find out where the fire was. They told me it was north of milepost 112, which is one of the Hammett exits. We drove out to see what had happened and had an opportunity to ask a driver of a BLM fire truck what started the fire. As it turns out it was failure of Idaho Power's line that started the pole on fire which then started a small range fire.

The power event prior to this one, a week or two ago, that left us without power for more than 8 hours was two poles down according to Idaho Power's recorded message. There was no indication as to where those poles were located or why they went down. Was this situation another failure of their equipment or just an unfortunate event out of their control?

I suppose my points here are that a large portion of the lines, poles and equipment serving Hammett were installed 60 years or more ago and are therefore prone to failure due to age and the fact Hammett is growing. The methods and routing used 60 years ago quite possibly are not reliable today either. As near as I can tell, living in Hammett for 23 years, nothing has been done in this area in the form of preventative maintenance or upgrades. Some of the poles here have had short poles installed next to them and the two tied together to 'prop' up the poles. Some poles are so old, dry and cracked I'm expecting the next wind storm to bring them down. It appears to me that Idaho Power's approach to this area is to fix problems only when the system fails. This puts us at risk for a large number of future failures. Outages are not only inconvenient but can destroy electronic equipment, cause loss of refrigerated food and use up large quantities of batteries that are backups for things like carbon monoxide alarms, sprinkler timers and the like.

If Idaho Power is going to use reliable power as a reason for rate increases it is going to be necessary for them to actually use funds to fix areas such as Hammett. It would also behoove IPUC to seek documentation from Idaho Power that they are actually doing so. In fact, it would be interesting for IPUC to actively seek customer input on satisfaction with Idaho Power to ascertain how well they are doing in the public's eye and to identify possible areas needing improvement that may not otherwise be visible to IPUC. A yearly survey of a select sample of customers in each service area by mail might be something of value.

While the numerous power issues in Hammett recently may be due to simply a group of unusual unfortunate events, considering the age of the equipment and the lack of preventative maintenance and improvements it is likely a lot more issues will show up very well in the near future. I also believe IPUC should look closely at the time it is taking Idaho Power to restore power in small events and determine if they are adequate, especially in the case of a large outage.

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipuc1/ipuc.html>
IP address is 12.213.224.57
