



## **SBUA Newsletter – Fall 2020**

[Utilityadvocates.org/news-and-resources](http://Utilityadvocates.org/news-and-resources)

### **Greetings SBUA Oregon Members!**

SBUA has had a busy year advocating for small business, especially Pacific Power small commercial customers, including some of our SBUA members, and also small commercial customers regarding COVID-19 impacts. We have been participating and providing direct feedback at stakeholder meetings.

#### **Annual Meeting**

SBUA's Annual Meeting for Oregon is a bit later this year November 19, 2020 9-10 a.m. by Zoom. We will reach out to members with the information to join us. Hope to see you there!

Please email [diane@utilityadvocates.org](mailto:diane@utilityadvocates.org) or [carrie@utilityadvocates.org](mailto:carrie@utilityadvocates.org) with your concerns.

#### **SBUA Survey Results and Webinar**

Access the webinar slides “Getting Oregon’s Small Businesses the Best Energy Future” here: <https://utilityadvocates.org/getting-oregons-small-businesses-the-best-energy-future-august-26-2020/>.

<b>Survey Results (Approximately 5 responses)</b>	
COBID Certified	50% Yes, 50% No
Electricity Concerns Prioritized in this Order	40% Service and Reliability, 40% Greenhouse Gas Concerns, 20% Price
Consideration of Climate Change in My Business	25% Always, 50% Often, 25% Sometimes
Consideration of Climate Change in State Government	40% Always, 60% Often
Change of Workplace	50% Yes, 50% No
Home Office Power Deduction from Power Bill	33.3% Yes, 66.7% No
Inability or Anticipated Inability to Pay Electric Bill	25% Always, 50% Often, 25% Sometimes

## UPDATES

### PacifiCorp 2020 Rate Case

The PacifiCorp Rate Case is wrapping up, and SBUA is thankful for Bill Steele's, Ellie Hardwick's, and Carrie Ng's assistance in this docket. SBUA is working to keep rates and terms of service fair and reasonable for small commercial customers while PacifiCorp continues to transition to cleaner sources of electricity across its six state service territory.

#### *Did you know?*

**Energy efficiency** is generally the lowest cost source of energy—compare 2-5 cents kWh to any other amount of production. Retrofitting decreases waste and overall consumption of energy. These energy savings translate into lower bills for the customer and supporting grid reliability. Demand response and other tools are available now to incorporate into your building or operations.

Check out this **Free Energy Efficiency Webinar** on November 16, 1-2:30 PM designed for small commercial customers:  
<https://nwenergy.org/news/events/webinar-expanding-access-to-energy-efficiency-financing-tools-and-programs/>

#### *Energy Trust of Oregon and Energy Efficiency*

Dive down for information on how “cost effective” is determined in Energy Trust of Oregon's energy efficiency projects.

[https://www.energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/GEN\\_FS\\_CostEffectiveness.pdf](https://www.energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/GEN_FS_CostEffectiveness.pdf)

## COVID-19 Stipulation: SBUA Involvement

SBUA advocated before the Public Utility Commission for more focus on impacts of COVID-19 on small commercial customers and our comments are found here: <https://www.oregon.gov/puc/utilities/Pages/COVID-19-Impacts.aspx>. Stakeholders did consider small commercial more in Oregon than in some states, however, the primary focus in Oregon is on low income customers. SBUA agrees that low income residential customers are an important focus. SBUA also sees though that small business is severely impacted by COVID-19, and SBUA supports data-based input about COVID impact on small commercial customers, and similar terms as residential for resuming disconnections and late fees. While SBUA did not join the Stipulation due to these key threshold differences, it will be participating in proceedings to follow.

The COVID-19 Stipulation identifies two major categories of COVID-19 related costs the utilities will be seeking to recover in the years ahead. The first category are direct costs related to reasonable measures incurred by the utilities to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The second category are those costs related to managing customers accounts such as late payment fees, bad debt expense and reconnection fees. SBUA will be there to seek the least cost and best alternatives for small commercial customers.

## Portland General Electric "PGE" & Small Businesses & COVID-19

In March, PGE voluntarily suspended late fees and disconnections to help customers facing financial hardships because of COVID-19.

It's important to know that PGE will resume these on December 1, 2020 for non-residential customers that have not contacted PGE to set up arrangements on their past due balance. PGE urges customers with past due accounts to call 800-542-8818 Monday through Fridays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., to discuss ways to access bill support options that are manageable, including time payment options.

PGE has begun reaching out to customers to discuss solutions and will always notify customers before power is shut off. Customers will be notified of past due balances at least 30 days before 15-day and 5-day notices of disconnection are sent. PGE knows the importance of businesses in our communities and wants to help small businesses avoid disconnection.

Going into cooler weather months, PGE small business customers can also utilize tools to help manage their electricity bill: signing up for bill alerts to keep tabs on energy use; using PGE's online Energy Tracker tool to see when and how you're using energy; and following tips on how to control your energy costs. For more information about these tools, visit [www.PortlandGeneral.com/corona](http://www.PortlandGeneral.com/corona).

Billing optimization: <https://portlandgeneral.com/business/control-my-energy-costs/ways-to-save>

Conservation with the Energy Trust of Oregon: <https://portlandgeneral.com/business/control-my-energy-costs/incentives-loans-tax-credits>.

### Transportation Electrification Planning

PacifiCorp and Portland Gas Electric have filed reports on their pilot programs. For PacifiCorp's report see: <https://edocs.puc.state.or.us/efdocs/HAH/um1810hah153320.pdf> reporting 41 grants recipients building charging stations throughout Oregon. See final report of PacifiCorp of these pilot activities by June 30, 2021. For PGE's report see: <https://edocs.puc.state.or.us/efdocs/HAD/um1811had153623.pdf>, and try an electric bus in Hillsboro or Milwaukee.

***SBUA would like your input — What would help your business most to try electric vehicles?***

### Oregon Public Utility Commission Executive Order 20-04 Work Plans

See the draft work plan here: <https://www.oregon.gov/puc/utilities/Documents/EO20-04-PUC-WorkPlan.pdf>. SBUA has submitted comments finding that we will focus on making sure small commercial customers are at the table giving input on the shape of and implementing the Work Plan articulating the relationship of small commercial customers as and to impacted communities. SBUA will be working on this in 2021 especially, looking closely at Green Tariffs, transportation, portfolio options, quantifying impact on and participation of small business in Oregon's Greenhouse Gas Emissions reductions efforts.

### 2020 Legislative Committee Days and Upcoming 2021 Legislature

December Legislative Committee days is 12/7-10, 2020. For 2021, the Oregon Legislature will be in session February 1st through July 11th. As a 501(c)3, SBUA does not lobby but it will work

to support fair representation of small commercial customer interests. See the Pacific Northwest Energy Digest for more information!

The Pacific Northwest Energy Digest levels the information playing field for small business busy doing what they do best! The Energy Digest summarizes very brief key energy regulatory events that impact small business the most, AND provides information on financial and other opportunities. For access to the to [the latest information](#), contact [diane@utilityadvocates.org](mailto:diane@utilityadvocates.org) or [carrie@utilityadvocates.org](mailto:carrie@utilityadvocates.org).

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Bonus Incentives for Energy Efficiency Projects

The Energy Trust of Oregon is providing bonuses for energy efficiency projects including qualifying products and lighting projects. While installation deadlines for the bonuses were previously set to expire on December 1, 2020, various bonuses have been extended.

- Multifamily, extended through March 31, 2021: attic/ceiling insulation, floor insulation, wall insulation, and gas furnaces.
- New and Major Renovation, extended through December 31, 2020: early design assistance, equipment purchase.
- Industrial, extended through December 31, 2020: irrigation and custom O&M.

For more information, follow the links below:

Multifamily: <https://www.energytrust.org/commercial/multifamily-cash-incentives/incentive-bonus-multifamily/>

General Commercial: <https://www.energytrust.org/commercial/bonuses/>

New Buildings: <https://www.energytrust.org/commercial/newbuildings-cash-incentives-incentive-bonus-newbuildings/>

Industrial: <https://www.energytrust.org/industry-agriculture/industry-equipment-incentives/industry-agriculture-bonuses/>

### Portland Clean Energy Fund Requests for Proposals Are Due November 16!

Approximately \$8.6 million is available for both project proposals and planning proposals.

See: <https://www.portland.gov/bps/cleanenergy/guide-pcef-grant-application-process>.

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*A Special Thank You for Your Support!*

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### ***Meet our new Law Clerk, Carrie.***

Carrie Ng is a 2L at Lewis & Clark Law School. She believes electricity is a human right and that rates should be established fairly for sustainable development. Over the summer, Carrie worked at the Energy & Telecommunications Team at the San Francisco City Attorney's Office. There, she learned and was inspired by the structure of utility advocates and sought to join in SBUA's mission upon return to Oregon for school. Welcome Carrie!!

#### **About SBUA**

SBUA is dedicated to advocate for and educate small businesses in energy regulatory matters. SBUA endeavors to share financial opportunities in the energy sector for small businesses, including incentives for small commercial energy efficiency, renewable energy, and work opportunities in public or utility contracting work with its members. SBUA seeks to help small business increase energy efficiency, reduce energy costs, and reduce their energy footprint.

[<Donate Here>](#)

#### **Membership**

Our membership has grown and diversified. SBUA in Oregon represents thriving small business offering the following products and services: dining, baking, candy, coffee, shoe repair, commercial agriculture, fine jewelry, residential and commercial cleaning, business consulting, energy technologies, woodworking, architecture, legal services, and multi-family residential, just to name a few.

If you have any input regarding membership fees or any other concern, please email [diane@utilityadvocates.org](mailto:diane@utilityadvocates.org) or [carrie@utilityadvocates.org](mailto:carrie@utilityadvocates.org).

