

PSE'S "Energize Eastside" high voltage transmission line: WRONG for our communities

What is "Energize Eastside"?



"Energize Eastside" is Puget Sound Energy's name for a proposed 230,000-volt, 18-mile transmission line through Redmond, Bellevue, Newcastle, and Renton.

After three years of research and findings by multiple industry experts, CENSE has concluded that Energize Eastside is a project with no purpose other than increasing revenues for PSE's Australian and Canadian owners. Energize Eastside is not necessary to serve growth. Total electricity consumption has been declining for years, despite population growth, and PSE's transmission line project will not improve electrical reliability by any practical measure.

Who is CENSE?



The Coalition of Eastside Neighborhoods for Sensible Energy (CENSE) is a volunteer-run, donor-funded organization representing thousands of residents who have serious concerns about the need, safety, cost and environmental impacts of PSE's high-voltage 230kV transmission line project.

Our goal is to be the voice of the community and to ensure that important questions about PSE's project are answered. For example, why isn't PSE following the lead of more than 130 US cities of comparable size to Bellevue and investing in smart technologies to provide electricity in a reliable and environmentally responsible way? The Eastside can have ample, reliable electricity while preserving the beauty and livability of our communities.

Reliability and Need

PSE says that the existing 50-year old line is outdated and cannot continue to serve our growing population. This is a misleading statement. PSE has built three new transmission lines through Bellevue in the past 20 years. Transmission capacity has grown even faster than Eastside population. PSE has maintained the line in question and it can reliably serve us for another 50 years.

For the last decade, total electricity consumption on the Eastside has declined and is expected to decline in the future. PSE's advertising implies that Energize Eastside will improve electrical reliability, but PSE reported to the City of Bellevue that the project will not decrease the most common source of power outages - those caused by storm damage. *(more info other side)*

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(continued from other side)

Safety



For most of its proposed route, Energize Eastside would be constructed in close proximity to the Olympic Pipeline, which transports 13 million gallons of high-pressure jet fuel and gasoline through our communities each day.

This is the same pipeline that exploded in Bellingham in 1999, claiming the lives of three kids. The cause was a minor construction accident that had occurred years earlier. A similar accident in our densely populated neighborhoods would be a "catastrophe" according to the Bellevue Fire Department.

Furthermore, the utility corridor crosses the Seattle Fault Line, which runs parallel to I-90. This fault could slip more than six feet during the next big earthquake, potentially rupturing the pipeline. Higher voltage on the transmission line raises the risk of igniting a huge fire at the same time emergency responders are busy and roads are damaged or clogged.

Profit Motive



Energize Eastside would cost PSE's electric customers \$1 billion during the next 40-50 years: \$200 million upfront plus an additional \$800 million in interest. Because PSE's energy sales have fallen 7% in the past five years, PSE is looking for new revenue opportunities.

The outdated regulatory policies of the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) guarantee PSE generous financial returns on transmission expenditures. While PSE's Australian and Canadian owners would profit from Energize Eastside, PSE ratepayers would pay 100% of the cost, and gain no measurable improvement in electrical reliability.

Neighborhoods and Environment



PSE proposes to install metal poles 80 -100 feet tall. Approximately 6,000 trees would be cut or removed to maintain a safe distance from the higher voltage. The result would be a permanent industrial scar through 29 neighborhoods in one of the most beautiful urban landscapes in the nation. Smarter options would provide improved reliability and preserve the beauty and livability of our communities.

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