

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Contact: Kelsey Nyland, Kelsey.Nyland@seattle.gov

Mayor Durkan Announces Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle City Light Will Keep Utilities on During COVID-19 Civil Emergency in Seattle

Seattle (March 10, 2020) – Mayor Jenny A. Durkan announced that Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and Seattle City Light (SCL) will keep utility services on during the COVID-19 Civil Emergency in Seattle. This will provide immediate utility relief for customers, both residential and commercial, financially impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Effective immediately, all SPU and SCL customers can set up deferred payment plans if their financial stability has been jeopardized by COVID-19. Utility service will stay on as their deferred payment plans are developed and implemented.

In addition to encouraging customers to set up payment plans, SPU and SCL have created a [Utility Discount Program \(UDP\)](#) self-certification form for income-eligible customers. This allows income-eligible residential customers to access heavily discounted utilities by simply signing a short form that attests to their household income, rather than having to provide income documentation. This will provide immediate and lasting utility bill relief for customers who are unemployed or underemployed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

“We’re keeping our utilities on for the duration of the COVID-19 Civil Emergency in Seattle. We’re already seeing the impact COVID-19 is having on working people, nonprofits, and small business owners in Seattle,” said Mayor Durkan. “The City of Seattle supports working people and small businesses, and we will do everything in our power to ease their financial stress during this time. Every day, I want us to think about supporting our workers, and keeping individuals safe and our businesses afloat.”

“While it’s hard to determine what the far-reaching effects of COVID-19 will be in the long-term, there are steps we can take in the near-term to avoid exacerbating an already challenging chapter in our region’s history,” said Councilmember Alex Pedersen ([District 4 - Northeast Seattle](#)). “Today’s announcement also builds on the prior efforts of Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda, who worked hard to give rate relief to all qualified customers. I hope to continue this discussion during my April 1 committee meeting as our public health officials deem appropriate.”

SPU and SCL customers who have been financially impacted by COVID-19, regardless of background or immigration status, can request a deferred payment plan with the utilities. This will ensure the customer receives uninterrupted utility services as they work with utility service representatives to develop a long-term plan that meets their financial needs. In addition, Mayor Durkan will transmit legislation this week to eliminate the one percent late fee added to all past due balances.

Seattle City Light and Seattle Public Utilities will also begin proactive outreach to small and midsize businesses that may already be experiencing financial difficulty to establish a payment arrangement that will support their continued operations through this emergency and beyond. Customer contacts will begin mid-week.

“Our goal is to provide you with reliable, affordable, and uninterrupted utility services, but we need your help to do so,” said Debra Smith, Seattle City Light General Manager and CEO. “If you are struggling to pay your utility bill due to impacts related to COVID-19, please contact us so we can assist.”

“City utilities are prepared to make payment arrangements based upon individual customer needs,” said Mami Hara, Seattle Public Utilities General Manager and CEO. “Whether you are a residential customer, a nonprofit or a business, our staff is ready to help find a solution.”

Customers financially impacted by COVID 19 are urged to set up payment plans with either Seattle City Light or Seattle Public Utilities by calling 206-684-3000 or sending an email 24/7 at <http://www.seattle.gov/utilities/about-us/email-question>.

UDP lowers Seattle City Light bills by 60 percent and Seattle Public Utility bills by 50 percent. To learn more about enrollment in UDP, call 206-684-0268. [Eligibility requirements can be found here.](#)

Professional translation for City utility services are available when you call 206-684-3000. *Información en español * Impormasyon sa Tagalog * 中文資訊* Thông tin bằng tiếng Việt * 한국어 정보 * Macluumaad Af-Soomaali ah