

Mary E. Drake
72 E. Pine St.
Atlanta, Idaho 83716
(208) 864-2171
Email: flute.md@gmail.com
February 19, 2022

Idaho Public Utilities Commission
472 W. Washington
Boise, Idaho 83702

Re: Case# ALT-E-22-01

Dear Commissioners,

Please consider this letter a response to a call for comments for Case #: ALT-E-22-01, Order 35302.

On January 2, 2018 I filed a formal complaint with the Idaho Public Utilities Commission regarding customer service issues with Atlanta Power Company. The complaint was assigned case #: ALT-E-18-01. After many orders and notices, a Final Order (34420) was issued on August 16, 2019 and this case was closed. The Final Order concluded:

"We find that a willing sale of the Company's assets to an entity that will be responsive to customers, personnel, and the public is the top priority. Such a sale would address the problems that gave rise to the Complaint, and would provide a durable solution to the problems that have long beset Atlanta Power. If the sale does not go through, we have numerous tools at our disposal to ensure that Atlanta Power fulfills all of its duties as a regulated public utility. Those duties include but are not limited to: providing safe and reliable service, complying with the National Electric Safety Code, responding to customer complaints in an adequate and timely manner, filing annual reports (both past due and on an ongoing basis), providing non-discriminatory service throughout its service area, and complying with audit and production requests from Commission Staff. We intend to closely monitor Atlanta Power, as long as it remains a regulated public utility, to guarantee that the Company meets its obligations to its customers."

Last year, on July 2, 2021, after almost 2 years since the Final Order was issued on the Formal Complaint submitted previously, I re-submitted the Formal Complaint (assigned case # ALT-E-22-01) because the sale did not occur to the Co-Op, and there were still issues being experienced in Atlanta regarding the Atlanta Power Company. Now, there is a show cause hearing scheduled for Feb. 23, 2022, wherein Atlanta Power Company has been ordered to appear and "show cause why the Commission should not (1) reimpose penalties on the company resulting from a previous case, (2) impose new penalties on the company for new and continuing violations and (3) open a new investigation into whether the company is providing safe and adequate service to its customers."

In a News Release dated February 7, 2022 the Idaho Public Utilities Commission announced that written comments are being accepted regarding this hearing. Therefore, I wish to respectfully submit the following comments:

1. Several of the issues in the initial Formal Complaint I filed have been resolved. For instance, there is currently someone in town who is available to assist during power outages. This is Gene Haught. As stated in the "Cross-Petition for Reconsideration" letter submitted on April 30, 2019... "We do have Gene Haught, for which we are eternally grateful. Gene freely volunteers his time... and when the power goes out he goes down there and many times 'second-guesses' what is wrong and manages to fix it so far. We are very lucky. One time we were very, very lucky when we had 3 electrical engineers camping out in town, they volunteered to show Gene a few tricks. Some of that equipment is very dangerous and not safe, so it is also a risk and one has to really know what they are doing, or physical harm could occur." Since this time (2019), Gene has become an employee of Atlanta Power Company and has continued to step-up for the town of Atlanta, all the while self-educating himself on how the system works. Gene has truly been an asset to the town of Atlanta when it comes to the Power. Ways I have experienced or witnessed excellent customer service from Gene as he has represented Atlanta Power Company:

*Gene has recruited assistants here, in Atlanta, to help with the power. One of them is Nick Jones who is a Training Specialist at Northwestern Lineman College in Meridian, Idaho. Nick is an experienced lineman. As an instructor, he has had his students up here, in Atlanta, laying out where to re-locate more efficient power lines. Gene and Nick, with the approval of Israel, would like to do this project this year. According to Gene, the needed transformers are actually on order, however have been delayed.

*Earlier this year, a line came down. It was fixed that same day, immediately. Nick drove to Atlanta from Boise to help and it was fixed that evening.

*Another time, a tree came down and knocked down the power lines on Pine St.. Gene responded that night and got the lines off the road. The next day, Nick came up from Boise and restored the power, except to my house, due to the whole service box was ripped off the side of my house when the tree fell. After I repaired the service box to my house that week, Nick returned on the weekend and helped Gene re-connect me to the power. This was very, very good service I received from Atlanta Power Company, as represented by Gene and Nick.

*The generator has not been working properly. I have been asking for someone to come up and look at it to get it fixed. Gene said he couldn't get anyone to come up to fix it. So he and Jim Frazier (an Atlanta resident) tinkered with it and it worked a little better. Then, finally, the generator broke completely. Israel Ray (Atlanta Power Company Owner) then paid CAT to come up and fix the generator. It is now fixed.

*Most recently, due to freezing temperatures, the power goes out in the middle of the night because the turbine does not get enough water to operate. So, in the middle of night, either Gene or Jim Frazier will get up and go turn the diesel generator on so there is power until the issue can be resolved the next day and the Hydro comes back on. When told they don't need to do this, the response is: "We have people who need the power for their heat, or for water! This keeps them safe!" This is excellent customer service.

2. The initial Formal Complaint I filed was to present the Idaho Public Utilities Commission with problems needing attention in relation to continuous/ongoing Power Outages as a result of The Atlanta Power Company neglecting to comply with Idaho Statute 61-301, "Maintenance of Adequate Service". However, on May 15, 2019, and again on September 3, 2021, the Atlanta Electrical Consumer Cooperative, Inc. (AECC) filed a petition to intervene on this case with the purpose of purchasing the Atlanta Power Company. Unfortunately, in recent weeks, I was shocked to learn that a member of the AECC willfully acted with a wrong intention by asking Nick Jones to stop helping Gene with any Atlanta Power problems. This action caused harm to the town of Atlanta and demonstrated that this AECC member did not value the safety of Atlanta residents.

I need to comment that since the sale to the AECC failed to occur, and since the date I re-instated the initial formal complaint (July 2, 2021), things really started happening with Israel Ray. It is evident that Israel Ray has taken actions to serve the needs of the Atlanta Power Company customers. There is now someone to call when the power goes out in Atlanta, Idaho. That number is Gene Haught. Gene seems to have a direct communication with Israel Ray and when there is need for an expenditure to fix a problem, Israel has proven to be available with the funds needed. It appears Israel Ray has gone to great lengths in keeping the town of Atlanta powered-up and safe.

3. There still exists the concern about fixing the underlying problems with the Atlanta Power Plant equipment... it is a fact that it is perhaps outdated and in dire need of upgrading and more precise maintenance. Until these foundational problems are corrected, it is inevitable that the power will continue to have periodic outages in our town of Atlanta, Idaho...

In addition, it would behoove the Atlanta Power Company to have additional human resources other than ONE employee (albeit, as stated previously, Gene Haught is greatly appreciated) who is available to assist when problems occur. For, this begs to question what will happen should Gene become incapacitated, move, or suddenly become unavailable. Just as the town depended on Dave Gill at one point, when he moved, all access to anyone available to fix the power disappeared in an instant. This is not a good situation to be in. This is something to consider.

All in all, I would simply like to state that I appreciate the efforts made by Israel Ray in recent months to address the issues in the formal complaint I filed. I am optimistic that the town of Atlanta is becoming more secure in its access to vital Power from the Atlanta Power Company. Especially, I wish to express a "Thank You" to Gene Haught, Nick Jones, and Jim Frazier for all of their work in keeping this town alive and well.

Sincerely,
Mary E. Drake
Mary E. Drake

From: [PUCWeb Notification](#)
To: [Jan Noriyuki](#)
Subject: Notice: A comment was submitted to PUCWeb
Date: Monday, February 21, 2022 2:00:07 PM

The following comment was submitted via PUCWeb:

Name: Allen Lake
Submission Time: Feb 21 2022 1:34PM
Email: allenrlake@rtci.net
Telephone: 208-864-2151
Address: 80 E. Alturas Rd.
Atlanta, ID 83716-5022

Name of Utility Company: Atlanta Power

Case ID: ATL-E-21-01

Comment: "I have seen steady improvement in the electrical system in Atlanta since Gene Haught and Nick Jones have worked together to address the necessary maintenance of the power grid. I have always supported the continued private ownership of Atlanta Power rather than ownership through a community co-op. I support the efforts of Haught/Jones to purchase Atlanta Power."
