

January 13, 2024

CASE NO. IPC-E-24-03

To whom it may concern,

I, Paul Madalena, am filing a complaint against Idaho Power.

On Monday August 21st, 2023, we were woken up early in the morning to our appliances (oscillating fans, oven, refrigerator, etc.) turning off and on. Our lamps and clock next to our bed were not working as well. I found that the power strip, under our bed, had been blown. I replaced it and a second one blew right away. Doug Gietzen, a local electrician, was called. When he arrived, he did a thorough check of the electrical system in our house. He checked all of our equipment inside the house and did not find a problem with the equipment's function. He then went and tested the line side of the main breaker. He found a slight difference of five-to-six volts. He had my wife turn on an appliance and found the difference increased. From this test he determined that the problem was on Idaho Power's side. He instructed my wife to contact Idaho Power, which she did while he was here. He then left stating that he should not need to be here when Idaho Power arrived.

Idaho Power arrived toward the end of the day. We I arrived home from work, around 5 pm, the trouble-man was checking their J-box near the street. He stated that when he checked the poles there was a one-to-three-volt difference between the two. He stated that everything checked out fine on their end and that we should have our equipment checked. We informed him that our equipment was checked earlier that day by a licensed electrician. He then stated that if we had any more problems to call them back. (The day before this event, it had rained a good portion of the day.)

On Saturday August 26th, 2023, we were preparing for the Twin Falls County fair to begin because our children were in 4-H. This day was the scheduled interviews for 4-H. We had forgotten a large model and my wife had run home to get it. She attempted to open the garage door and found that it was not working. Later after I got home, I did some trouble shooting and found that the garage door opener was no longer working. It had been raining the day before (Friday) and early that morning. On Monday August 28th, 2023 in the morning, everything was working fine. My wife and children left around 10:00 AM to go to the fairgrounds to work the 4-H food booth. They returned home around 2:00 PM to take the chickens to the fair, my wife found that none of the lights in the house were working. Idaho Power was called by my wife. She was irate with them because the problem was not fixed, we needed a new garage door opener and now it appeared that we needed a new oven/range as well. Once, she got off the phone with Idaho Power, she called Doug Gietzen to give him an update. She had to leave again right away and was concerned about the safety of our home as there was, once again, the smell of an electrical fire. Doug came right over and waited for Idaho Power. This time Idaho Power stated that while checking the voltage there was a "slight difference" from phase to phase but was within their parameters. When we asked our electrician about the difference, he stated that there should not be a difference at any time. Idaho Power did further testing, and brought a second trouble-man. They then determined that the neutral on their end was faulty. They then fixed the neutral.

Between the two events, we found several items were damaged due to the faulty neutral. The most expensive of these was the garage door opener. The garage door opener was found not to be working after the first event and before the second event. During the repair of the garage door opener, the built in surge protector was found to be blown and the control board was fried. An attempt was made to replace the parts but was unsuccessful. The garage door opener unit was then replaced. Repairing these items created a financial hardship on us because we are a single income family. Also due to fair-time and other events in our lives the repair, claim, and this complaint have not been done in a timely manner. After the repairs were done, we filed a claim with Idaho Power. The result of the claim was that they denied the repair for the garage door opener (the most expensive item claimed). They stated that the reason for the denial was because it happened before the second event; however, they did approve the cost of the two power strips, which happened during the first event.

They are claiming no liability for breakdown of equipment per Rule J Section 1 a. We are filing this report due to the ethics and principle of the decisions made regarding our claim. The outcome we desire is that Idaho Power take FULL responsibility for their faulty equipment and in the future they do more thorough testing and fix the problem in response to the first occurrence.

Witness: Doug Gietzen (208)308-3575

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