

PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 OF WHATCOM COUNTY

Response for Pandemic Events

Effective March 16, 2020

This policy applies to all District Employees

The purpose of this policy is to protect our employees and keep the PUD functioning during a disease outbreak. Strategies for screening and preventing the transmission of pandemic influenza or other contagious diseases (Pandemic Event), should employees become ill or in contact with a pandemic influenza strain. It is intended to be consistent with the guidance issued by the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)* and will be updated as CDC guidance changes. Therefore, employees are expected to comply with the current and future guidelines.

Objectives:

1. Reduce the spread of disease among staff
2. Infection control measures
3. Maintain business operations and minimize impact on the PUD's customers and business partners
4. Address employee procedures and leave policies

Plan:

1. Reduce the spread of disease among staff

By following the CDC's guidance, the PUD will take the following workplace safety precautions:

- Sanitizing frequented areas such as restrooms/breakrooms/copier rooms.
- Wash hands often with soap and water. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your mouth/nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home while you are sick and avoid close contact with others.

2. Infection Control Measures

To create a culture of wellness before, during and after an outbreak, the PUD will:

- Place posters that encourage staying home when sick, cough/sneeze etiquette and hand hygiene at entrance and high visibility locations.
- Provide soap, water and alcohol-based hand rubs in multiple locations and routinely refill.
- Instruct employees to clean hands often with hand-sanitizer or by washing for at least 20 seconds.

- Supply tissue and no-touch waste bins.
- Routinely clean commonly touched surfaces in all facilities.

3. **Maintain Business Operations, Minimize Customer Impact**

In order to maintain daily business operations, the PUD will:

- Identify what jobs are needed to carry on day-to-day activities:
 - Water Operations – Two (2) operators on duty, or at least one.
 - Electric Operations – One (1) electrician on-site; Remote access – at least one.
 - IT/SCADA Operations – At least one employee shall remain in Whatcom County.
 - Front Office Administration – At least one to collect mail and process accounting/banking needs.
- Work from Home/Remote Access
 - When: Job responsibilities can be met by working remotely.
 - Who: Staff identified that can meet responsibilities by working remotely.
 - District Laptops will be assigned to those working from home.
Under no circumstances shall employees use their personal computers/devices for District business.
- Access Workplace Exposure Risk
 - All meetings (other than Commission Meetings) planned at PUD facilities will be cancelled for the next 60 days.
 - Key Partners/Suppliers and Contractors
 - Key partners/supplier/contractors that come to any PUD facility will be asked to sign in, in order to track workplace exposure risk.
 - Materials orders shall be limited to essential items and delivery methods (UPS/FedEx, Truck) of these orders will be alerted to front desk staff.
 - Janitorial contractor will be asked to complete extra sanitizing measures such as wiping off door handles, light switches, and other frequently touched surfaces that may not receive the normal weekly cleaning.
- Commission Meetings

The PUD adheres to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) RCW 42.30 and follows the State Attorney General Opinions. Because the PUD is also concerned about virus transmission at our public meetings, the following will be considered in addition to OPMA guidelines:

 - Reduce the number of agenda items so the Board can make decisions on only the most urgent or time-sensitive or essential items, thus decreasing the time needed for the public meeting.
 - Encourage written public comments.
 - Remote participation such as conference call options.
 - Staff attendance at Commission Meetings: Only essential staff will attend.
 - Reschedule the meeting or wait until a future regular meeting to conduct business, or schedule a special meeting.

4. Employee Travel Restrictions

- No travel or training for ALL employees for the next 60 days (until May 4, 2020)
This includes WPUA meetings.

5. Mandatory Medical Check-Ups, Vaccinations or Medication

- Although not mandatory, it is strongly recommended that all employees have a current flu vaccination.

6. Restrictions from Work

- Suspected or probably Pandemic Influenza cases involving District employees will result in the employee's restriction from work as soon as identified and they will be asked to follow guidelines provided by the Whatcom County Health Department, Washington State Department of Health and the CDC.
- Mandatory reporting of exposure, such as employees reporting to employers and employers reporting to public health authorities.
- Suspected or probable Pandemic Influenza cases involving District employees must be medically cleared upon resolution of symptoms with and according to the guidelines from the Whatcom County Health Department before returning to work without such medical release.

7. Employee Quarantine or Isolation

- Employees who are sick and come to work will be sent home (EEOC permits employers to mandate that an individual who exhibits flu-like symptoms stay home).
- Sick employees, especially those with an acute respiratory illness, will be encouraged to stay home and not come to work until they are free of a fever (100.4 or greater), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (i.e. cough suppressants).
- Employees with sick family members in the same household will be advised to stay home.

8. Workplace Policies

- Paid Sick Leave Benefits (all eligible employees)
 - CBA – 8 hours accrued per month
 - Non-CBA – 8 hours accrued per month
- Paid Leave (Washington Family and Medical Leave Program)
- Unpaid Leave (Family Medical Leave Act)
- District's Supplemental Sick Leave Authorization – will be authorized based on medical condition.

9. Facility Shutdowns

- As a last resort should a majority of employees become ill.
- For how long or until further notice.

- Only PUD employees required to provide on-site, mission-critical functions will report to their normal work locations.
- Work from home options where possible.

10. Contact Information

- General Manager – Stephan Jilk
Email: stevej@pudwhatcom.org
Telephone: 360-384-4288 ext. 12
Cell: 360-927-0339
- Assistant General Manager – Brian Walters
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Telephone: 360-384-4288 ext. 25
Cell: 360-305-2385
- Director of Utility Operations – Duane Holden
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Telephone: 360-384-4288 ext. 26
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- HR Administrator/Assistant to General Manager – Ann Grimm
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Telephone: 360-384-4288 x 27
Cell: 360-927-6356

www.pudwhatcom.org
info@pudwhatcom.org

11. Facility Locations

- Administration Office
1705 Trigg Road, Ferndale, WA 9248
(360) 384-4288
- Water Treatment Plant No. 1
5431 Ferndale Road, Ferndale, WA 98248
- Water Treatment Plant No. 2
1705 Trigg Road, Ferndale, WA 98248
(360) 318-4899 - Water Operations On-Call
- Electric Operations
Refinery Substation (No. 1)
3901 Unick Road, Ferndale, WA 98248

Ferndale Substation (No. 2)
5431 Ferndale Road, Ferndale, WA 98248

Enterprise Substation (No. 3)
1705 Trigg Road, Ferndale, WA 98248
(360) 739-2509 - Electric Operations On-Call

Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County

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