

State regulators to examine costs of retiring PSE's coal-fired electric plants

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Details	<p>Media Contact: (360) 664-1116 or media@utc.wa.gov Docket Number: UE-151500</p> <p>State regulators to examine costs of retiring PSE's coal-fired electric plants Request comments from company, interested persons</p> <p>OLYMPIA, Wash. – Today state utility regulators opened an investigation into the costs associated with retiring Puget Sound Energy's (PSE's) two older coal-fired electric generating plants in Colstrip, Montana.</p> <p>The Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) seeks to determine the costs of environmental remediation and other activities associated with the eventual closure of the Colstrip Units 1 and 2, which were built in the 1970s and continue to serve a portion of the utility's electric load. The plants are jointly owned by Bellevue-based PSE and Talen Energy Corp. of Allentown, PA.</p> <p>"We want to be sure we know what costs Puget Sound Energy's customers may face when the day comes for these older units to close," said UTC Chairman David Danner. "We need to know that money is set aside to comply with environmental regulations and meet other obligations."</p> <p>PSE has indicated its intention to transition to cleaner energy sources, and this year the Washington Legislature considered bills to establish a process for PSE to petition the UTC for approval of plans to finance the closure of Units 1 and 2 through low-cost bonds. While the legislation did not pass, the UTC concluded that determining closure costs was essential to understanding possible customer rate impacts of PSE's plans to transition from coal.</p> <p>The UTC will issue a notice to the company and other interested parties this week seeking written comments on specific questions by September 15, 2015.</p> <p>The UTC regulates the private, investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities in Washington. It is the commission's responsibility to ensure regulated companies provide safe and reliable service to customers at reasonable rates, while allowing them the opportunity to earn a fair profit.</p> <p>###</p>