

DOCUMENTS IN THIS PACKET INCLUDE:

LETTERS FROM CITIZENS TO THE
UTILITIES ADVISORY COMMISSION

From: Mehrzad
To: Dailey, Karla
Cc: UAC; City Mgr; Batchelor, Dean; Boatwright, Tabatha; Council, City; Kou, Lydia
Subject: Re: Response from City of Palo Alto Utilities Regarding High Natural Gas Prices
Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 3:11:58 PM
Attachments: CA AVG Natural Gas Prices Monthly.png
Natural Gas Prices 2.png
Gas Prices.png
image001.png
image014.png
image015.png
image017.png
image010.png
image018.png
image013.png

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mehrzadrasti@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

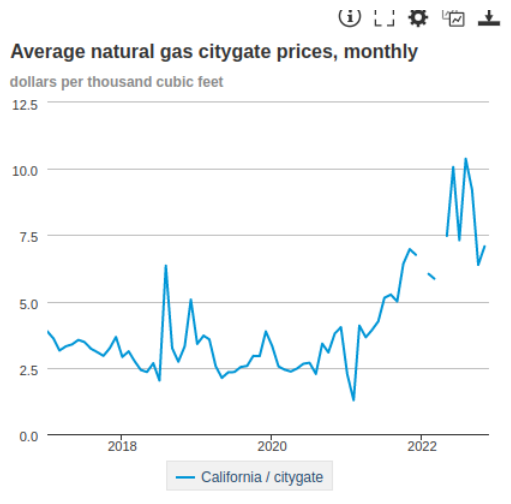
Hello Karla,

Thank you for getting back to me. My understanding is that, unlike its normal practices in the past, the city has started moving huge amounts of money from the Gas Fund to its General Fund, paving the way for such an unreasonable gas price increase in our utility bills, and this is in spite of the fact that the natural gas price has fallen to its lowest level since the beginning of 2022 (including in California, please see the following charts). In the past, the courts prevented the city from moving funds from the Gas fund to the General fund in excess of 18%, but with the recent passage of Measure L, the city can start doing this again. It would be a big relief to Palo Alto residents if the city council members consider going back to the old practice of not tapping on the natural gas fund, and let that fund absorb the gas price fluctuations. The gas price increase of 120% in our utility bills in less than two months is unheard of, and I do not believe the residents can simply let this practice continue.

Thank you,

Mehrzad Rasti

650 391-4725





On 1/31/23 5:57 PM, Dailey, Karla wrote:

Thank you for contacting CPAU. We understand customers' concerns over the high winter natural gas prices.

The prices that CPAU and other utilities in the region pay for the natural gas delivered to customers have risen significantly this year. Gas commodity prices for January this year were five times higher than last January's gas prices, which could triple customers' gas bills. Gas customers across California are experiencing similar impacts. Like the state's other natural gas utilities, CPAU purchases natural gas supply for its customers at market prices, does not control those prices, and does not mark-up the supply cost of the gas purchased on behalf of its customers.

Since learning of these higher prices in late November and early December, CPAU has been attempting to inform customers in advance to take action and save energy to try to avoid surprisingly high utility bills in January and February.

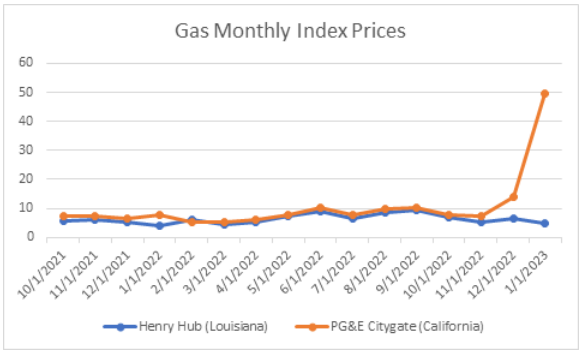
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Please let us know if you have additional questions or concerns.

KARLA DAILEY

Acting Assistant Director of Utilities, Resource Management

Utilities

(650) 329-2523 | karla.dailey@cityofpaloalto.org

www.cityofpaloalto.org



From: [Jeff Hoel](#)
To: [UAC](#)
Cc: [Hoel, Jeff \(external\): Council City](#)
Subject: TRANSCRIPT & COMMENTS -- 02-01-23 UAC meeting -- commissioner comments -- Utilities Quarterly Report for Q1 -- SAIDI
Date: Saturday, February 4, 2023 6:43:51 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Commissioners,

At your 02-01-23 meeting, during VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS and REPORTS from MEETINGS/EVENTS, there was a discussion about SAIDI, which is a measure of electric reliability.

Please see, below the "#####" line, a TRANSCRIPT of this portion of the meeting, to which I have added my COMMENTS (paragraphs in red beginning with "###").

Many thanks to Vice Chair Johnston for raising this issue.

Jeff

Jeff Hoel
731 Colorado Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

#####

TRANSCRIPT

3:21:02:

Chair Segal: Do any commissioners have any comments, reports, or -- for meetings or events? Vice Chair Johnston.

3:21:12:

Vice Chair Johnston: Yes. Thank you. I had one question and one comment on the quarterly report that was included in our packet.

Here's one version of that quarterly report (60 pages). Let's call it Version A.
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-id-14973-info.pdf>

I got this version by clicking on "Informational Utilities Quarterly Report Update for Q1 of FY2023" link on page 2 of UAC's 02-01-23 agenda document (190 pages)
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-uac-agenda-and-packet.pdf>

Another version of the quarterly report is available within the agenda document itself, on pages 129-190 (packet pages 124-184) Let's call it Version B. Why are there two different versions?

Below the "\$\$\$\$\$" line, I have identified some of the differences between Version A and Version B.

Which, as always, is always very interesting. And is very helpful. But my question was on the graph, I guess, or the chart, that's on paragraph 1.4. It really -- on page -- well, it's packet page 136. But it really talks about outages. And there are two comments. One is, I don't know what units these outages are.

Technically, SAIDI has no "units." It's customer-minutes of outage per customer per year. But, yes, that should be explained.

It says, the System Average Interruption Duration Index. 81.69. I don't know what that means. And I don't know whether that's good or bad or whatever.

Palo Alto's Proposed Operating Budget for FY2022 (page 386)
https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/administrative-services/city-budgets/fy-2022-city-budget/fy-2022-proposed-city-of-palo-alto-operating-budget-for-web_2.pdf
says that SAIDI was 122 in FY2019, was 65 in FY2020, and was estimated to be 95 in FY2021, and that the goal for FY2022 was 60. To me, that goal was not particularly ambitious.

Palo Alto's Proposed Operating Budget for FY2017 (page 26)
https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2016/05-04-2016-special-meeting/item-1_proposed-operating-and-capital-budgets-for-fy-2017.pdf
says that SAIDI was 16 in FY2014, was 47 for FY2015, was 32 for FY2016, and that the "proposed" SAIDI for FY2017 was 29.

Palo Alto's Proposed Budget for FY 2023 (which apparently includes the Operating Budget) has NO SAIDI information and NO SAIDI goal. To me, that's a serious omission.
https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/administrative-services/city-budgets/fy2023-city-budget/proposed-fy23/fy-2023-proposed-capital-budget-real-final_upload2web_small.pdf

Palo Alto's Utilities Quarterly Update for Q4 of FY2015 (page 47) has some information about SAIDI. It was 46.85. The report included summary

information about 19 outages for the year.

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/reports/uac-informational-reports/2015-informational-reports/10-07-15-meeting/info-item_utilities-quarterly-update-4th-q-fy-2015.pdf

I would like to have seen more information about each individual outage rather than just aggregated by month. The report said which outages were aerial, which were underground, which were storm-related, etc.

It's just -- To me, it's a number that doesn't have any context. And we also see here the figures for Q1. And I think it would be helpful to be able to look at a comparison, to see what the comparable figures would be for -- you know, for Q4 last year, or Q1 of last year, if it's the kind of thing that kind of varies seasonally. But this information -- which is really important -- is not presented -- at least in a way that I can make much use of. So, that's my comment number one.

3:22:57:

My comment number two is, while the font that this is printed in looks very nice, it's really hard to read. And ...

3:23:09:

Chair Segal: I second that.

3:23:10:

Vice Chair Johnston: ... the draft report that we saw -- was presented, you know, when we looked at -- to get ready for this meeting was in a nice font that was easy to read. So, as nice as this looks, it's not -- it's very hard to read.

To my eye, the fonts in Version A and Version B appeared identical or at least very similar. Is it possible that when the agenda document (with Version B in it) was published, some fonts were not included? If so, and the specified fonts were not available on the viewer's computer, the PDF reader would have substituted different fonts, that might have been less legible. Is this what happened?

3:23:31:

Director Batchelor: Vice Chair Johnston, thank you for those comments. Ah, yes. We will make sure that we look at the font as we move forward in these reports.

So, the one thing that's very difficult to find is the -- these numbers that you see up here for SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIFI. It's not something that other utilities want to put -- broadcast out on their websites. And so, it's difficult to do comparisons.

Sherry Listgarten was able to find SAIDI information for lots of California utilities.

<https://www.paloaltoonline.com/blogs/p/2021/04/04/palo-alto-utilities-breeds-mistrust-with-lack-of-transparency-around-outages>

(She didn't get the information from their websites, but rather from here.)

<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/eia861/>

Like, I wish I could find the comparisons to PG&E,

PG&E has lots of SAIDI information on its website.

https://www.pge.com/en_US/residential/outages/planning-and-preparedness/safety-and-preparedness/grid-reliability/electric-reliability-reports/electric-reliability-reports.page

or, you know, to even to some of the -- like Santa Clara,

Silicon Valley Power (Santa Clara's municipal electric utility) reports its SAIDI for years 2009-2018 here. (But, yeah, it not explained very well.)

<https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/home/showpublisheddocument/62481/637268684502400000>

Silicon Valley Power's website has an "Outage History" list of 405 items going back to 2011. (But, yeah, there's not much information about each outage.)

https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/svp-and-community/outages-and-alerts/outage-history/-/FlexSetting_Type-1/-sortn-StartDate/-sortd-desc/-npage-1

or some of the other NCPA members. And that's one of the areas that I'm working on. That we can do some sharing amongst ourselves. So that we can do some comparisons -- how we look.

This sounds like Director Batchelor is hoping that NCPA members will share SAIDI information amongst the members without releasing it to the public. To me, that's NOT what we want.

More information about NCPA's members is provided below the "%%%" line. I don't know why these are the utilities Palo Alto SHOULD be comparing itself to.

Fort Collins, CO, usually has a SAIDI of less than 20. Let's compare Palo Alto to them.

<https://publish.clearpointstrategy.com/594/Measures/scorecardId=6290&object=measure&objectId=91417&periodId=282372.html>

There are nationals -- numbers out there that we can compare ourselves to.

This data is old, but it shows that for utilities which applied in 2016 to APPA to receive RP3 awards, the first quartile SAIDI was 23.03, the second quartile SAIDI was 45.00, the third quartile was 74.15, and the worst SAIDI was 188.46.

https://www.publicpower.org/system/files/documents/analysis_of_2016_rp3_application_data.pdf

(Of 113 utilities that applied, 110 got some kind of award. It says 42 got Diamond, 43 got Platinum, and 35 got Gold. But that adds up to 120, not 110.)

But we will work on this chart a little bit better, to look at, you know ...

3:24:40:

Vice Chair Johnston: I think it would be useful -- Director Batchelor, I think it would be useful to see -- to compare it to ourselves. How are WE doing over time? Are we seeing increased outages? Are the outages longer? Decreased outages? Are the outages shorter? I mean, obviously, we'd like to

3:25:04:

Director Batchelor: So, the -- you know, the thought process was that I was asked -- ah -- a couple meetings ago to start adding these into the quarterly reports. You know, it's easier to see -- ah -- you know -- quarter -- if we had quarter 1 and quarter 2 and we're talking about quarter 3, we'd be able to take a look at that, since this is the 1st quarter. I'm open to suggestions to look at adding the 4th quarter back in there. Or, actually, if you would like to look at quarter-to-quarter, from year-to-year. So, quarter of '23. Or, '22. To do a comparisons of that. I can get that information. I can show you the -- Since this is quarter number 1, you know, I can leave the graph in there for the whole entire year of last year, and then, as we move into quarter 2, you can look at how we're doing in this quarter 2 of this year, compared to the quarter last year. So, I'm open to suggestions. Whatever makes it easiest for the commission to be able to compare ourselves. So, I -- like I said, I could do the whole year of last year. And then, as we move forward, we can compare them. Or, if you just want so see the quarter-to-quarter. Ah ...

3:26:25:

Vice Chair Johnston: Well, I think it -- I would guess that outages are, to some extent, seasonal -- You probably get outages in the summertime due to wildfires, and in the wintertime due to storms. So -- But whatever is going to be a valid comparison that would give us a feeling of whether we're doing better over time or not as well over time on these measures.

I'd like to see the data and let the data tell us whether the outages are seasonal or not.

3:26:59:

Director Batchelor: OK. Let me -- Let me think a little bit about that. Because, you know, we do see -- We do also see, depending on how the weather is, in the summertime, if we're going into a hot spell, you know, we might find a little -- a few more outages, where our equipment is stressed a little bit during that period of time. But let me think a little bit more about how we can change this, so it's a little bit more -- first of all, easier to read, and second of all, how we can do the comparison portions of ourselves.

3:27:30:

Vice Chair Johnston: Thank you.

3:27:36

Chair Segal: Any other commissioner comments or reports?

[illegible]

Differences between the two versions of the Utilities Quarterly Update document:

Version A

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-id-14973-info.pdf>

Version B.

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-uac-agenda-and-packet.pdf>

* Version B is 62 pages long. Version A is 60 pages long.

* Version B has packet page numbers. Version A does not.

* In Version B, the page footers say "January 4, 2023." In Version A, the footers says "February 2023." (I assume the footers should say "February 2023" -- or maybe "February 1, 2023.")

* Version B has staff members' names in parentheses next to various report sections (108 occurrences), and yellow markers next to some of them (18 occurrences). Version A does not.

* In Version B, Figure 3 straddles two pages. In Version A, it doesn't.

* In Version B, there's a blank page at page 182. In Version A, there isn't a corresponding blank page there (between page 52 and 53).

* Etc.

%%%%%%%%%%%

Various SAIDI Information about NCPA members

Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) has 16 members.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_California_Power_Agency

The following list shows:

a) SAIDI information for 2019, as reported by Sherry Listgarten's 04-04-21 blog, and

<https://www.paloaltoonline.com/blogs/p/2021/04/04/palo-alto-utilities-breeds-mistrust-with-lack-of-transparency-around-outages>

b) RP3 awards given by the American Public Power Association (APPA) for electric reliability, safety, etc.

<https://www.publicpower.org/rp3-designated-utilities>

(Diamond ranks highest, followed by Platinum, and then Gold. Awards last three years.)

	SAIDI (2019)	RP3
* Alameda Municipal Power	94.600	Platinum 2021
* Bay Area Rapid Transit		

* City of Biggs		
* City of Gridley		
* City of Healdsburg		
* City of Lompoc		Diamond 2021
* City of Palo Alto	136. 100	Platinum 2021
* City of Ukiah		
* Lodi Electric Utility		Gold 2021
* Port of Oakland		
* Redding Electric Utility	77. 400	Platinum 2021
* Roseville Electric		Diamond 2022
* Silicon Valley Power (Santa Clara)		
* Truckee Donner PUD	1024. 420	Diamond 2021
* Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative		
* Shasta Lake	86. 900	

Various information from NCPA members' websites

* Alameda Municipal Power

<https://www.alamedamp.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/8038?fileID=4295>

Page 14: SAIDI is shown month by month from July 2021 to June 2022 ---- varied from 43.6 in July to 15.9 in September. Average: 28.225 (I counted the 12 months equally)

https://alamedamp.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/ArchivedAgenda/_07202020-1562?packet=true

Page 213: SAIDI is shown month by month from July 2019 to June 2021 -- varied from 0.0 in July to 28.6 in June.

* Bay Area Rapid Transit

* City of Biggs

Google "site:biggs-ca.gov electric saidi " no hits.

* City of Gridley

Google "site:gridley.ca.us electric saidi " no hits.

* City of Healdsburg

Google "site:ci.healdsburg.ca.us saidi " 1 hit (why not more?)

<https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/6956/2016-Electric-Report?bidId=>

SAIDI was 2.3 in 2016. For PG&E in the north bay region, it was 97.4. For PG&E overall, it was 72.4.

* City of Lompoc

Google "site:cityoflompoc.com saidi " no hits.

* City of Palo Alto

* City of Ukiah

Google "site:cityofukiah.com saidi " no hits.

* Lodi Electric Utility

<https://www.lo-di.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/257>

Page 67: SAIDI was 24.09 in 2015-2016, 14.153 in 2016-2017, and 45.61 in 2017-2018 ---- no further detail

* Port of Oakland

* Redding Electric Utility

<https://www.cityofredding.org/departments/redding-electric-utility/reu-pages/reu-s-electric-reliability>

Redding Electric Utility's SAIDI was 50.1 for 2016 --- For just Redding, it was 12.2. For PG&E, it was 106.6.

* Roseville Electric

Google "site:roseville.ca.us saidi" 3 hits

https://cdn5-hosted.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_7964838/Image/Electric/Electric_IRP_2018_WEB.pdf

Roseville's 5 year average SAIDI is 13.7

* Silicon Valley Power

* Truckee Donner PUD

Google "site:tdpud.org electric saidi " no hits

<https://www.tdpud.org/Home/Components/News/News/388/>

TDPUD Recognized as a Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) APPA Awards TDPUD Highest RP3 Award -- 2021

* Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative

* Shasta Lake

From: [Dailey, Karla](#)
To: [Mehrzaad](#)
Cc: [UAC](#); [City Mgr](#); [Batchelor, Dean](#); [Boatwright, Tabatha](#); [Council, City](#); [Kou, Lydia](#)
Subject: RE: Response from City of Palo Alto Utilities Regarding High Natural Gas Prices
Date: Monday, February 6, 2023 10:29:40 AM
Attachments: [image005.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)
[image013.png](#)
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Thank you again for contacting the City of Palo Alto. The General Fund transfer has been consistent for many years, and is not a factor in January bill increases. The only change in the City's gas rates since the passage of Measure L has related to gas market prices. Each month the City changes its rates to reflect current market conditions. Due to extremely high market prices in December and January, gas rates increased. They are declining in February because prices have fallen. Almost every utility in California experienced the same increase in rates that Palo Alto is experiencing. Please let us know if you have additional questions or concerns.



KARLA DAILEY

Acting Assistant Director of Utilities, Resource Management
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www.cityofpaloalto.org



Service Feedback

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Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 3:12 PM
To: Dailey, Karla <Karla.Dailey@CityofPaloAlto.org>
Cc: UAC <UAC@cityofpaloalto.org>; City Mgr <CityMgr@cityofpaloalto.org>; Batchelor, Dean <Dean.Batchelor@CityofPaloAlto.org>; Boatwright, Tabatha <Tabatha.Boatwright@CityofPaloAlto.org>; Council, City <city.council@cityofpaloalto.org>; Kou, Lydia <Lydia.Kou@CityofPaloAlto.org>
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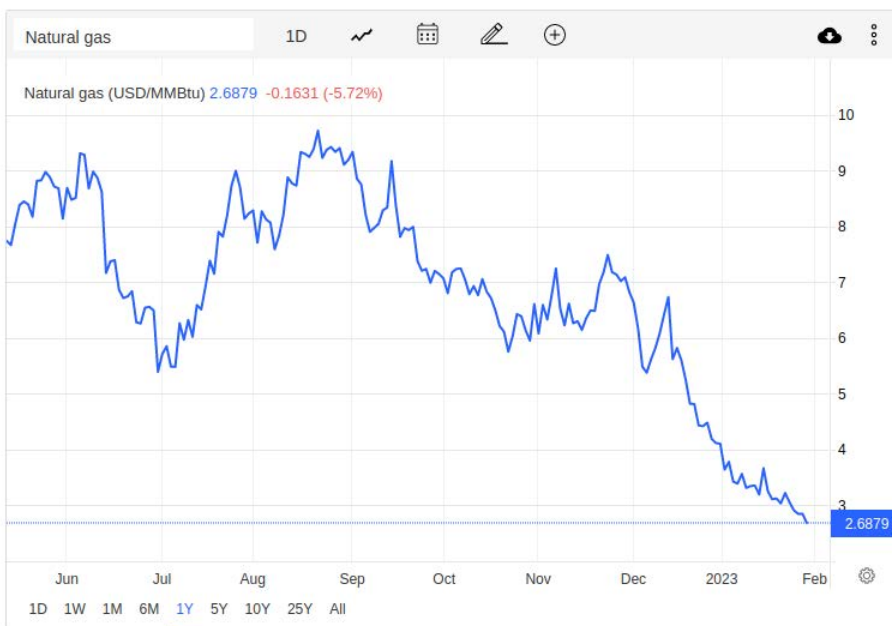
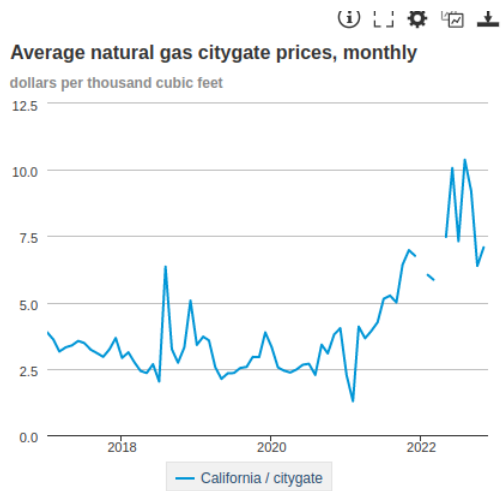
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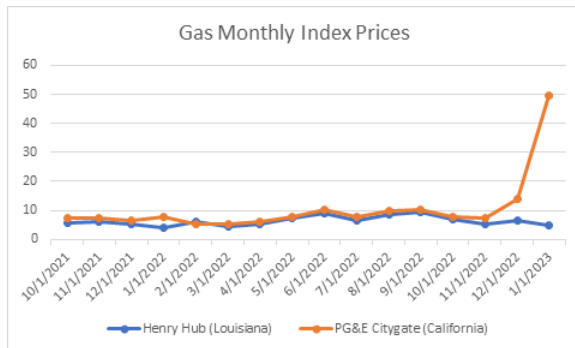
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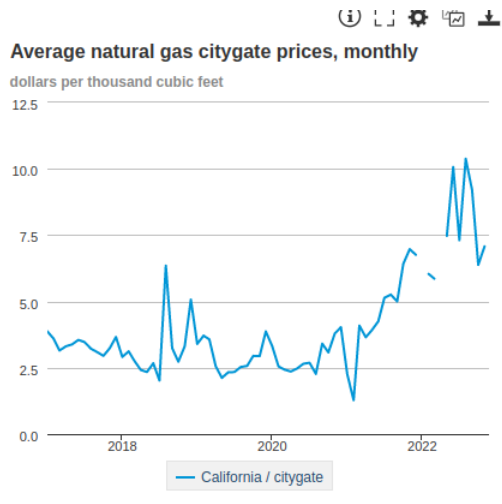
Hello Karla,

Thank you for getting back to me. My understanding is that, unlike its normal practices in the past, the city has started moving huge amounts of money from the Gas Fund to its General Fund, paving the way for such an unreasonable gas price increase in our utility bills, and this is in spite of the fact that the natural gas price has fallen to its lowest level since the beginning of 2022 (including in California, please see the following charts). In the past, the courts prevented the city from moving funds from the Gas fund to the General fund in excess of 18%, but with the recent passage of Measure L, the city can start doing this again. It would be a big relief to Palo Alto residents if the city council members consider going back to the old practice of not tapping on the natural gas fund, and let that fund absorb the gas price fluctuations. The gas price increase of 120% in our utility bills in less than two months is unheard of, and I do not believe the residents can simply let this practice continue.

Thank you,

Mehrzad Rasti

650 391-4725





On 1/31/23 5:57 PM, Dailey, Karla wrote:

Thank you for contacting CPAU. We understand customers' concerns over the high winter natural gas prices.

The prices that CPAU and other utilities in the region pay for the natural gas delivered to customers have risen significantly this year. Gas commodity prices for January this year were five times higher than last January's gas prices, which could triple customers' gas bills. Gas customers across California are experiencing similar impacts. Like the state's other natural gas utilities, CPAU purchases natural gas supply for its customers at market prices, does not control those prices, and does not mark-up the supply cost of the gas purchased on behalf of its customers.

Since learning of these higher prices in late November and early December, CPAU has been attempting to inform customers in advance to take action and save energy to try to avoid surprisingly high utility bills in January and February.

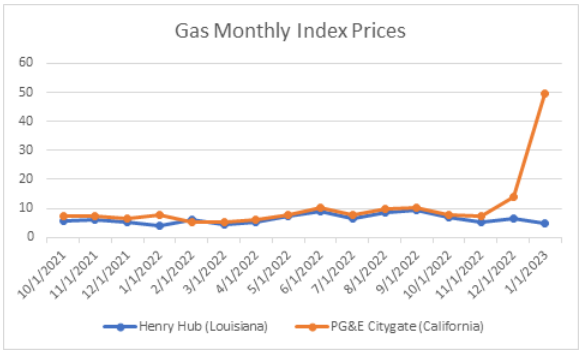
There are regional factors to consider here. Henry Hub prices reflect gas purchased and sold there in Louisiana. Palo Alto purchases gas at monthly market index prices at the PG&E Citygate hub in Northern California. This winter, natural gas prices rose dramatically across the western United States due to a confluence of factors, including: (a) the historically cold weather this region seen in December, (b) unusually low gas storage levels across the region, (c) constraints on the availability of natural gas supplies flowing into California, and (d) an increased reliance on natural gas in the electric power sector as a result of the ongoing drought's impact on hydroelectric supplies. This combination of factors led to a surge in gas prices in California that has diverged more so from those at Henry Hub (monthly price comparison chart between the hubs below). January prices are extremely high; however, natural gas prices starting in February and customer bills reflecting the February prices and consumption for customers are expected to decrease substantially from January.

Palo Alto has published information regarding the extreme energy prices and helpful resources on the utility website:

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/News-Articles/Utilities/Extreme-Energy-Prices-This-Winter-How-to-Save-on-Heating-Costs>

In addition, below is a Wall Street Journal article that discusses the specific situation in California:

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/natural-gas-prices-have-fallen-back-to-earth-except-in-california-11673411627>



Please let us know if you have additional questions or concerns.

KARLA DAILEY

Acting Assistant Director of Utilities, Resource Management

Utilities

(650) 329-2523 | karla.dailey@cityofpaloalto.org

www.cityofpaloalto.org



From: [Matthew Rossillon](#)
To: [UAC](#)
Subject: High school engineer interview project
Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 11:48:38 PM

You don't often get email from mrossillon@pausd.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Dear Community members,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Matthew Rossillon and I am a high school engineering and computer science teacher at Palo Alto High School. As part of my "Principals of Engineering" class curriculum, I have an exciting project for my students this year. They will be interviewing local engineers from different disciplines, which provides a unique opportunity for them to gain firsthand experience speaking with professionals in the field and understand the key skills and responsibilities of engineers.

I am reaching out to create a list of engineers who might be interested in participating in this project. The interview will take about half an hour and can be over Zoom, at a time that is most convenient for the engineer and student.

To help build this contact list, I have created a Google survey that I would kindly request you to fill out. If you have any friends, family members, or colleagues who may be interested in being interviewed, I would greatly appreciate it if you could forward this email to them. Your support in spreading the word about this opportunity is truly invaluable. Thank you for taking the time to read this email and for your consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you soon. Best regards,

<https://forms.gle/NUzR6rP2mjziYviN6>

Matthew Rossillon
High School Engineering and Computer Science Teacher
Palo Alto High School
Mrossillon@pausd.org
(510) 590-8350

From: [Jeff Hoel](#)
To: [UAC](#)
Cc: [Hoel, Jeff \(external\): Council City](#)
Subject: TRANSCRIPT & COMMENTS -- 02-01-23 UAC meeting -- commissioner comments -- Utilities Quarterly Report for Q1 -- SAIDI
Date: Saturday, February 4, 2023 6:43:51 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be cautious of opening attachments and clicking on links.

Commissioners,

At your 02-01-23 meeting, during VIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS and REPORTS from MEETINGS/EVENTS, there was a discussion about SAIDI, which is a measure of electric reliability.

Please see, below the "#####" line, a TRANSCRIPT of this portion of the meeting, to which I have added my COMMENTS (paragraphs in red beginning with "###").

Many thanks to Vice Chair Johnston for raising this issue.

Jeff

Jeff Hoel
731 Colorado Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

#####

TRANSCRIPT

3:21:02:

Chair Segal: Do any commissioners have any comments, reports, or -- for meetings or events? Vice Chair Johnston.

3:21:12:

Vice Chair Johnston: Yes. Thank you. I had one question and one comment on the quarterly report that was included in our packet.

Here's one version of that quarterly report (60 pages). Let's call it Version A.
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-id-14973-info.pdf>

I got this version by clicking on "Informational Utilities Quarterly Report Update for Q1 of FY2023" link on page 2 of UAC's 02-01-23 agenda document (190 pages)
<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-uac-agenda-and-packet.pdf>

Another version of the quarterly report is available within the agenda document itself, on pages 129-190 (packet pages 124-184) Let's call it Version B. Why are there two different versions?

Below the "\$\$\$\$\$" line, I have identified some of the differences between Version A and Version B.

Which, as always, is always very interesting. And is very helpful. But my question was on the graph, I guess, or the chart, that's on paragraph 1.4. It really -- on page -- well, it's packet page 136. But it really talks about outages. And there are two comments. One is, I don't know what units these outages are.

Technically, SAIDI has no "units." It's customer-minutes of outage per customer per year. But, yes, that should be explained.

It says, the System Average Interruption Duration Index. 81.69. I don't know what that means. And I don't know whether that's good or bad or whatever.

Palo Alto's Proposed Operating Budget for FY2022 (page 386)
https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/administrative-services/city-budgets/fy-2022-city-budget/fy-2022-proposed-city-of-palo-alto-operating-budget-for-web_2.pdf
says that SAIDI was 122 in FY2019, was 65 in FY2020, and was estimated to be 95 in FY2021, and that the goal for FY2022 was 60. To me, that goal was not particularly ambitious.

Palo Alto's Proposed Operating Budget for FY2017 (page 26)
https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2016/05-04-2016-special-meeting/item-1_proposed-operating-and-capital-budgets-for-fy-2017.pdf
says that SAIDI was 16 in FY2014, was 47 for FY2015, was 32 for FY2016, and that the "proposed" SAIDI for FY2017 was 29.

Palo Alto's Proposed Budget for FY 2023 (which apparently includes the Operating Budget) has NO SAIDI information and NO SAIDI goal. To me, that's a serious omission.
https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/administrative-services/city-budgets/fy2023-city-budget/proposed-fy23/fy-2023-proposed-capital-budget-real-final_upload2web_small.pdf

Palo Alto's Utilities Quarterly Update for Q4 of FY2015 (page 47) has some information about SAIDI. It was 46.85. The report included summary

information about 19 outages for the year.

https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/reports/uac-informational-reports/2015-informational-reports/10-07-15-meeting/info-item_utilities-quarterly-update-4th-q-fy-2015.pdf

I would like to have seen more information about each individual outage rather than just aggregated by month. The report said which outages were aerial, which were underground, which were storm-related, etc.

It's just -- To me, it's a number that doesn't have any context. And we also see here the figures for Q1. And I think it would be helpful to be able to look at a comparison, to see what the comparable figures would be for -- you know, for Q4 last year, or Q1 of last year, if it's the kind of thing that kind of varies seasonally. But this information -- which is really important -- is not presented -- at least in a way that I can make much use of. So, that's my comment number one.

3:22:57:

My comment number two is, while the font that this is printed in looks very nice, it's really hard to read. And ...

3:23:09:

Chair Segal: I second that.

3:23:10:

Vice Chair Johnston: ... the draft report that we saw -- was presented, you know, when we looked at -- to get ready for this meeting was in a nice font that was easy to read. So, as nice as this looks, it's not -- it's very hard to read.

To my eye, the fonts in Version A and Version B appeared identical or at least very similar. Is it possible that when the agenda document (with Version B in it) was published, some fonts were not included? If so, and the specified fonts were not available on the viewer's computer, the PDF reader would have substituted different fonts, that might have been less legible. Is this what happened?

3:23:31:

Director Batchelor: Vice Chair Johnston, thank you for those comments. Ah, yes. We will make sure that we look at the font as we move forward in these reports.

So, the one thing that's very difficult to find is the -- these numbers that you see up here for SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIFI. It's not something that other utilities want to put -- broadcast out on their websites. And so, it's difficult to do comparisons.

Sherry Listgarten was able to find SAIDI information for lots of California utilities.

<https://www.paloaltoonline.com/blogs/p/2021/04/04/palo-alto-utilities-breeds-mistrust-with-lack-of-transparency-around-outages>

(She didn't get the information from their websites, but rather from here.)

<https://www.eia.gov/electricity/data/eia861/>

Like, I wish I could find the comparisons to PG&E,

PG&E has lots of SAIDI information on its website.

https://www.pge.com/en_US/residential/outages/planning-and-preparedness/safety-and-preparedness/grid-reliability/electric-reliability-reports/electric-reliability-reports.page

or, you know, to even to some of the -- like Santa Clara,

Silicon Valley Power (Santa Clara's municipal electric utility) reports its SAIDI for years 2009-2018 here. (But, yeah, it not explained very well.)

<https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/home/showpublisheddocument/62481/637268684502400000>

Silicon Valley Power's website has an "Outage History" list of 405 items going back to 2011. (But, yeah, there's not much information about each outage.)

https://www.siliconvalleypower.com/svp-and-community/outages-and-alerts/outage-history/-/FlexSetting_Type-1/-sortn-StartDate/-sortd-desc/-npage-1

or some of the other NCPA members. And that's one of the areas that I'm working on. That we can do some sharing amongst ourselves. So that we can do some comparisons -- how we look.

This sounds like Director Batchelor is hoping that NCPA members will share SAIDI information amongst the members without releasing it to the public. To me, that's NOT what we want.

More information about NCPA's members is provided below the "%%%" line. I don't know why these are the utilities Palo Alto SHOULD be comparing itself to.

Fort Collins, CO, usually has a SAIDI of less than 20. Let's compare Palo Alto to them.

<https://publish.clearpointstrategy.com/594/Measures/scorecardId=6290&object=measure&objectId=91417&periodId=282372.html>

There are nationals -- numbers out there that we can compare ourselves to.

This data is old, but it shows that for utilities which applied in 2016 to APPA to receive RP3 awards, the first quartile SAIDI was 23.03, the second quartile SAIDI was 45.00, the third quartile was 74.15, and the worst SAIDI was 188.46.

https://www.publicpower.org/system/files/documents/analysis_of_2016_rp3_application_data.pdf

(Of 113 utilities that applied, 110 got some kind of award. It says 42 got Diamond, 43 got Platinum, and 35 got Gold. But that adds up to 120, not 110.)

But we will work on this chart a little bit better, to look at, you know ...

3:24:40:

Vice Chair Johnston: I think it would be useful -- Director Batchelor, I think it would be useful to see -- to compare it to ourselves. How are WE doing over time? Are we seeing increased outages? Are the outages longer? Decreased outages? Are the outages shorter? I mean, obviously, we'd like to

3:25:04:

Director Batchelor: So, the -- you know, the thought process was that I was asked -- ah -- a couple meetings ago to start adding these into the quarterly reports. You know, it's easier to see -- ah -- you know -- quarter -- if we had quarter 1 and quarter 2 and we're talking about quarter 3, we'd be able to take a look at that, since this is the 1st quarter. I'm open to suggestions to look at adding the 4th quarter back in there. Or, actually, if you would like to look at quarter-to-quarter, from year-to-year. So, quarter of '23. Or, '22. To do a comparisons of that. I can get that information. I can show you the -- Since this is quarter number 1, you know, I can leave the graph in there for the whole entire year of last year, and then, as we move into quarter 2, you can look at how we're doing in this quarter 2 of this year, compared to the quarter last year. So, I'm open to suggestions. Whatever makes it easiest for the commission to be able to compare ourselves. So, I -- like I said, I could do the whole year of last year. And then, as we move forward, we can compare them. Or, if you just want so see the quarter-to-quarter. Ah ...

3:26:25:

Vice Chair Johnston: Well, I think it -- I would guess that outages are, to some extent, seasonal -- You probably get outages in the summertime due to wildfires, and in the wintertime due to storms. So -- But whatever is going to be a valid comparison that would give us a feeling of whether we're doing better over time or not as well over time on these measures.

I'd like to see the data and let the data tell us whether the outages are seasonal or not.

3:26:59:

Director Batchelor: OK. Let me -- Let me think a little bit about that. Because, you know, we do see -- We do also see, depending on how the weather is, in the summertime, if we're going into a hot spell, you know, we might find a little -- a few more outages, where our equipment is stressed a little bit during that period of time. But let me think a little bit more about how we can change this, so it's a little bit more -- first of all, easier to read, and second of all, how we can do the comparison portions of ourselves.

3:27:30:

Vice Chair Johnston: Thank you.

3:27:36

Chair Segal: Any other commissioner comments or reports?

[illegible]

Version A

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-id-14973-info.pdf>

Version B.

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/utilities-advisory-commission/archived-agenda-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes-2023/02-feb-2023/02-01-2023-uac-agenda-and-packet.pdf>

* Version B is 62 pages long. Version A is 60 pages long.

* Version B has packet page numbers. Version A does not.

* In Version B, the page footers say "January 4, 2023." In Version A, the footers says "February 2023." (I assume the footers should say "February 2023" -- or maybe "February 1, 2023.")

* Version B has staff members' names in parentheses next to various report sections (108 occurrences), and yellow markers next to some of them (18 occurrences). Version A does not.

* In Version B, Figure 3 straddles two pages. In Version A, it doesn't.

* In Version B, there's a blank page at page 182. In Version A, there isn't a corresponding blank page there (between page 52 and 53).

* Etc.

[illegible]

Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) has 16 members.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_California_Power_Agency

The following list shows:

a) SAIDI information for 2019, as reported by Sherry Listgarten's 04-04-21 blog, and

<https://www.paloaltoonline.com/blogs/p/2021/04/04/palo-alto-utilities-breeds-mistrust-with-lack-of-transparency-around-outages>

b) RP3 awards given by the American Public Power Association (APPA) for electric reliability, safety, etc.

<https://www.publicpower.org/rp3-designated-utilities>

(Diamond ranks highest, followed by Platinum, and then Gold. Awards last three years.)

	SAIDI (2019)	RP3
* Alameda Municipal Power	94.600	Platinum 2021
* Bay Area Rapid Transit		

* City of Biggs		
* City of Gridley		
* City of Healdsburg		
* City of Lompoc		Diamond 2021
* City of Palo Alto	136. 100	Platinum 2021
* City of Ukiah		
* Lodi Electric Utility		Gold 2021
* Port of Oakland		
* Redding Electric Utility	77. 400	Platinum 2021
* Roseville Electric		Diamond 2022
* Silicon Valley Power (Santa Clara)		
* Truckee Donner PUD	1024. 420	Diamond 2021
* Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative		
* Shasta Lake	86. 900	

Various information from NCPA members' websites

* Alameda Municipal Power

<https://www.alamedamp.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/8038?fileID=4295>

Page 14: SAIDI is shown month by month from July 2021 to June 2022 ---- varied from 43.6 in July to 15.9 in September. Average: 28.225 (I counted the 12 months equally)

https://alamedamp.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/ArchivedAgenda/_07202020-1562?packet=true

Page 213: SAIDI is shown month by month from July 2019 to June 2021 -- varied from 0.0 in July to 28.6 in June.

* Bay Area Rapid Transit

* City of Biggs

Google "site:biggs-ca.gov electric saidi " no hits.

* City of Gridley

Google "site:gridley.ca.us electric saidi " no hits.

* City of Healdsburg

Google "site:ci.healdsburg.ca.us saidi " 1 hit (why not more?)

<https://www.ci.healdsburg.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/6956/2016-Electric-Report?bidId=>

SAIDI was 2.3 in 2016. For PG&E in the north bay region, it was 97.4. For PG&E overall, it was 72.4.

* City of Lompoc

Google "site:cityoflompoc.com saidi " no hits.

* City of Palo Alto

* City of Ukiah

Google "site:cityofukiah.com saidi " no hits.

* Lodi Electric Utility

<https://www.lo-di.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/257>

Page 67: SAIDI was 24.09 in 2015-2016, 14.153 in 2016-2017, and 45.61 in 2017-2018 ---- no further detail

* Port of Oakland

* Redding Electric Utility

<https://www.cityofredding.org/departments/redding-electric-utility/reu-pages/reu-s-electric-reliability>

Redding Electric Utility's SAIDI was 50.1 for 2016 --- For just Redding, it was 12.2. For PG&E, it was 106.6.

* Roseville Electric

Google "site:roseville.ca.us saidi" 3 hits

https://cdn5-hosted.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_7964838/Image/Electric/Electric_IRP_2018_WEB.pdf

Roseville's 5 year average SAIDI is 13.7

* Silicon Valley Power

* Truckee Donner PUD

Google "site:tdpud.org electric saidi " no hits

<https://www.tdpud.org/Home/Components/News/News/388/>

TDPUD Recognized as a Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) APPA Awards TDPUD Highest RP3 Award -- 2021

* Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative

* Shasta Lake