

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A customer communication system is being offered by the PUC to provide direct telephone notification to customers in advance of planned service interruptions.

PUC encourages customers to update their contact information so the system can run parallel to current notification methods.

How does this service work?

The Atlas Notification System is essentially 3 separate systems; a geographic information system (GIS), PUC's customer information database and an Interactive Voice Response system (auto dialer). When work involving service interruptions to customers is being planned, PUC staff will identify which area will be affected by the interruption. The electric or water meters in the identified area will be cross referenced with the PUC customer database and a call list is compiled. That list is issued by the auto dialer to notify the affected customers.

What types of situations will I receive phone calls?

At present the Atlas Notification System is only being used to provide advanced notification for planned power outages and water service interruptions.

When crews are planning work in a neighborhood, all customers to be affected will receive a call 24-48 hours in advance of the interruption. This will allow customers time to prepare for the interruption.

The Atlas system could also be used in the unlikely event of a major emergency where mass communication is required (e.g. a boil water advisory).

When should I expect calls?

Generally speaking, customers will only receive notification of planned interruptions that directly affect them between the hours of 8:00-4:30 Monday through Friday, except for holidays.

Do I have to enroll for this service? Will I receive phone calls even if I choose to not enroll?

Presently, every PUC customer is registered in the Atlas Notification System. PUC would like to assure customers that the Atlas Notification System will only be used for planned service interruption notices and will **never** be used for solicitation of any kind. However, should customers wish to not receive notifications there is an opt-out feature available.

Is my account information still secure? Who has access to this information?

Customer privacy is something the PUC takes very seriously. This is why the Atlas Notification System is managed and operated solely by PUC employees. No third party has access to PUC's Customer Information Database.

What if my account information is not up to date?

The PUC is introducing the Atlas Notification System in parallel with current notification procedures while we fully test the system to ensure no customers fall through the cracks. Updating your account information is the best way to ensure you will receive notifications. PUC is offering a convenient way to update your information at any time. Customers can e-mail customer.care@ssmruc.com or call the PUC Customer Experience Team at 705-759-6522 to speak to a representative who would be happy to update the account information.

What if I want these calls to be directed to my cell phone or another number?

While updating their contact information, customers will also have the opportunity to provide a preferred outage contact number. Once provided, this outage contact number will be the primary contact number used when delivering notifications through the Atlas System.

Is there a way to opt-out if I do not want to receive these messages?

Yes, there is. Customers have the option to opt-out of the Atlas Notification System by e-mailing customer.care@ssmruc.com or calling the PUC Customer Experience Team at 705-759-6522. It should be noted however, that in the case of a major emergency where PUC must contact affected customers, those who have chosen to opt-out will still receive the emergency notice.

I'm a tenant. What happens if my PUC services are included in my rent (landlord pays for services) or I live in an apartment?

Currently the Atlas Notification System requires an account in the name of the customer to receive the notice. Customers who live in apartment buildings or townhouses and do not have a PUC account will have to rely on the building manager or landlord to pass on the notification.

How much is this system going to cost and how will it affect my PUC bill?

There will be no direct impact on customers' bills from this alert system.

Does this mean you will call me before discoloured water starts coming out of my tap?

We cannot accurately predict exactly where, when or who will experience discoloured water. That being said, if a discoloured water problem occurs within a generalized area, we can use this new system to get an alert out as quickly as possible to all customers within the area.

Also, when there are planned water improvement activities such as flushing, we will use this system to alert residents in the area to the potential for discoloured water in advance of the flushing.

Why didn't you have this system when all the brown water problems were happening?

This new alert system required the planning and development of three different components including a geographic mapping system, PUC's customer information database and an automated dialing system. All of this took considerable time to complete.

Where can I access more information about this service?

More information can be found on the PUC website www.ssmruc.com. To contact our Customer Experience Team, e-mail customer.care@ssmruc.com or call 705-759-6522.