

Mr. William J. Verkest, Sr.
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PUCO

April 9, 2002

Dear Mr. Sheets;

Enclosed is a brief, describing my appearance at the P.U.C.O. meeting on March 12, 2002.

Thank you for your consideration in permitting me to appear at the Hearing.

Sincerely, *Sincerely*
William J. Verkest, Sr. 4-9-02
William J. Verkest

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William J. Verkest, Sr.

I appeared at a formal P.U.C.O. hearing on March 12, 2002. My complaint was AEP's failure to replace worn, bare power lines on N. 8th Street. This poses a safety issue, as do arcing wires, power drops in homes when neighbors' air conditioning comes on, lines twisted in trees (lines carrying different voltage), and outdated transformers. While I realize the millions of miles of wires prevents AEP from regularly inspecting all areas, when issues are brought to their attention by consumers, a period of three years seems an unreasonable amount of time for requested repairs/replacement. The large area would seem to make it crucial for AEP to rely on customers to report concerns.

Among evidence submitted were:

- Pictures of transformers and lines on N. 8th and Locust Streets;
- A newspaper article about a January power outage which initially affected the area of N. 8th Street, Mound St., and half of Mound Court (approximately 40 homes) as well as the business district of Church Street from N. 11th Street to the downtown area, including the Police Department. Five hours later much of the area's power was cut off so AEP could conduct repairs. I had been previously told by AEP that we were not on the commercial circuits;
- A letter from Arlene Dean, 59 N. 8th Street. She returned home one night to find half her home without power, then the rest of the power going out. AEP replaced the transformer supplying power to her home.
- A letter from Beth Ferry, 198 Locust Street, regarding the drop in power at her home when her neighbor's air conditioning comes on, and the visibly arcing wires at the transformer outside her house.

Concerns I had while trying to get needed repairs made were comments from AEP regarding "cost-cutting", and the "unneeded" insulation peeling off wires. If it were not needed, the insulation would not have been put on the wires as a matter of course. During a conversation with AEP last summer, when I discussed failure to adequately trim trees, the representative said they could "take down the entire tree" if they wanted. I replied, "But that would just be for spite, wouldn't it?" The Asplundi crew they sent out were asked by my wife what the wires above the tree looked like, and the worker replied, "There are a couple of wires up there that are pretty bare". Because these people are not tree experts, I subsequently hired a tree specialist to properly trim the tree. A second tree was so damaged by the "trim" that I recently paid to have it taken down completely.

Cable crews have commented on the condition of the wiring along N. 8th Street, and when crews strung new cable two years ago they expressed concern about working closely to deteriorating wiring. When our telephone pole split almost completely in two, it took over four years to get it replaced, and the crew who replaced it stated we likely would get new wiring, due to the condition of the wires. Our neighborhood has a lot of active children, and since children do climb trees, their safety while playing and climbing in our neighborhood is a real concern.

Since Mr. Little, of P.U.C.O., left and was unavailable for testimony, I did not have his recollection of the visit to my home in early December. While neighbors would have responded to subpoenas, I am disabled and do not have the financial resources to pay for subpoenas. It would also present a hardship to many of my neighbors to take off work and find sitters for children in order to appear.