

PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

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JAN 08 2009
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COMMENTS:

Recent media reports have described proposed LG&E rate changes in terms of fees to cover past work (i.e., Ike), and billing increases to cover future work (new power plant, etc). No one, however, has reported any effort to enhance the performance of *current* commitments, without which the rest would be like throwing good money after bad.

The case I'm most familiar with, from work on the Preston Corridor Planning Group, is the maintenance of streetlights, which is done on contract to the Louisville Metro government. Over the past year, I've made repeated (and growing) reports of outages along the Preston corridor between Audubon Parkway and Grade Lane, which is my daily commuting route. Reports turned to entreaties, to pleas, and finally to outrage as the list grew without redress, at one point reaching nearly two dozen fixtures.

Some repairs finally began recently after direct intervention by Metro Public Works principals, and, notably, after the public conference on this rate proposal was announced. Ironically, however, the longest-running, and, as it happens, *the most dangerous outages persist to this day*: these include lights on the overpass over I-264, and the very busy intersection at Grade Lane and its approach to the adjoining I-65 interchange, first reported in February of last year.

I realize the period discussed here includes the Ike 'surge.' In recognition of those challenges, I made no reports at all for a period of about two months after the storm. That hardly explains the remaining lapse of six to eight months without action.

A public utility should, first and foremost, be accountable for its service responsibilities. Any decision on increased charges should thus be taken against what the company has done with money already allocated. In this case, it seems clear that funds provided by the city's contract for streetlight maintenance simply haven't been spent. Are there similar cases across the spectrum of LG&E's activities? If so, how much of the associated money could be committed to offset the proposed rate increase? Or, better still, what commitment could be obtained from the company in conjunction with the increase, to fulfill its arrears in essential services?

If this action can be made to produce such a commitment to reduce the dangers of travel along major urban corridors, and to address future maintenance more responsibly, it will certainly prove worthwhile. Otherwise, it's an unwarranted burden and an uncertain investment.

Thanks very much for your attention to these important matters, and, in particular, for your recent visit to Louisville to hear some of the community's concerns first-hand.