

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Formal Complaint

April 12, 2026

RE: Dangerous power surges resulting in devastating losses of property and endangerment of human life

My property at 3013 Comfort Road in Solebury, Pennsylvania has suffered numerous catastrophic power surges and outages during the forty (40) years I have resided at this residence. The power surge events have most recently occurred on October 31, 2023, and January 9, 2024. Both dates there was no storms or high winds. Within the last several years we have experienced extended power outages and surges. I have text messages documenting outages and damaged appliances on the following dates: 2/5/14; 5/9/16; 3/2-5/18; 4/12/20; 8/7-10/20; 10/31/23; and 1/9/24. This is not an exhaustive list, just the dates on which surges or outages were noted in text messages.

These events were not always associated with extreme weather. We almost always lose power during storms and frequently lose power during days without noticeably winds/rain/snow. There have been times when we have gone without power for more than one week. so we installed a whole-house generator, at great expense, to ensure running water and heat.

While the periods of time without any power have been incredibly difficult due to my husband's failing health (and were more difficult when I had three (3) small children), they have been less costly to deal with (aside from installing a whole house generator and paying for the fuel) than the recent devastating power surges. The October 31, 2023 power surge caused the thermostat for my electrically heated floor to ignite, singeing the wall in my bathroom. Luckily it did not cause a full-fledged fire or my home could have been partially or entirely destroyed.

This same surge destroyed almost everything connected to electricity in my home, DESPITE two whole-house surge protectors located on each of our circuit breakers. One of the whole-house surge protectors was found by the plumber who came to repair the well pump which was destroyed during the surge to have blown off the circuit breaker box and was on the other side of the basement. It should be noted that during all power outages and surges we would have NO running water without a generator. This is a significant hazard to health especially with young children or elderly individuals in the house. During the surge of 10/31/23 our generator was also impacted and did not come on. We had to have the generator reset, recalibrated and serviced before it would work again.

Below is an abbreviated listing of the damage from the October 31, 2023 surge and the associated repairs required with a list of the costs incurred to date. Please note that some repairs are ongoing due to the inability to find contractors, the delays in receiving parts, the difficulty in finding replacement items, and the time required to manage a project while working full time and caring for an elderly spouse with dementia:

| Item   | Repairs  | Cost  |
|--|--|---|
| Hot water heater<br>Air Handler<br>Indirect Tank<br>Indirect Tank control board and thermostat<br>Blower motor<br>Hot water recirculating pump   | Replace Control Panel<br>Replace Circulator Pump<br>Replace zone control board<br>Pending: replace thermostat on control board<br>Replace blower motor, transformer, multi-function board, and control board                         | Cost: \$13,322  |
| Well pump  | Replace entire unit including control box  | Cost: \$1175  |
| Security system  | Replace entire unit  | Costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$165 (diagnostic)</li> <li>• \$3620</li> </ul>   |
| Sump pumps (2)   | Replace entire units   | Cost: \$1485  |
| Septic Tank Alert Alarm  | Replace  | Pending (estimate \$750)  |
| Whole-house stereo system including: Multi Zone Audio Controller; Analog Input Module; AM/FM Tuner Module; Touch Screen Keypad; Outdoor built-in speakers; Receiver; Power Distribution Center | Replace appropriate units. Patch sheetrock where built-in control panels were located; repaint walls   | Cost: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5468</li> </ul> Not included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance deductible (\$1000)</li> <li>• Items not covered (~\$6000)</li> </ul> |
| AV equipment in 2 rooms (Receivers, speakers, sub-woofers, Blue ray player)  | Replace appropriate units  | Cost: \$8552 (Reimbursed by insurance for \$2163. Also incurred \$1000 deductible). See above.  |
| Whirlpool tub control board  | Replace entire tub; remove double window to install tub which won't fit through bedroom door; replace window (old one no longer to code), replace onyx tub surround; repaint trim and walls; repair siding, rehang lighting fixtures | Cost: \$49,210  |
| Heated Floor thermostat  | Replace thermostat, second thermostat worked, then shorted. Traced lines through wall, replaced with third thermostat which is still not completely functional   | Cost: \$2700  |

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| Surge protectors on 2 circuit breaker panels; 2 circuit breakers  | Replace circuit breakers and surge protectors  | Costs to date: \$10,553<br>Pending: final bill from electrician   |
| Compromised GFCI  | Replace all GFCIs; Replace floor thermostat; replace motion sensor light, replace doorbell | Cost: \$2310  |
| Ceiling Light fixtures – multiple   | Replace all  | Cost: \$575   |
| Dishwashers (2)   | Replace both   | Cost: \$8265 (reused both wooden door panels)   |
| Ovens (2)   | Replace both   | Cost: \$8200  |
| Sub-Zero undercounter refrigerators (2) and new wooden panels/handles since design changed and door from prior unit wouldn't fit newer design | Replace both   | Cost:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5575 (refrigerators, without door panels or handles)</li> <li>• \$1320 (custom wooden door panels inc. shipping)</li> <li>• \$300 (new handles, new design no longer has integrated handles)</li> </ul> |
| Bidet Seat  | Replace  | Costs: \$2145   |
| Small appliances and electronics (including AV/Audio)   | Replace  | Cost: \$2163<br><br>Not covered (including deductible): \$7,390   |
| Refinish hardwood floors damaged by leaking refrigerators   | Disassemble/move/reassemble Steinway grand piano and pool table<br>Refinish flooring       | Pending:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2000 (move piano)</li> <li>• \$1500 (move pool table)</li> <li>• \$13,068 (flooring)</li> </ul>  |
| Intercom System; doorbells didn't work. Repaired once but shorted again.  | Replace entire system  | Cost: \$8000  |
| Food in freezers/refrigerator   | Replaced   | Not estimated   |

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|---|--|------------------|
| <b>TOTAL PAID or COMMITTED TO DATE (rounded):</b>                 |  | <b>\$142,500</b> |
| <b>TOTAL REMAINING TO BE PAID (estimated), or not reimbursed:</b> |  | <b>\$30,000</b>  |

|                                  |  |                  |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------|
| <b>DEDUCTIBLES:</b>              |  | <b>\$ 2,000</b>  |
| <b>ESTIMATED TOTAL (rounded)</b> |  | <b>\$175,000</b> |

The above is not a complete list as there are still damaged items being found and repairs being done. It took over 9 months to find someone to replace the whirlpool tub and some of the work on the electrically heated floor is still pending.

Many of the items replaced or repaired (or in the process of being repaired/replaced) in the October 2023 surge were previously replaced due to surges. We have replaced dishwashers, refrigerators, the well pump and TVs/computers multiple times.

We installed elaborate, expensive surge protection equipment on all items, in many cases protecting some items with multiple surge protection devices, however this has not prevented the extreme surges from destroying electrical equipment. In addition, we have no way of knowing whether or not the wiring that hasn't been replaced in our home has been compromised and represents a potential deadly threat of fire.

We've had numerous insurance claims which has resulted in our rates being raised. In addition, we've had to cover the deductibles each time a claim has been made. We have never received the full claim amount which means that we have paid out-of-pocket for multiple surge events which has caused me to draw down on my 401k savings which has in turn resulted in onerous tax burdens. The cost of these surges to us has been hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses.

Additionally, the faulty infrastructure is subject to real estate disclosure rules which means our property will suffer significant market devaluation.

And finally, I spent the better part of 2024 and 2025 trying to put my house back in order following the surge of October 23, 2023. Many repairs were completely destroyed by the January 2024 surge, necessitating more work. All of this was done while I was struggling to manage medical expenses and personal challenges related to my husband's diagnosis with Frontotemporal Dementia, a degenerative, terminal brain disease. The thousands of hours (yes – it is almost a full-time job) dealing with the insurance claims, the contractors, and the project management are not only hours I will never get back, but they kept me from enjoying the limited time I have left with my husband as he wrestles with an illness for which there is no treatment or cure.

The stress caused by these events has significantly impacted my health, causing heart palpitations requiring medication, as well as other stress-related health issues.

These electrical surges and power outages must be addressed. The costs associated with these repairs are causing significant hardship, despite being partially covered by insurance. The health impact is even more devastating, both mentally and physically. I am worried that at any time my house could burn down due to the negligence of PECO. My performance at work has been compromised as I deal with the numerous home repairs that are required due to PECO's negligence. The inability of PECO to provide safe, reliable energy to its customers is a deadly time bomb and it is only a matter of time before someone's home catches on fire and serious bodily harm or even death results.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia Scheller", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patricia Scheller

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