

PSE statement on Baker Dam Early-Warning System activation

BELLEVUE, Wash. 6/02/25 -

We want to provide more information to our customers regarding the recent siren activation at Baker Dam. The Baker River Dam early-warning siren system was activated on Friday, May 30 at 10:12 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

As soon as the early-warning system activated, PSE conducted a visual inspection of the dam and contacted local authorities, Whatcom/Skagit 911, and Skagit Department of Emergency Management. The visual inspection confirmed there were no physical failures at the dam; upon further inspection we determined the wires that trigger the siren were damaged during construction work at the Lower Baker Dam. This wire system is designed so that if there is a break, it automatically triggers the early-warning system.

As part of the community, we understand how disturbing these warnings can be. We appreciate our customers who began evacuation procedures. That is the appropriate action to be taken when the early-warning siren system activates. There was a siren activation in November 2024 due to equipment failure at a specific siren location. This incident is very different in that the system performed as it was designed by sounding the alarm as soon as the wires were broken.

Safety is our top priority, and we are committed to the safe operation of the Baker hydroelectric system and having early-warning systems for the Skagit Valley Community. The early-warning system has been repaired and is operational. We plan to conduct our annual siren testing drill in August and will provide more information in advance of the test date.

We continue to coordinate with local and state agencies to address concerns from our customers and community.

Stay informed by opting-in to local alerts:

- Skagit Department of Emergency Management CodeRed Sign-up Community Notification Enrollment
- PSE Alerts: PSE | Log In to Your PSE Account go to “My Settings” then click on “Notification Preferences” and select “Outage notifications.” This will give you the option to select to receive email, text, and phone call alerts.

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