

United Energy pays \$90,000 for failing to notify customers of planned outage

Energy distributor United Energy has paid \$90,000 in penalties after allegedly failing to notify customers of a planned power outage.

The Essential Services Commission issued the penalties after finding that the distributor left customers in Springvale South without electricity for more than six hours on 1 August 2018.

Commission chairperson Ron Ben-David says the commission issued the company nine \$10,000 energy industry penalty notices.

“Customers were without electricity for several hours on a winter’s day.

“They may not have been able to heat or light their home, cook, boil water or communicate with family members,” he said.

“United Energy’s failure to notify these customers of the planned interruption meant they were not given the opportunity to make alternative arrangements while the power was out,” he said.

It’s the second time in recent months the commission has taken action against a distributor for failing to notify customers of a planned outage.

[AusNet Services paid \\$150,000](#) after it left residential and business customers in Bass, Woolamai and Glen Forbes without electricity for three hours on 18 July 2018.

Making sure customers are notified of planned outages has been a strategic focus of the commission since mid-2017.

Editors’ note: The commission can issue energy industry penalty notices where it has reason to believe a business has committed an energy industry contravention. The payment of a penalty specified in the energy industry penalty notices is not an admission of a contravention of their electricity and gas retail licences.

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