

Interruption Cost Estimate (ICE) 2.0 Customer Interruption Cost Study

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This document contains responses to frequently asked questions about the ICE Calculator 2.0 customer interruption cost study. These responses can be used by Powder River Energy's Member Service Representatives and Key Account Managers to provide more information to customers about the study. This is an internal document and is not meant to be customer facing.

Q1. Who is conducting this study?

A1. Powder River Energy is working with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and NRECA to conduct this research survey to understand the costs customers could experience due to power outages. This study will help researchers understand how much Powder River Energy customers value their electricity service during outages and how valuable it is to customers to avoid outages in the future. For more information about ICE 2.0, see icecalculator.com/recent-updates.

Q2. Why is Powder River Energy conducting this study?

A2. Powder River Energy is conducting this study to understand the costs that customers could potentially experience due to power outages. This study is part of a larger initiative led by LBNL and NRECA to update and upgrade the ICE Calculator - a publicly available electric reliability planning tool to estimate interruption costs and/or the benefits associated with reliability improvements in the U.S.

For account reps:

Your participation will help utilities make decisions that reduce the impact of power interruptions. Since you are one of our largest customers, we wanted to get your feedback about how power interruptions influence your business operations. The results from this study will inform decisions on grid improvements to improve the service to customers.

Q3. How will Powder River Energy use the results of the study?

A3. Powder River Energy will use the survey results to understand better the financial impact of power outages on its customers. This information will inform decisions on grid improvements to improve customer service, such as upgrading transmission lines, increasing renewable hosting capacity, making ready work for electric vehicle charging, and introducing new rate options.

Q4. Why was I selected to take the survey?

A4. A small, random sample of customers have been selected to receive this survey.

Q5. What is Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory?

A5. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory – also known as – “The Berkeley Lab,” is a multi-program science lab in the national laboratory system supported by the U.S. Department of Energy through its Office of Science. The Berkeley Lab is managed by the University of California and is charged with conducting unclassified research across a wide range of scientific disciplines. For more information, see www.lbl.gov.

Q6. What is NRECA?

A6. NRECA is national service organization that represents America’s electric cooperatives, NRECA works to empower co-ops and to help ensure their long-term success.

Q7. Will Powder River Energy know the answers I provide in the survey?

A7. Individuals’ names and/or the names of the company/organization will be kept anonymous and will not be associated with the information they provide.

Q8. How did you get my contact information?

A8. We are conducting this research on behalf of Powder River Energy, who provided your contact information for this study.

Q9. Who can I talk to at Powder River Energy to confirm that this study is legitimate?

A9A. Residential and small/medium business customers can email NRECA at marketresearch@nreca.coop.

A9B. Large non-residential customers can email NRECA at marketresearch@nreca.coop.

Q10. Is there an incentive for participating?

No financial incentives are planned for this survey effort.

Q13. Is this study approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB)?

A13. This study has been approved by the LBNL's IRB (Pro00023369). If you have questions about your legal rights as a participant in the survey, please contact the LBNL Human Subjects Committee (harc@lbl.gov; (510) 486-5399).

Q14. Who can participate in this study?

A14A. Residential customers must:

- be 18 years old or older
- have lived in Powder River Energy's service territory for two years or more (it is okay if they have moved within the service territory during that time)
- be aware of, or responsible for, your home's electricity bills, and
- not be an LBNL or Federal government employee.

A14B. Non-residential businesses must:

- have operated/managed the business in Powder River Energy's service territory for two years or more (it is okay if their business has moved within the service territory during that time),
- have received electricity from Powder River Energy for two years or more, and
- be aware of, or responsible for, the organization's electricity bills.

Q15. How long does the survey take?

A15A. The residential survey will take about 10 to 15 minutes.

A15B. The small/medium non-residential survey will take about 15 to 20 minutes.

A15C. The large non-residential survey will take about 20 to 30 minutes.

Q16. How do you protect my privacy?

A16. The research team will take steps to minimize the risk that others could access your private or sensitive information. This includes removing sensitive information such as your name and email address before the researchers analyze the survey answers. Your information will be anonymized, and no private information will be shared beyond the research team.

This study has been approved by LBNL's IRB (Pro00023369). If you have questions about your legal rights as a survey participant, please contact the LBNL Human Subjects Committee (harc@lbl.gov; 1-510-486-5399). If you have any questions, please email NRECA at marketresearch@nreca.coop.

Q17. Who will see my answers?

A17. Only the study team members will see your answers. Individuals' names and/or the name of the company/organization will be kept anonymous and will not be associated with the information they provide.

Q18. What are the benefits of this study?

A18. This study will help researchers understand how much Powder River Energy customers value their electricity service during outages and how valuable it is to customers to avoid outages in the future. Completing this survey also provides you with an opportunity to plan your response should you experience an outage in the future.

Q19. How will the information from this study be stored?

A19. All data will be scrubbed for confidential information and anonymized before being transmitted to LBNL and RI.

Q20. Whom should I contact if I have any questions or concerns about the survey?

A20. If you have any questions, please email NRECA at marketresearch@nreca.coop.

Q21. How long will the study last?

A21A. The residential survey will remain open for about 2-3 weeks or until the desired number of responses has been received.

A21B. The non-residential survey will remain open for about 3-10 weeks or until the desired number of responses have been received.

Q22. How does the study work?

A22A. Residential customers: In this study, you will be asked for basic information about your household and the status of several items related to power outages, such as how many members are in your household and whether you own a backup generator. Next, you will be asked questions about hypothetical power outages that last for different lengths of time and have different impacts. These questions include asking you to estimate how much money those power outages could cost you and how much you would be willing to pay to avoid them.

A22B. Non-residential customers: In this study, you will be asked for basic information about your business, including your business's operations and the status of several items related to power outages, such as the number of employees and whether your business has a backup generator. Next, you will be asked questions about hypothetical power outages that last for different amounts of time, affect different numbers of customers, and have different impacts. These questions include asking you to estimate how much money those power outages could cost your business.