

EWEB TESTIMONY GUIDE - FALL 2026

Testimony Info

EWEB public meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. Public testimony can be given in person or over the phone. Public input: any EWEB topic can be addressed. We recommend you write out your testimony in advance. **EWEB gives up to three minutes for public comment, which is about 300-400 words typed.** Find more information on their website [here](#).

When: First Tuesday of the month, 5:30 PM; Public comment begins around 6:05 PM

- August 4, 2026
- September 8, 2026
- October 6, 2026
- November 3, 2026
- December 1, 2026

Where: 4200 Roosevelt Blvd., Eugene

Meeting Agenda [HERE](#)

Testify

- **In-Person *best option if you are able*** (at the EWEB Roosevelt Operations Center located at 4200 Roosevelt Blvd.) - No advance sign-up necessary. Sign-up forms available upon arrival.
- **By Telephone** - Complete the [Sign up to Speak](#) web form. Requests to speak by phone can be submitted any time, but **no later than 2:00 p.m.** on the day of the board meeting. Speakers will be contacted with instructions for calling into the meeting.
- **Written Testimony** - [Submit Written Testimony](#) via web form. Comments received by 2:00 p.m. will be provided to the Board in advance of the meeting; comments received after 2:00 p.m. may not be received by Commissioners until after the meeting has occurred. **Written comments will not be read during the meeting.**

Tips for Testifying

- When testifying, it's good to address the council formally, starting testimony with:
 - “Board President Hairston, and EWEB Commissioners... Thank you for providing this opportunity for testimony. My name is [NAME] and I am a resident in Ward [Ward #]...”
- Remember to always end your testimony with a final thank you.
- Look presentable and present yourself professionally.
- At the beginning of your testimony, reference any special qualifications or life experiences that you have that might make your words more compelling (ie “I am a teacher at a 4j school” “I am a grandparent” etc.)
- Don't try to cram too much information into your testimony!

- Tell personal stories that relate to the issue or your firsthand experience with climate change.
 - What was your experience like during the heatwave? Did you experience an energy burden? Have you had trouble accessing or even hearing about subsidies? Do you have respiratory problems exacerbated by the consumption of gas in buildings?

Talking Points:

Topline:

EWEB must take measures to modernize its rate design in order to protect residential customers and small businesses from rising costs, while incentivizing energy efficiency and conservation.

Addressing energy costs and establishing progressive rate design is a matter of redistributing the costs of energy generation and distribution, in order to ensure that large corporate energy users are paying their fair share, while residential customers are protected from rapidly increasing costs.

Data Centers:

In light of the recent boom in data center construction in Oregon, EWEB should protect customers from rate increases from data center development by increasing the [existing large general electric service customers](#), as was recently done by Portland General Electric in response to the State Legislature's 2025 POWER Act.

- **Climate Impacts:**
 - Data centers require huge amounts of electricity, and run back up diesel generators, both of which would undermine the City of Eugene's climate recovery ordinance goals to reduce community wide fossil fuel use by 50% by 2030
- **Huge Energy Demand:**
 - Conventional data centers have an average of 25 megawatts of power capacity, whereas the average house draws around 1.5 kilowatts on the grid at any given time. One conventional data center consumes the same amount of electricity to power roughly 20,000 homes.
 - Hyperscale data center energy consumption is around 100 megawatts, or the equivalent of 80,000 homes; the largest data center energy consumption is around 5,000 megawatts¹.
 - Power consumption in Oregon is already up 30% from 2010, most of that increase in the past few years. AI computing data centers are expected to double the state's energy consumption over the next five years, while upgrades to the

¹ International Energy Agency, 2024. Data centre electricity consumption in household electricity consumption equivalents, 2024.
<https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics/charts/data-centre-electricity-consumption-in-household-electricity-consumption-equivalents-2024>

electrical grid are happening at a much slower rate, increasing the risk of rolling blackouts during peak surges at the state level.²

- **Air Pollution:**

- Data centers rely on back-up power generators to keep up with power demands during power outages or during high-peak consumption times. In a span of just 5 years, diesel generator use tripled nationally because of data center development.³ Diesel exhaust has a tremendous impact on human health contributing to illnesses such as asthma, heart disease, lung disease- particularly in young children, elderly adults, or those who already have pre-existing health concerns.⁴

- **Noise Pollution:**

- Residents of existing data centers across the county are raising concerns about constant noise pollution from these operations.
- The cooling systems, fans, and diesel generators all contribute to a constant hum that is carried hundreds of meters away from these data centers.
- Communities around existing data centers have reported “headaches, vertigo, nausea, sleep disturbances, ear pain and hypertension” from nearby data centers.⁵

- **Water Quality Impacts:**

- Approximately 57% of all data centers use potable water to cool their servers, and up to 90% of that water is pulled from the surrounding watersheds (from lakes, rivers, or aquifers).⁶ Data centers in Loudoun County, Virginia, collectively used over 900 million gallons of water in 2023 alone.⁷
- Water which has been used to cool data centers has been linked to increased concentration of water contaminants such as nitrates and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), as well as thermal pollution by introducing warmer water back into the watershed.⁸

² Mike Rogoway, The Oregonian.. ‘A 9-gigawatt problem’: Northwest’s soaring energy demand, supply constraints, could spark new power crisis. (Jan. 11, 2026).
<https://www.oregonlive.com/business/2026/01/a-9-gigawatt-problem-northwests-soaring-energy-demand-supply-constraints-could-spark-new-power-crisis.html&subscribed=auth0%7C6a6cfc10f8257b5fa6c07b85>

³ Bianca Giacobone, Latitude Media. *The data center boom is a diesel generator boom.* (Mar. 9, 2026).
<https://www.latitudemedia.com/news/the-data-center-boom-is-a-diesel-generator-boom/>

⁴ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Learn about impacts of diesel exhaust and the diesel emissions reduction act. (2026)
<https://www.epa.gov/dera/learn-about-impacts-diesel-exhaust-and-diesel-emissions-reduction-act>

⁵ Environmental and Energy Study Institute. Communities are raising noise pollution concerns about data centers. (2026).
<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/communities-are-raising-noise-pollution-concernsabouth-data-centers>

⁶ University of Georgia. *Understanding how data centers impact surface and ground waters.* (2026).
<https://fieldreport.caes.uga.edu/publications/TP121/how-data-centers-impact-surface-and-ground-waters/>

⁷ Environmental and Energy Study Institute. *Data Centers and Water Consumption.* (2025).
<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-centers-and-water-consumption>

⁸ Kim, K., Data Center Cooling Water Discharge: Assessing Environmental Transparency and Information Gaps. *UC Law Environmental Journal*, 32(2), 177. (2026).

- 99.9% of Lane County residents are currently experiencing drought conditions, and a new data center would take much needed water away from homes and businesses.⁹

With respect to limited income programs (i.e., bill support programs), I recommend that EWEB:

- Extend self-verification to the monthly affordability program;
- Ensure bill credit amounts are at least in alignment with the IOUs;
- Auto-enroll LIHEAP and OEAP recipients;
- Develop an arrearage program;
- Provide a bill credit based on energy burden.

EWEB Is Falling Behind Other Utilities in the State on Programs to Protect Ratepayers:

- EWEB has long identified limited-income customer support as a foundational priority and provided assistance through bill credits and efficiency incentives.
- As energy prices continue to rise (along with other everyday items), EWEB must focus on affordability for all customers, but especially for its limited-income customers who are disproportionately affected by these rising costs.
- Rising energy costs, in tandem with the rapidly increasing cost of living, can lead low and moderate income households to experience high energy burden, and force working families to choose between buying groceries, paying rent, and paying their energy bills.
- EWEB's current suite of limited-income assistance programs provides a strong foundation for future programs, but, as the Commissioners and staff have already identified, those programs must be expanded to provide adequate ongoing financial support while also optimizing those households' energy efficiency potential.
- Through a combined focus on financial assistance and conservation, EWEB can support its most vulnerable communities while also benefiting the utility as a whole through decreased aggregate and peak energy demand.
- EWEB must establish new affordability programs that are at least in alignment with investor owned utilities in Oregon, if not exceeding them. For example, Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, and NW Natural all offer limited-income bill assistance programs that provide monthly bill credits for customers with income at or below 60% of the state median income.

To not fall short of the level of service set by the investor-owned utilities, EWEB should:

- **Extend self-verification to the monthly affordability program.**
 - The monthly bill credit program with self-verification will be more accessible and have a lower administrative burden. A post-enrollment verification of no more than 3% of enrolled participants is the industry standard. If a participant does not

⁹ NOAA. National Integrated Drought Information System. *Drought conditions for Lane County. (2026).*
<https://www.drought.gov/states/oregon/county/Lane>

respond to the verification request, they should be dropped without penalty and allowed to re-enroll upon verification of income.

- **Ensure bill credit amounts are at least in alignment with the IOUs.**
 - The investor-owned utilities in Oregon provide bill discounts that range from an 80-85% discount for customers earning less than 15% of state median income to a 15-20% discount for those earning 60% state median income, depending on the utility.
- **Auto-enroll LIHEAP and OEAP recipients.**
 - The investor-owned utilities all auto-enroll recipients of public programs for low income households such as LIHEAP and OEAP. These customers are also exempt from post-enrollment verification.
- **Develop an arrearage program.**
 - Arrearage programs are less consistent across utilities, but are generally more robust than EWEB's one-time \$280 bill credit. Seattle City Light's program may provide a good example for EWEB. Its Emergency Bill Assistance Program provides a credit to customers who have received an urgent or final shutoff notice or have a past due balance of \$250 or more of up to \$710 per year, and up to \$1420 for households that have a minor resident.
- **Bill credit based on energy burden.**
 - In addition, as a progressive municipal utility, EWEB has the opportunity to exceed the standard for bill credits set by the investor owned utilities. A highly impactful way EWEB could do this is by setting bill credits based on energy burden by using mechanisms like percentage of income payment plan programs, which look at the energy burden on the household rather than a percentage discount on the bill.