



Seattle
Public
Utilities

VISUAL BRAND GUIDELINES



WELCOME

This style guideline, created by the Communications Team at Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), helps employees to convey our organization's story in a clear and consistent way. These guidelines ensure that SPU's written and visual communication materials are standard across all internal and external platforms. In these guidelines you will find information on the correct usage of the SPU logo and various communications templates.

Employees should refer to these guidelines when developing communication materials, as well as share the style guide with consultants who design or print materials on behalf of SPU.

If you have any questions about these guidelines or using the templates or logo, please contact your Branch Communications Liaison.

OUR PERSONALITY

MISSION

Seattle Public Utilities provides efficient and forward-looking utility services that keep Seattle the best place to live and work for everyone.

Elevator Pitch

Seattle Public Utilities provides essential water; drainage and wastewater; and garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste services.

We strive to be an efficient and forward-looking utility, providing excellent services and stewarding our natural resources.

We are community-centered, committed to equitable service for all customers.

SPU's Community-Centered Goals

- Improve affordability and accountability
- Achieve excellence in core service delivery
- Build equity through strong and inclusive partnerships
- Enhance public health and the environment

The SPU Promise

- We provide efficient and forward-looking utility services that keep Seattle the best place to live and work for everyone.
- We help customers see how their utility dollars sustain and improve their quality of life.
- We solve problems at the source.
- We foster a culture focused on our customers, safety, innovation, inclusion, and value for money.

What is a Community-Centered Utility?

As a community-centered utility, SPU is committed to equitable service for all customers. We strive to listen to and collaborate with the communities we serve, investing in them and partnering with them on the design and implementation of our programs to reflect community values.

WRITING GUIDANCE

As a public agency that interacts directly with the community, it's important that our communications are accessible and engaging. While much of our work is technical and nuanced, the language we use to communicate with the public doesn't need to be.

This section provides guidance on tone of voice and the use of plain language to help us clearly communicate our work.

Tone

We are community-centered utility and our tone reflects that: approachable, inclusive, and engaging. It depends on the audience, but in general we can use a more casual, familiar tone. For example, apart from proper names, we can refer to ourselves and our customers personally ("we," "our," "you," "they," "your family," etc.)

- Instead of this: "With storm season approaching, customers are asked to clear leaves and other debris from their local storm drains to prevent ponding and localized flooding."
- Say this: Storm season is on the way! Help us prevent street flooding by raking leaves out of storm drains.

Utility Terms

Consistency of commonly-used terms is important. Here is a list of common utility-related terms in their correct forms:

- **force main** (not forcemain)
- **garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste** (not solid waste)
- **litter** (not trash)
- **nightwork** (not night work)
- **sewer main** (not sewermain)
- **stormwater** (not storm water)
- **water main** (not watermain)

Plain Language Tips

1. Organize information clearly

- Put the most important information first
- Group related elements together
- Use descriptive headings for each topic

2. Use familiar words

- Avoid jargon and industry terms
Ex: Use "Garbage, recycling, and food and yard waste" instead of "solid waste"
- Limit the use of acronyms
- Define acronyms and abbreviations
Ex: Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)

3. Be Concise

- Don't say in 25 words what you can say in 10

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

Street Addresses *

- No punctuation is necessary for direction abbreviations
Ex: NW 53rd, not N.W. 53rd
- Add punctuation when using address abbreviations
Ex: Ravenna Ave. NE

Dates

- Do not put st, nd, rd, or th after a date. Ex: May 12, not Dec. 12th
- Abbreviate months August through February when used with a date; do not abbreviate months March through July.
Ex: Dec. 15, not December 15

Times

- Use a.m. and p.m.
- Place a space between the number and a.m. or p.m.. Ex: 10 a.m.
- Do not use :00. Ex: 10 a.m., not 10:00 a.m.
- Place an en dash (-) between times when showing time range
- If a time range is entirely in the morning or evening, use a.m. or p.m. only once. Ex: 10-11:30 a.m.

Phone Numbers *

- Area codes go in parentheses
Ex: (206) 684-8056, not 206-684-8056

URLs

- Do not include http:// in a url
Ex: www.seattle.gov/util, not <http://www.seattle.gov/util>
- Exception: if a url begins with https:// it should be included)

● **Bulleted Lists ***

- Generally, no need for a period at the end of a bulleted item
- The exception is if the point is made up of multiple sentences. In which case, use a period. (See what we did there?)

● **Oxford Comma**

- Use it! The oxford comma, a.k.a the serial comma, clarifies lists and prevents misunderstandings.

Examples:

Without: I'd like to thank my parents, Mayor Durkan and Mami Hara.

With: I'd like to thank my parents, Mayor Durkan, and Mami Hara.

● **City vs. city**

- Capitalize City when you are referring to the City of Seattle as an organization
- Do not capitalize city if you are referring to Seattle as a place or municipality

Ex: The City and partner organizations are working together to reach affordability goals.

Ex: Traffic in the city is worse than ever.

● **Utility vs. utility**

- Capitalize Utility when you are referring specifically to SPU as an organization

Ex: SPU has worked nationally with climate researchers to assess how climate change may affect the systems it manages. The Utility focuses on both climate adaptation and greenhouse gas mitigation.

AP Style: In most circumstances, SPU relies on The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook guidelines for capitalization, hyphenation, abbreviation and other usage questions.

*There are some exceptions to our use of AP Style, identified in this section by an asterisk.

LOGO

Spacing

A buffer space of one-half the width of the medallion should be retained around the department logo at all time.

Size

The logo should not be displayed smaller than 1/4" in height, as measured by the medallion.

Multiple Departments

When multiple departments are involved in an event or program, the Seattle logo should be used in place of multiple department logos. Interdepartmental programming should use the Seattle logo as well.



VIOLATIONS



DO NOT stretch.



DO NOT squeeze.



DO NOT change color of text.



DO NOT change background color of the medallion.



DO NOT invert or use any color other than white for the face.



DO NOT animate or embellish the medallion.



DO NOT place over distracting backgrounds.

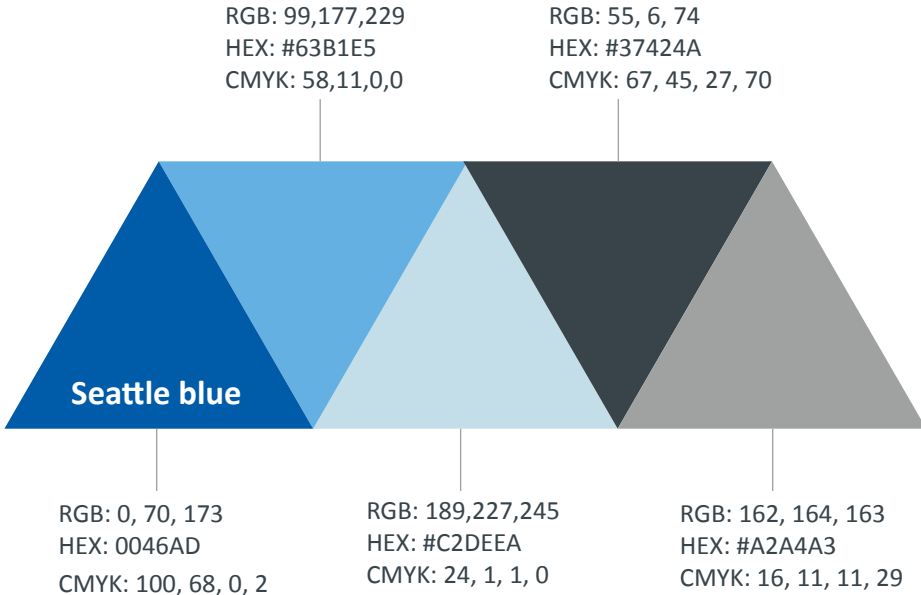


DO NOT add words.

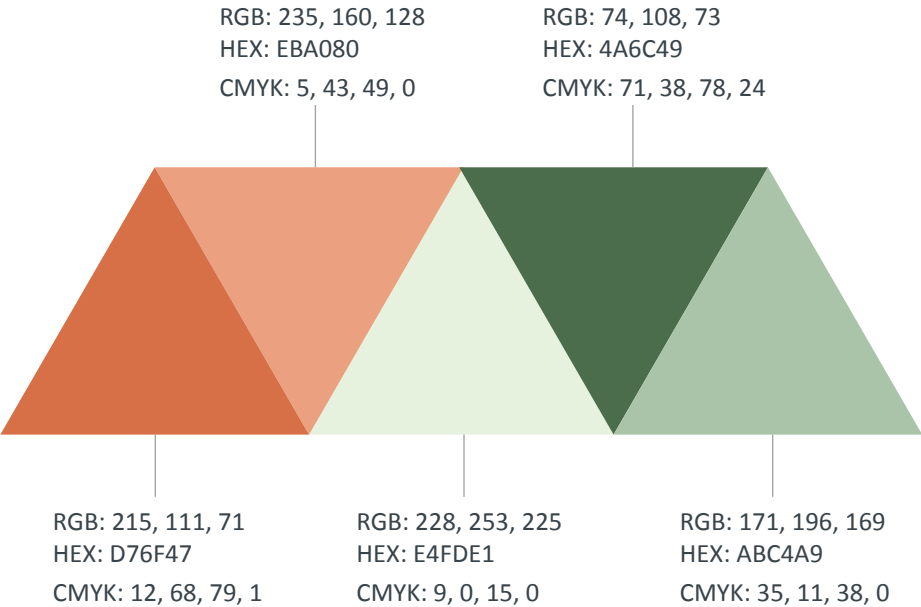
COLORS

Seattle Blue
Seattle Blue is the City of Seattle’s primary brand color. You will find this blue in many of the templates on this site. Designers can create Seattle Blue using the formulas below. Generally, the RGB color build should be used for on-screen use, and the CMYK color build should be used for printed versions.

PRIMARY



SECONDARY



TYPOGRAPHY

Seattle Text

Seattle Text is the official font of the City of Seattle, and it can also be used for publications as a heading. There are four versions: Regular, **Bold**, *Italic*, and ***Bold Italic***. Consistent use of the brand fonts will help grow their recognition.

Seattle Text has been installed on all City computers. Since Seattle Text is not widely available outside of the City, it should not be used in documents that will be shared in their native format. PDF documents should outline fonts to ensure font integrity is maintained.

Example:

Headline Here

Subheads Here

Body here body here body here
Body here body here body here

- Always left align headlines and subheads
- Ratio of headline to subheads is 1.6: 1
- Example: 24: 15 or 48: 30
- Only use Seattle Text for headers. Use Arial if not available

Headline: Seattle Text, Bold, Seattle Blue, Capitalized

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

0123456789

Subheads: Seattle Text, Regular, Capitalized

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

0123456789

Body: Calibri, regular, bold, or italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

0123456789

Alternate: Arial, regular, bold, or italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

0123456789

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is a powerful tool in visual storytelling. Images can effectively convey our values and missions and help us better connect with our audience. We encourage you to use images featuring SPU customers, staff, and our brand logo, and images set in the Seattle area or Pacific Northwest. This technique provides a greater level of authenticity than stock photography.

You can find an SPU image bank on the [Communication Resources SharePoint site](#). If you need specific photos that aren't displayed in the image bank, please contact us for assistance.

Photo Credit

When necessary, make sure to include a caption with Photo Credit (i.e. "Photo Credit: Photographer Name")

When using photography, there are some things to take into consideration:

Feeling

The images should create a positive and environment friendly vibe.

Resolution

Use high quality images if possible. And think about where the images will be displayed — smaller images should have less details than larger ones.

Diversity

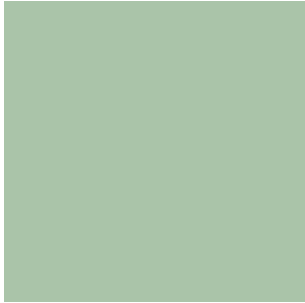
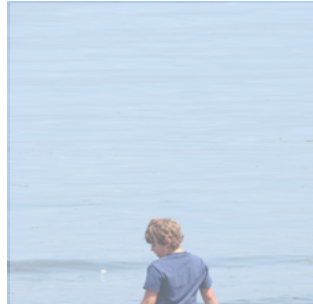
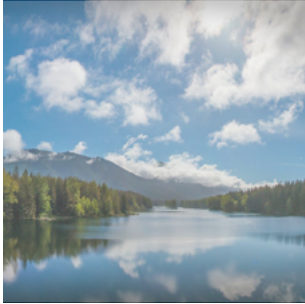
People in the images should be diverse in terms of gender, race, age, etc.

Contrast

All images and text need to have a high contrast with the background.

Brand

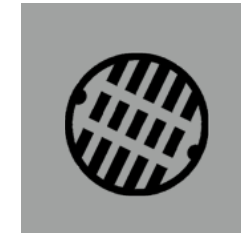
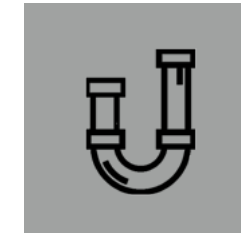
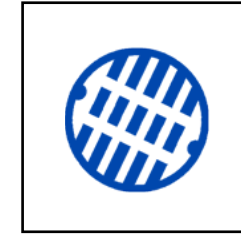
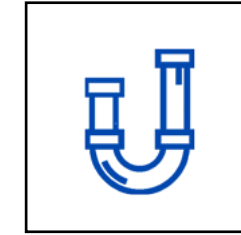
The images should not show the logo or name of other brands.



ICONS

These icons represent our water, solid waste, and drainage and wastewater line of business. There are three colors available to use. Please use them with relevant content and place them with a high contrast background.

You can find the icon files on the [Communication Resources SharePoint site](#).



APPLICATION



Postcard

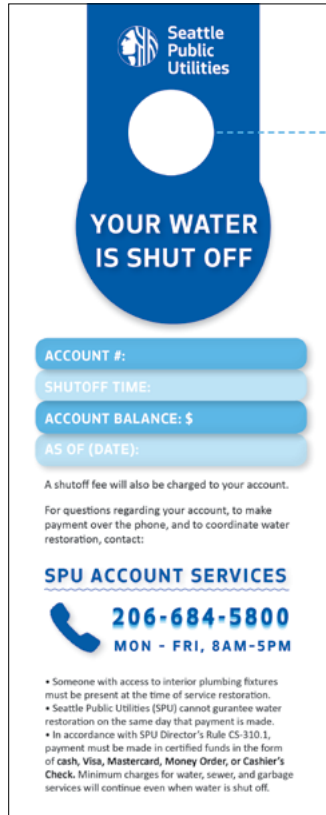


Business card & letterhead

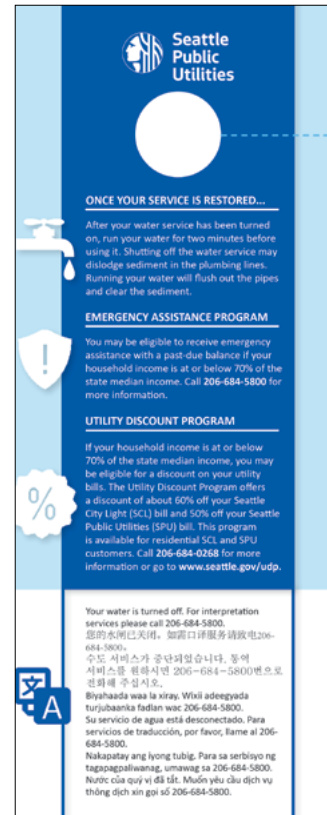


Greeting card

APPLICATION



Door hanger



Trifold mailer



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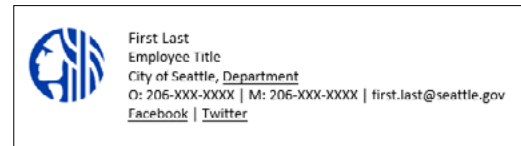


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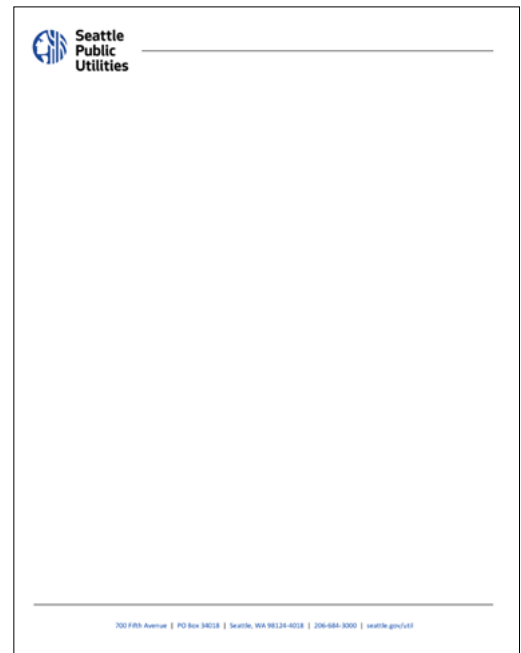
TEMPLATES



SPU one-pager template

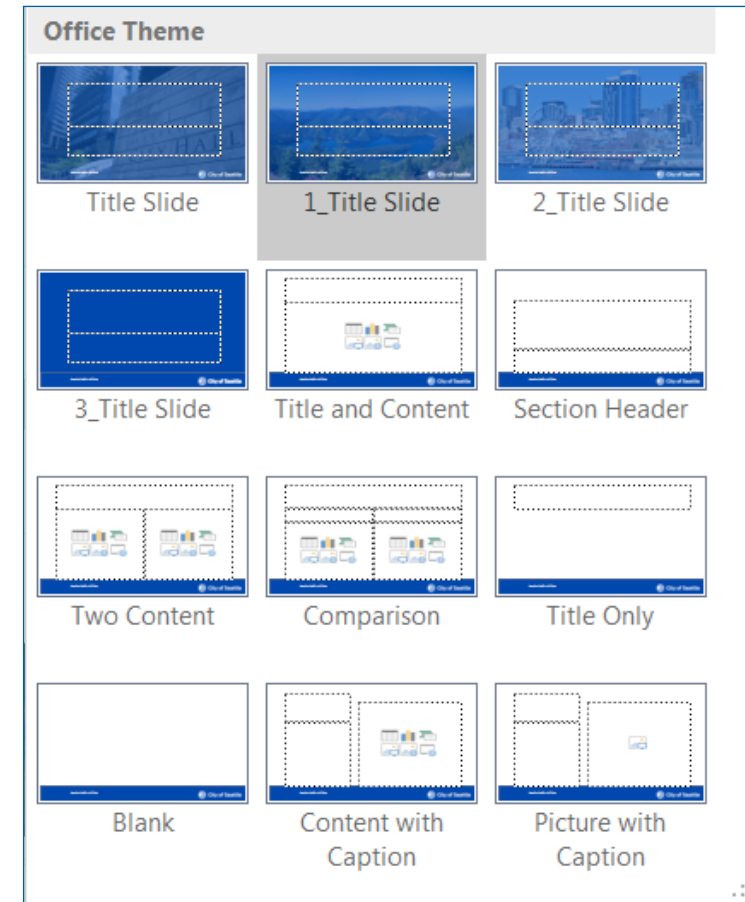
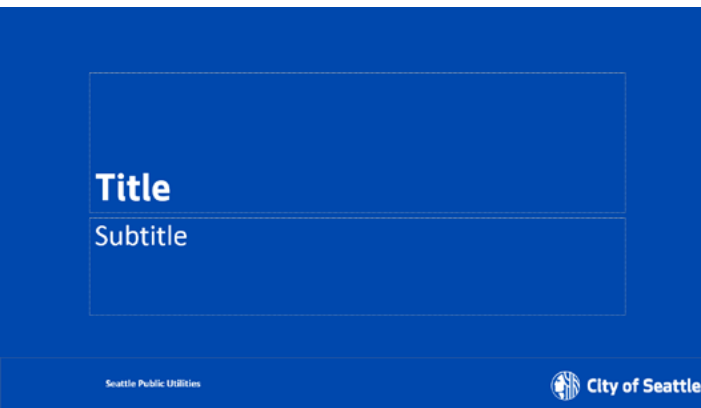
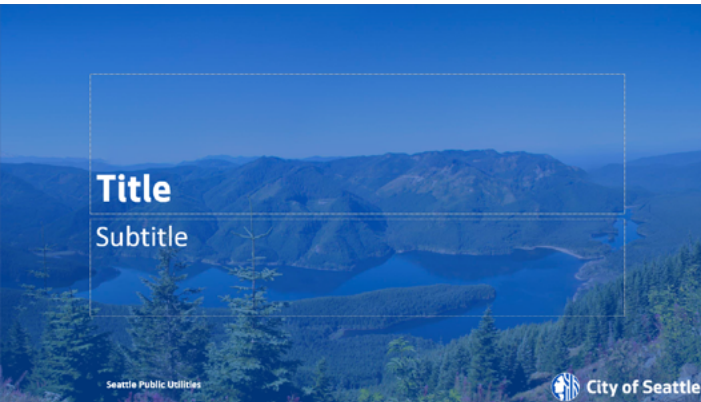


SPU email signature template



SPU letterhead template

Welcome to download SPU templates on the [Communication Resources SharePoint site](#).



SPU powerpoint template

There are four different title slides (See left) for you to choose. Feel free to select the one that fits your audience. You can download the powerpoint template on the [Communication Resources SharePoint site](#).

How to find different slide templates in powerpoint?

- In the “**Insert**” tab on the top, click “**New Slide**” .
- Select the layout template that fits your needs from the drop-down menu (See above).

THANK YOU

If you have any questions about these guidelines or using the templates or logo, please contact Ellen Pepin-Cato at Ellen.Pepin-Cato@seattle.gov.

