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SAMISH ISLAND, Wash. — A Samish Island couple believes a Puget Sound Energy microgrid built near their property line violates noise ordinances and has forced them to put plans for their dream home on hold.

Zac Small and Kathleen Maloney bought property on Samish Island in 2019, envisioning it as their "happy place." Four years later, Puget Sound Energy built a microgrid next to their land to power an adjacent fire station and three homes during power outages.

The couple says the unit's noisy cooling fans run intermittently throughout the day and night, violating Skagit County's noise ordinance.

"It sounds like a little mini jet engine," Small said.

"We moved out here to get some peace and quiet, have a little bit of acreage. And we get worse noise than we do in the city," Maloney said.

The couple told KING 5 they were given no advance notice about the project.

"There was no opportunity to ask questions or communicate in any way about what to expect here," Small said.

A PSE-commissioned noise study recommended building a 14-by-18-foot wall to block the sound. That recommendation was made in October 2025, but construction has not begun.

A PSE spokesperson said the wall option could take months or even years to design, permit and construct, adding, "We have installed improvements and are actively pursuing additional upgrades to the HVAC to reduce the noise. This has taken longer than anticipated due to unforeseen delays but is a priority to resolve. We are committed to being a good neighbor."

In the meantime, the couple says they have put plans to build their dream home on hold.

"I've spent a lot of time working toward this goal and to have it interrupted like this is very disappointing," Small said.