



Power Lines

A monthly newsletter from Columbia River People's Utility District

January 2009

Board Approves \$30.1 Million Budget for 2009 No Rate Increases Planned This Year

At their December 16th meeting, the PUD's Board of Directors approved a \$30.1 million budget for 2009 - a decrease of 5.4% from 2008. The budget included these major goals:

- Keep electric rates stable
- Maintain core operations and services to customers
- Increase cash reserves for future power supply opportunities, capital projects and to mitigate future rate impacts

Decrease in Revenues Expected

The budget includes a projected 8% decrease in revenues from industrial customers resulting from the closure of Boise Veneer and a recently announced reduction in operations at the Boise paper mill in St. Helens. Although the PUD does not serve the paper mill, reduced operations there are forecast to have a cascading affect on other PUD customers and on the local economy.

Core Operations & Services Funded

The PUD will maintain full funding for core operations and services, including system maintenance and improvements, tree trimming, energy efficiency programs, and customer service functions.

"Our customers have high expectations for a safe, reliable electric system and excellent customer service," said PUD General Manager Kevin P. Owens. "We are pleased to be able to meet their expectations without raising rates."

Customers Assist with Budget Process

The PUD convenes a Budget Committee each fall to advise the board on the proposed budget. This year's committee included representatives from residential, business, governmental, industrial, senior and low income customer classes. The committee met twice in November to review and discuss the budget.

"Receiving input from customers on the budget process helps to keep us focused on what is important to them," said PUD Board President Dick Simpson. "The Budget Committee's efforts are greatly appreciated."



System improvements, like this 2008 project to upgrade a section of line on Heath Road near Rainier, help ensure that we can provide safe, reliable service.



PUD Energy Services Supervisor Tim Lammers Honored as APEM Energy Manager of the Year

Energy Services Supervisor Tim Lammers has been chosen as the 2008 Energy Manager of the Year for Electric Utilities by the Oregon Association of Professional Energy Managers (APEM).

Oregon APEM is a membership based organization in Oregon and SW Washington representing private companies, utilities, federal, state and local government, school districts, hospitals, universities, engineering, consulting, architecture firms and other energy management professionals.

"We are very fortunate to have Tim here at the PUD," said General Manager Kevin Owens.

PUD, BPA Sign 20 Year Power Purchase Agreement

Columbia River PUD has signed a new 20-year power purchase agreement with its wholesale power provider, Bonneville Power Administration. The contract guarantees preference access to power sold by BPA and will provide rate stability for PUD customers through the year 2028.

"This contract is for our children and grandchildren," said PUD General Manager Kevin Owens. "It offers a significant

hedge against rising energy prices in the future. Most importantly, it guarantees that our core power supply is clean and renewable."

BPA has been the PUD's sole power provider since the PUD began providing electric service in 1984. The PUD's first 20-year power supply contract with BPA was the cornerstone of the PUD's successful bond issuance that allowed the PUD to purchase the electric system from Portland General Electric. PUD customers today save \$6.5 million a year because the PUD's rates are, on average, 30% lower than PGE's.

"That is \$6.5 million staying in our local community rather than being sent to Portland," said Owens.



BPA Account Executive Theresa Rockwood and PUD General Manager Kevin Owens sign the BPA contract. Back row, from left: PUD Board Members Dave Baker, Carol Everman, Dick Simpson and Darrel Purkerson, BPA Administrator Steve Wright, PUD Community & Government Relations Manager Valarie Koss, and BPA Senior Vice President of Power Services Paul Norman.

Stay Away From Downed Power Lines!

During the winter, harsh weather and slick roads can result in fallen trees or car crashes that tear down power lines. In the event you encounter a downed line, remember these important safety tips to avoid serious injury:

- If you see a downed power line, stay away, keep all other people away and call the PUD immediately at (503) 397-1844 to report it.
- Never touch a downed power line. Always assume that any power line is live and dangerous.
- Never cut trees or limbs that are touching the power lines.
- Always keep at least 50 feet away from any downed line. The ground around a live power line may be electrified as well, and is dangerous.
- Never drive over a downed power line, or under lines that are sagging over the roadway.
- Don't touch cars, debris or fallen branches that are near downed lines. Anything touching a power line is just as dangerous as the power line itself.
- If a power line falls on your car, stay inside and wait for help. If you must leave the vehicle because it is on fire, or in danger of catching on fire, open the door and without touching the outside of the car, jump away. Do not touch the car and the ground at the same time - this creates a path for the electricity to flow through your body. Land with your feet together and shuffle away from the car.



PUD crews are specially trained to remove trees or limbs that have fallen across power lines. Never do this yourself - call us!

PUD's Annual Audit Underway

Each year an independent auditing firm reviews the PUD's accounting records to ensure that we are conducting business in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. As part of the audit, customer records and billing activity are reviewed.

If you have questions about how your bill is calculated, individual line items on your bill, your billing history or your energy usage, please contact Customer Accounts at (503) 397-0590 or custsvc@crpud.org.

If you feel that your bill was calculated incorrectly or that your account balance is not correct please write to our auditors and describe the error. Include a copy of your billing statement, if available. Send your letter to: Kenneth Kuhns & Co., 570 Liberty Street SE, Suite 210, Salem, OR 97301