

January 2017 Newsletter

## PUD Employees Raise Over \$11K for United Way

The PUD's employees have once again shown their generous spirit during the Season of Giving. The group donated \$11,285 to United Way of Columbia County.

The December campaign's fund raisers included ornament-making, a chili cook-off, a cookie bake-off, a raffle, and a flying (paper) pig.



## Start 2017 with a New Heat Pump

A new ductless heat pump can help improve year-round comfort in your home and reduce energy costs. Gene in Scappoose installed one recently and has been happy with the results.

"I'm happy with the machine. It does circulate (heated/cooled air) through the house pretty dang good," he said.

Call our Energy Experts at (503) 366-5470 to see if a ductless heat pump is right for you.



## Tips for Keeping Winter Bills Low

The average December temperature was about 15 degrees lower than in November. This cold weather can cause a spike in energy use.

Use these tips to stay comfortable while cutting energy waste to keep bills low.

1. **Turn your thermostat down a few degrees.** Set it a degree or two cooler while you're home, and lower it several degrees when you're away or asleep. On average, every degree you lower your thermostat reduces your heating bill about 2%.
2. **Save while you shower.** Up to 2/3 of your water heating bill can come from showering. Use an energy-saving shower head and take shorter showers to lower your water heating costs.
3. **Save while you wash.** Only wash full loads of laundry and dishes. Use cold water when possible.
4. **Let the sunshine in.** Open blinds, drapes, and curtains when the sun is shining through windows.
5. **Keep the heat in.** Close blinds, drapes, and curtains when the sun isn't hitting the windows.
6. **Turn off appliances and electronics.** Turn off your lights, TVs, stereos, computers, and other appliances when not actively using them.
7. **Stop wasting electricity.** Unplug items like cell phone chargers, coffee makers, DVD players, and microwaves when you are away or when they aren't in use. They draw energy even when not being used.
8. **Use energy-efficient lights.** Replace burned out bulbs with LEDs, which use less energy than incandescent bulbs and last longer.

For more tips on lowering winter energy bills, call our Energy Experts at (503) 366-5470, email [experts@crpud.org](mailto:experts@crpud.org), or visit us online at [www.crpud.net/coldweather](http://www.crpud.net/coldweather).

# PUD Board Adopts 2017 Budget

**Our Board of Directors has approved a \$35.2 million Operating and Capital Budget for 2017.** It is available at [www.crpud.net/2017budget](http://www.crpud.net/2017budget).

"This budget was developed to ensure we can continue to serve customers reliably and affordably, and that we are ready to serve the growth that is expected in our service area," said Interim General Manager John Nguyen.

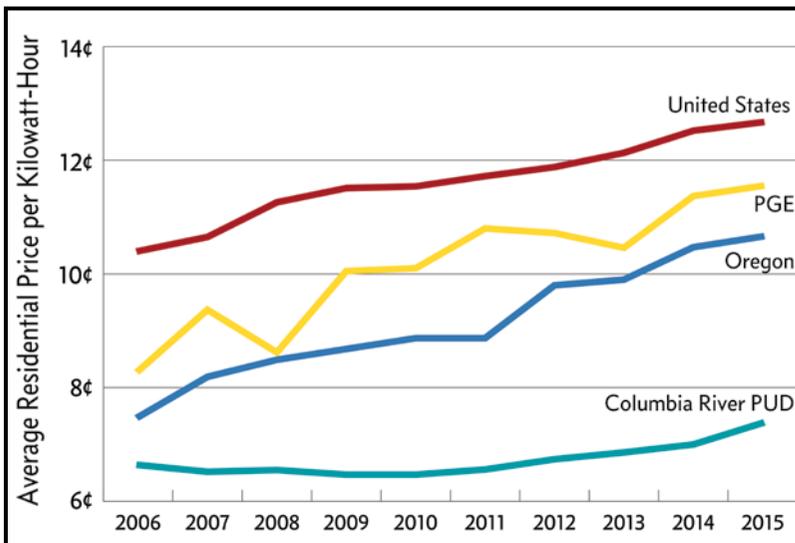
Electric rates will remain stable at least through September 2017, but may change in October 2017, when new wholesale power prices take effect. The PUD's current residential rates, which were set in October 2015, are 31% lower than the statewide average and 43% less than the national average.

## New substation groundwork and other capital improvements planned

Net power costs are \$19.4 million, making up 55% of expenditures. Controllable expenses of \$11.5 million are 32% of expenditures. The largest capital expense in the budget is the land purchase for a new substation in Scappoose, budgeted at \$300,000.

**The budget was set with input from the PUD Board, PUD staff, and a customer Budget Advisory Committee.** That committee includes representatives from the PUD's residential, commercial, and industrial customer classes, as well as advocates for low-income and senior citizens.

"I think the staff has done a wonderful job putting together this budget," said Budget Advisory Committee Member Bill Eagle. "It's clear and understandable, and the public will support it."



*PUD residential customers saved an average of \$408 each in 2015 compared with average electric rates in Oregon. The total savings for all PUD residential customers was about \$6.6 million!*



## Annual PUD Audit Underway

**Each year an independent auditor reviews our accounting records.** This audit ensures that we are conducting business in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and that controls are in place to safeguard the PUD's assets. 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 our Customer Accounts department at **(503) 397-0590** or [info@crpud.org](mailto:info@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. Please 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

Office: 64001 Columbia River Hwy, Deer Island, OR 97054

Mailing: PO Box 1193, St. Helens, OR 97051 • (503) 397-1844

Digital: [www.crpud.net](http://www.crpud.net) • [facebook.com/crpud](https://www.facebook.com/crpud) • [twitter.com/crpudUtility](https://twitter.com/crpudUtility)

**COLUMBIA RIVER**  
**PUD**  
A COMMUNITY-OWNED UTILITY