



Skamania County PUD's News From the Wire

**Aug.-Sept.
2008
Edition**

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**PUD #1 of
Skamania County**

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**Board of
Commissioners**

Meeting Schedule

9 a.m.

Monday 08/18/07

Tuesday 09/02/07

Monday 09/15/07

Monday 10/06/07

Monday 10/20/07

An Efficiency Improvement The PUD Hires a Tree Crew

One of the larger expenses in operating an electric utility system, such as your PUD's, is power line right-of-way maintenance; i.e., tree trimming. We have been spending substantial money in each of the last few years on a tree-trimming contractor. This is a significant increase from the 2001 level of spending, and now a big part of our annual expense budget.

While beautiful providers of shade and wildlife habitat, trees simply don't mix with power lines very well. When trees and power lines get together, short circuits appear, fuses blow, lights go out, and in the worst case, fires can and do start. This incompatibility drives your PUD to cut, trim, and remove trees that interfere with our power lines to help keep the lights on.

After reviewing the cost and effectiveness of the contractor efforts, your elected Commission has approved starting an in-house tree crew composed of four regular full-time employees. We have purchased a tree-trimming-style bucket truck and a new chipper. We will soon purchase a small dump truck. We have hired two experienced Journeymen Tree Trimmers, and will soon hire a third, along with a Groundman / Brush Dragger. This new crew should be up and running by August.

You may see the new tree crew working on a power line near you. If so, please say 'Hello'. They too work for you, and you pay their wages. The Foreman of the crew is Pat Hartley of Stevenson, and the first Trimmer hired is Gary Gast of Carson. The other two crew members are unknown as of this writing. These new PUD employees are as happy to be with the PUD as I am to have them. I really believe we will get more trees cut for every dollar spent. Hence, the efficiency improvement.

Please also note, that to gain even more efficiency, to reduce traffic in the PUD shop at 8:00am and 4:30pm each day, and to make the trucks and chipper available to our mechanic for maintenance, the tree crew will work 4-10 hr days, Monday through Thursday. They will try to not wake you too early in the morning when the chain saws and chipper start up.

I am excited to see this new crew get started. It is one more way in which your PUD is trying to keep the lights on and the power bill down.

Bob Wittenberg, Manager for the District

Auto Pay is Now Available To Residential & Business Accounts

How does it work? If you sign up for Auto Pay, you will receive your bills as usual. The bill will still show the amount due and the payment due date. Then on the day after the due date the amount due will be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. You won't have to fuss with stamps, checks or remembering to get on line with your bank to pay your bill. Simple!

What are the Advantages?

- Convenience—Your bill is paid automatically.
- Security—You no longer have to worry about lost checks.
- Freedom—Your bill is paid on time even when you're out of town.

How do I Join?

Fill out the attached authorization form. Don't forget to include a voided blank check for checking withdrawal with your authorization form. For savings withdrawal, remember to submit your nine digit bank routing number.

Note: Unlike Auto Pay when you initiate to pay your bill on line, your bank sends the PUD a check (which can take up to two weeks) and the PUD manually processes the payment. Auto Pay is faster & more efficient.



Special Thank You to our College Summer Helpers

- Monica Midland, Matt Rockowski and Troy Stump worked with the electric department crew.
- Chelsea Pyle assisted in the office.

They all did a wonderful job. The PUD is proud to be able to offer a College Student Worker Program to local college students.

Safety Alert Keep Signs Off Power Poles

Nails in power poles can injure linemen and could cause their climbing spikes to slip, leading to a fall.

That's why hanging signs on power poles in Washington State is against the law (RCW 70.54.090).

Thank you for helping with this safety issue.

AUTO PAY FORM ENCLOSED

News From the Wire

is an informational newsletter published by
Skamania County PUD for our customers.
Reader comments are welcome.

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