

## Skamania County PUD's

# News From the Wire

**Aug--Sept  
2013  
Edition**

Published Bi-Monthly

**PUD #1 of  
Skamania County**

**PO Box 500  
1492 Wind River  
Hwy.  
Carson WA 98610**

**Office Hours:**

**8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.**

[www.skamaniapud.com](http://www.skamaniapud.com)

Phone: 509-427-5126  
Toll Free: 800-922-5329  
Fax: 509-427-8416

**Board of  
Commissioners**

**Meeting Schedule**

**9 a.m.**

Monday 08/19/13

Tuesday 09/03/13  
Monday 09/16/13

Monday 10/07/13  
Monday 10/21/13

You may recall in the last newsletter I responded to one customer question of how your electric bill is influenced by the growth of wind generation in the region. The short answer was the influence of regional wind generation on your power bill is quite small. In some aspects regional wind generation works to drive the PUD's energy costs up. One such regional issue is called "Over Supply."

**What is Over Supply?** You may know that there is no electrical energy storage capacity in the power system. So, at any instant in time electrical energy going into the system (generation) must equal energy being consumed (load) to keep the power system stable. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is our regional balancing authority; meaning, BPA has the responsibility to adjust regional generation so that it always matches the regional load plus energy that is being exported out of the region (typically to California or Canada). Our regional electrical power supply is largely weather dependent. Hydro power generation is highest during spring run-off. Also the wind blows the most and load is typically low in the springtime. Occasionally in the spring when the wind blows hard, run-off is high and loads are small, more power is generated by hydro and wind combined than is being consumed by load – Over Supply.

**So what action is required** to balance generation and load during an Over Supply event? Since load cannot be increased by power system operators, the only option is to reduce generation. The seemingly obvious solution is to spill more water over the dams and generate less hydro power. The problem with this solution is environmental; more spill drives more nitrogen from the air into the water. Too much dissolved nitrogen in the water is bad for fish so there is a limit set on how much water can be spilled over the dams. The rest of the river flow has to be run through the turbines contributing to the Over Supply problem. Another action to reduce generation is to disconnect some of the wind farms from the power grid during an Over Supply event. This is the only option BPA has to mitigate Over Supply but this prevents a wind farm from generating power at a time when the wind is blowing the most. Wind farms rely on a government subsidy called Production Tax Credits (PTC). If the wind farm is not producing during a windy time, it is not earning PTC's when it could be and is effectively losing money. The wind farms then insist that someone should reimburse them for this loss during Over Supply and in today's political climate wind energy carries a lot of clout.

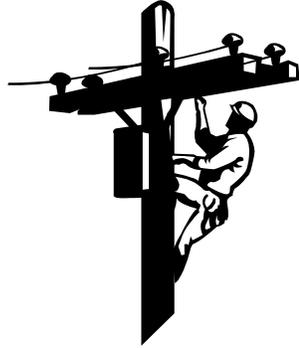
**The Over Supply debate** is ongoing in the region. Who should bear the burden for the wind farm's lost revenue? Should the wind farms since they effectively created the problem? Should the government/taxpayer pay PTC's to a wind farm that is not producing but could be if not for the Over Supply problem? Should the transmission system users (rate payers) cover the cost of lost revenue? Recommendations have been given by all stakeholders and regulating agencies have entered the debate but as of yet the problem is unresolved. Any portion of the cost that is transferred to the rate payer means you pay more on your power bill.

**In context,** Over Supply is a short duration spring-time phenomena unique to our region. It represents the conflict of new green power (wind) with old green power (hydro). Who pays is yet to be determined.

Brent Bischoff  
General Manager

## PLEASE KEEP SIGNS OFF POWER POLES

PUD #1 of Skamania County appreciates your cooperation in keeping our power poles clear of nails and staples. Nails in power poles can injure linemen and could cause their climbing spikes to slip, leading to a fall. That is why hanging signs on power poles in Washington State is against the law (RCW 70.54.090).



Thank you again for helping with this safety issue.

## Call Before You Dig: 1-800-424-5555



Whether you are planning a major construction project or landscaping your yard, it is important to call for a line locate at least 48 hours before digging or excavating.

When calling, be prepared to give your name, phone number, service location, nearest cross road and any special instructions. The Northwest Utility Notification Center will then contact the proper utilities.

“Call Before You Dig” is a free service that can prevent dangerous and costly accidents.

### Skamania PUD Welcomes Melanie Sharp, Project Manager



Melanie Sharp, a Washington State native, holds a Master’s Degree in Environmental Sciences and Resources from Portland State University. She spent the last ten years working for Normandeau Associates, focused on project permitting and management, natural resource impact assessment, fisheries, and GIS applications. She also worked for the

City of Vancouver and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Melanie has lived in Skamania County for over a decade and enjoys exploring the Gorge with her husband and twin daughters.

### Update Your Contact Information

It is important for your well-being that the PUD has your correct physical address and phone number. When an emergency such as a fire, or an issue such as a power outage arises, our crew needs to be able to quickly locate your premises. Please check to ensure that your physical address, which is printed on the lower portion of your PUD billing statement, matches with your 911 address. If the address is printed incorrectly, please call us to update it.

What about your phone number? If the PUD does not have a correct phone number for you, we are unable to notify you of planned power outages and other important matters. Please call to make sure this information is correct, or write your phone number on your payment ticket so we can update your files.

#### *News From the Wire*

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

#### **PUD Commissioners:**

District 3..... Clyde Leach, President  
509-493-3380  
District 2..... Curt Esch, Vice President  
509-427-8591  
District 1..... Dennis Gale, Secretary  
360-837-3862

1492 Wind River Hwy  
P.O. Box 500  
Carson WA 98610

[www.skamaniapud.com](http://www.skamaniapud.com)

Phone: 509-427-5126  
Toll free: 800-922-5329  
Fax: 509-427-8416

*Printed by The Optimist Printers*