



Skamania County PUD's

News From the Wire

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**PUD #1 of
Skamania County**

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Hwy.
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8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

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**Board of
Commissioners**

Meeting Schedule

9 a.m.

Monday 10/21/13

Monday 11/04/13

Monday 11/18/13

Monday 12/02/13

Monday 12/16/13

The year before I came to the PUD, I was teaching an Energy Systems course to Sr. level electrical engineering students at WSU Vancouver. One of the topics taught was Renewable Energy. I was surprised to discover that these engineering students, nearly ready to graduate with Bachelor of Science degrees, were not thinking critically (like engineers should) when we studied renewable energy. Instead they had accepted the view of renewable energy commonly portrayed in main stream media. They failed to question that perspective or to dig deeper.

Let me ask some questions that I asked of my students. Why do wind farms continue to require government subsidies in order for investors to continue to build them? Is an electric vehicle really a zero emission means of transportation? If solar energy is the next great renewable energy source, why don't you have a solar array on your roof today? One-liners won't do these questions justice but let me give you a flavor of what you will find if you dig deeper into and think more critically about renewable energy.

Some realities of renewable energy are: *Wind* - Production wind turbines are very expensive to manufacture relative to the amount of energy they will produce in their mechanical lifetime. Wind farms require expensive power transmission lines to move the energy they generate from the wind farms to the cities. When government subsidies for wind are in question, new wind farm construction grinds to a halt. *All-electric vehicles* - Electricity is not the energy source of an electric vehicle. Electricity is merely the means to transfer the actual energy source that propels the vehicle. In 2011 about 68% of the US electricity was generated from fossil fuels. So, all-electric vehicles are primarily powered by fossil fuel. *Solar* - Solar power does not yet stand as an economically self-reliant energy source; one reason for this is solar panels are extremely energy intensive to manufacture. Using today's technology, solar panels require about as much energy to manufacture as they will produce in their useful lifetime.

Does this mean renewable energy sources will never provide the majority of our energy needs? No! But forcing a transition to these sources faster than the scientists and engineers overcome the technical challenges has the potential to create economic and energy difficulties that we are beginning to experience already. Our present petroleum based energy infrastructure took a century to build; can we expect to make it obsolete in only a couple of decades? So when our governor presses his renewable energy policies, I hope we will not just get excited about the advertised environmental benefits but also seriously consider the economic realities and technical hurdles facing today's renewable energy sector.

Brent Bischoff, General Manager

The Many Ways to Pay Your Bill

The PUD accepts payments in a variety of different methods.
Here are a few of the ways you can pay your bill with us:

- Your bill may be paid with cash or check at our **office**, or at any of our three **payment stations** located throughout the county:
 - Washougal River Mercantile**
4232 Washougal River Rd
Washougal, WA 98671
360-837-3470
 - North Bonneville City Hall**
214 CBD Dr.
North Bonneville, 98639
509-427-8182
 - Riverview Community Bank** (Stevenson branch only)
225 SW Second St.
Stevenson, WA 98648
509-427-5603
- Visa, Mastercard or Discover (debit or credit) can be used over the phone or in our office
- You may mail us a check to apply toward your bill (see front page for our mailing address)
- There is a deposit box on the west side of our office for payments made after hours
- You may use ACH (autopay) through your checking or savings account, or with Visa, Mastercard or Discover. Please contact us if you are interested in this payment method, and we will send you our ACH form.
- Some of our customers use online banking through their personal bank to submit payment to us. If you use this payment method, please be aware that it takes 6-10 days for us to receive the payment, even though you see it come out of your bank account immediately. Please do not use this payment method if you are paying at the last minute— your account will not be considered paid until we have received the payment.

****THANK YOU TO OUR VALUED CUSTOMERS
WE APPRECIATE YOU!!****

Skamania PUD Welcomes Troy Stump, Meter Reader



After screening more than 80 applicants for the Meter Reader vacancy, Troy Stump of Carson, WA was selected to fill the position. Troy is a graduate of Stevenson High School and Vocational Outside Line Training Academy (VOLTA). He has been working for BNSF Railway for the past 3 years as a Journeyman Signaller. Troy worked for the PUD as a Utility Helper during the summer of 2008 following his high school graduation. Since that time his career goal has been to come to work full-time at the PUD. Long term, he wants to be a Journeyman Lineman here. Troy is very excited about his new job at the PUD. The PUD is confident that he will be an outstanding addition to our team.

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

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