



Skamania County PUD's *News From the Wire*

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**PUD #1 of
Skamania County**

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**Board of
Commissioners**

Meeting Schedule

9 a.m.

Monday	10/19/09
Monday	11/02/09
Monday	11/16/09
Monday	12/07/09
Monday	12/21/09

Good News From Your PUD

September 23rd, 2009

IT'S BUDGET TIME: This is the time when budgets for next year are developed. This process brings a thorough review of all aspects and systems of the PUD. Here is a brief report.

ELECTRIC SYSTEM: Today I share some good news. Although BPA will increase the cost of power to the PUD by 7.5% on October 1st, 2009, your PUD will absorb this cost, and not raise your rates for the foreseeable future.

Wholesale power costs make up over one-half of the cost of running your PUD electric system. Couple this with increased costs in regulatory compliance, materials, labor, etc., and it is easy to understand why most electric utilities are raising rates. For example, Ferry County PUD just announced a 10% rate increase.

Skamania PUD Commissioners and staff have continued searching for efficiencies and improved tools, methods, and materials to increase the reliability of service and keep costs down. Today we can share the fruit of this labor: The electric system does not need a rate increase. The reserves for emergencies, for renewal and replacements, and for system improvements are satisfactory. The financial position is strong. We continue to update circuit breakers, transformers, underground cables. And our staff is second to none.

UNDERWOOD WATER: Your Underwood Water System serves roughly 340 residences in the Southeast corner of the County. The water source is Galligan and Shaddox Springs on the side hill above State Road 14 between tunnels 3 and 4.

The big news for these customer-owners is two-fold. First, this system does not appear to need a rate increase at this time. Secondly, the 'fire protection reservoir' staff has been trying to get built, is about to become a construction project. Site work should start next week. A contract is signed, and completion is expected in June of 2010. It has been a long process to get to this point, and we continue to thank our elected State Senator and State Representatives, Sen. Honeyford, Reps. Chandler, Taylor, and former Rep. Newhouse for their help in securing some state funding.

CARSON WATER: Carson Water is much more challenging. The PUD has drilled three wells, none of which produce water in sufficient quantity. The Carson Reservoir is 32 years old and in need of maintenance. The Bear Creek water transmission line is 62 years old and in need of maintenance. Many steel pipes, some 4" and some 6", are in need of replacement. And the financial reserves are too low to do all this. PUD staff is recommending a significant rate increase. This will be a tough pill to swallow for your PUD Commission. But, a tougher pill is not properly maintaining your assets. Hence, your Commissioners are taking a very long look at Carson Water.

I hope this brief update is of some value to you.

Bob Wittenberg, Manager for the PUD



OPERATION WARM HEART

Operation Warm Heart (OWH) is a program that helps families keep their lights on in the cold winter months. Last year, you, the community donated \$8,827.98 which served 52 different families. We want to take this opportunity to thank each person who donated to Operation Warm Heart.

Contributions to OWH are tax deductible and are very much appreciated by those who receive the gift.

If you would like to donate to Operation Warm Heart as a recurring contribution on each billing, please complete the form enclosed in your billing. We are now able to offer many options for those wishing to donate on a regular basis, such as:

- Add an amount to each utility bill (\$1, \$2, \$3, up to any amount), the preauthorized amount will go to the Operation Warmheart Fund.
- "Round Up" - Each utility bill will be rounded to the nearest whole dollar, with the difference going into the Operation Warm Heart

Fund.

GIFT CERTIFICATES ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Here's how it works: Stop by or call the PUD office and make a payment on a customer's account. We will give you an attractive gift certificate that you can present to that special person, the payment will show up as a credit on their next bill. If you would like, we can send the gift certificate for you anonymously.

Give this deLIGHTful gift and make someone's heart & home a little brighter.

CONSIDER A BACK-UP GENERATOR BUT BE CAREFUL HOW YOU USE IT.

If you use a generator, please be sure it is installed properly to ensure your safety and the safety of our linemen. For more information, call us for a free brochure on "Standby Electric Generators & Their Dangers of Back Feed" - This brochure also includes information on portable and permanent generators and things to consider when looking for a generator.

REMEMBER SAFETY FIRST

News From the Wire

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

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