



Owner's Manual

PUD Board Members Provide Leadership in Region

Two NWCPUD board members will provide leadership on power issues affecting the Northwest region in 2008.

Public Power Council

Board president Bill Ward will continue his work on the 21-member executive committee of the Public Power Council. PPC represents 114 consumer-owned utilities in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana.

Public utilities formed PPC in 1966 to ensure that the interests of Bonneville Power Administration's (BPA) preference customers would be adequately represented in the changing energy environment.

Pacific Northwest energy consumers face many challenges in 2008. PPC will be one of the leaders addressing public power issues as they relate to the region and its preference customers of the Bonneville Power Administration.

PPC Executive Director, Scott Corwin says, "With Bill's background, expertise and dedication to customers, he has been a key player on the PPC Executive Committee and a big help since I came on board last year."

In 2008, PPC will address several topics including the resolution of the Residential Exchange issue, Regional Dialogue issues, long-term power contracts, wind integration issues, Renewable Portfolio Standards, fish and biological issues on the Columbia and Snake Rivers, legisla-

tion for dam breaching of lower Snake River dams, and global climate change legislation.

"All these issues are of major importance to the region and its rate payers," says Ward. "They will have an impact on the stability of power rates in the near and long-term future. It will take the participation of Congress, state and local governments, and private citizens to resolve these complex issues."

Ward encourages rate payers to get involved in determining what their future energy resources will look like and at what cost.

"2008 will be a challenging year for all of us," says Ward. "We will have 20 years to live with some of the decisions we make."

Oregon PUD Association

NWCPUD board vice president Howard Gonser has been elected president of the Oregon PUD Association for 2008.

The Oregon PUD Association (OPUDA) is an alliance of Oregon People's Utility Districts devoted to serving its customers and others who are interested in consumer ownership of their utility. Among other advocacy roles, OPUDA represents the six Oregon PUDs in legislative and related matters.

"Leading the Oregon PUD Association in the coming year will be a challenge as the Oregon legislature will meet for its first annual session in history beginning February 2008," says Gonser.

He indicated that on the positive side, this will allow legislators better involvement in state government by meeting every year instead of having an 18-month break between sessions.

From a not-for-profit utility standpoint, however, it will mean contin-

ued education of legislative representatives to help them better understand those issues which could have a negative impact on PUD customers.

"At each legislative session, there always seems to be new efforts to erode PUD local control so we're on the lookout for that, as well," says Gonser.

More Change to Come

The regional power dynamics in the Northwest will change dramatically in the next five years, more so than in the last sixty years.

As the federal-based power system is nearing its capacity and the demands for electricity continue to grow, there is a greater push by for-profit utilities such as PGE and PacifiCorp to vie to take a larger slice of the cheap power pie through legislative bills.

These utilities contend that since they serve the majority of electric consumers in Oregon, it seems logical that the majority should be able to change the rules – many times without regard to how it might negatively affect the smaller not-for-profit utilities such as PUDs, municipals and cooperatives.

As the stakes rise, it requires more effort to protect the rights to cheap electric power produced on the Columbia River system granted to the publicly-owned utilities by the Bonneville Power Act of 1939.

The NWCPUD board of directors, general manager and staff are taking a pro-active role in monitoring energy issues to ensure its customers are represented and protected as the region's energy policies are shaped for the next 20 years and beyond.

For more information about the issues affecting NWCPUD, please call our office at 296-2226.

NWCPUD Helps Others Weather the Storm

Within days after storm winds knocked out electricity to thousands of homes on the Oregon Coast last month, NWCPUD responded. A four-man PUD line crew along with three trucks were dispatched to help restore power to residential and commercial customers of Tillamook County PUD.

Crew members included Foreman Lyle Miller, Ted Rosenburg, Mike Coiner and BJ Ayres.

"We were fortunate that our local electrical system sustained very little damage during the storm," says Bill Richardson, NWCPUD operations superintendent. "Although our customers are always our top priority, when another utility sustains severe storm damage and requests our help and we can spare a crew, we go to their aid."

It is common practice among utilities to have mutual aid agreements, which allow utilities to send crews to help restore power during widespread emergency outages.

Loaned crews are under the direction of the utility that requests their help. That utility provides food and lodging for the personnel and pays their wages.

"When this type of emergency happens, it means crews work long hours – usually in adverse weather – clearing downed trees, putting up and repairing damaged poles, and stringing wire in order to restore power," Richardson says.

In the 1980s, a similar storm caused havoc along the coast and NWCPUD crews and equipment were sent to help restore power to Tillamook PUD customers then

as well.

"That was along time ago," says Richardson, "but believe it or not, we still have personnel at both utilities who remember the week our crews helped during that storm."

Paying Our Share

Northern Wasco County PUD paid over a quarter million dollars as its share of 2007 Wasco County property taxes – \$275,690 to be exact.

"The PUD's evaluation is calculated somewhat differently than it is for residents," says Jim Johnson, PUD Finance and Accounting Director. "All of the PUD's assets, which include poles, wire, substations, office and warehouse are annually evaluated by the State Department of Revenue who determines the property value that the County assesses the PUD."

In addition to county property taxes, the PUD also pays franchise taxes to the cities it serves. For 2007, the PUD paid around \$600,000 to the City of The Dalles and Dufur.

"There are some misconceptions we would like to clear up," says Johnson. "One is because our PUD is publicly owned that it is exempt from paying property taxes, and the other is the PUD is operated on taxes collected locally. Neither of these could be further from the truth."

NWCPUD's operating budget comes from revenue collected from the sale of electricity to its customers.

Rates are set locally by the PUD's board of directors who establish cost-based rates. The rate for each customer class pays the cost to serve that customer group. In this way, residential customers are not unfairly subsidizing another classification of customers, such as commercial or industrial, or vice versa.

Community Calendar

JANUARY

8

The NoteCrackers Sweet play live music for a social dance, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Mid-Columbia Senior Center. This "second Tuesday" event features danceable tunes from the '20s thru the '60s. Dancers and listeners are Free admission, donations accepted. Call 296-4788 for more information.

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Third Friday Art, food, music and more! 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., Downtown The Dalles.

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Northern Wasco County PUD Board Meeting, 6 p.m., 2345 River Road, The Dalles.

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St. Mary's Academy Family Auction Silent auction, food, games and music, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Academy, The Dalles. For more information, call 296-6004.

Non-profit community organizations are encouraged to promote events and activities that support, nurture and enhance the quality of life in communities served by Northern Wasco County PUD. To list an item in the community calendar, please call 298-3302.