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WA-18

## Manager's Message

Within Klickitat PUD, our water and wastewater department serves 16 water and wastewater systems. KPUD owns 14 of those systems in Glenwood, Lyle, Klickitat, Wishram, Rimrock Estates, Roosevelt, Ponderosa Park, the old aluminum smelter site and Bickleton. The utility also provides services to New Hope Farms, Klickitat County and the Port of Klickitat in Dallesport.

Each water and wastewater system is separate from the others. Each has its own rates and operating permit requirements, and each is accounted for separately. This is unlike the electric system that operates as one system throughout the county.

This structure creates a considerable amount of work to manage, but the rates for each of these systems is controlled by the decisions, activities and investments made in each of the communities.

Water-wastewater is a small department of six people: a coordinator, a lead operator and four certified system operators. The systems are small and remote from each other. Many of the systems need daily monitoring and adjusting. This requires each department employee to understand all the systems, their design, operation, permit requirements and idiosyncrasies. Because we do not control the inputs to the water or wastewater systems, the control systems take constant adjusting and tuning. A significant amount of travel is required to visit these systems.

Klickitat PUD is installing remote monitoring systems so we can see what is happening from the office or from cellphones while in the field. We then can reduce the number of trips. This, in turn, reduces travel time and allows operators to focus on completing maintenance or other required work. It is especially important to find these time savings because testing, monitoring and reporting requirements continue to be more stringent and take more time to complete.

We also have been steadily installing radio-read meters on a system-by-system basis for water services. Leak detection is always a challenge and focus. We have tools to help us detect major leaks quickly and provide a way for us to locate these leaks, many of which are on customers' systems. We have detected many leaks before the customer was aware of an issue.

The waste-wastewater staff cannot do it alone. They are supported by our customer service staff, our accounting and payroll staff, and purchasing and warehouse personnel. Our engineering department and electric meter shop also bring technical skills to the team.

I am proud of the work your KPUD employees do. They work every day to improve their teamwork and provide you quality service. They regularly receive awards from the Department of Ecology for exceptional performance.

Soon, we will communicate with you about 2020 water and wastewater rates and budgets, and visit the communities we serve that hold community council meetings. This process culminates in a public hearing May 26 in the Klickitat PUD commission room. I urge all of you to engage in these discussions. I look forward to talking with you.

**Jim Smith**  
**General Manager**