



When electricity came to rural America, it was "the next greatest thing."

Electricity, At Last

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When Klickitat PUD (KPUD) was formed in 1938, only townspeople had electricity. This was the main reason our citizens formed a public utility district. Once it was formed, we set out to make electricity available to everyone.

Interrupted by World War II, it was not until 1952 when everyone who wanted power had it. We were very proud of that day.

Living without electricity can be an adventure. Some people choose to be "off grid." They must like the adventure.

We take our mission seriously to bring power to all who request it. That is why it was frustrating when Mr. and Mrs. Worsham of Wishram built their house five years ago and were not able to have electricity. They could see the power poles just up the hill from their home, but red tape can be a lot harder to work than aluminum wires.

In that quarter-mile, a state highway, county road, federal land and a Columbia Gorge scenic act conspired to prevent electric service.

The Worshams and KPUD engineers worked relentlessly to find a way to make it happen. Permits, easements and special use designations needed to be obtained from Klickitat County, Washington state and multiple federal agencies. We finally got the go-ahead in late February.

Once given the green light, KPUD crews wasted no time in converging on the project. Flaggers were hired, the state highway department was notified and, finally, on Tuesday, February 26, the Worshams' electricity was delivered.

Most of us take electricity for granted. It's only when you don't have it that you really learn to appreciate it.

In a book telling the story of the electrification of rural America, electricity was described by a farmer as "the next greatest thing." This was after he finally had electricity in his house. It was, for him, second only to having God in his heart.

Tom D. Svendsen, General Manager

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