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WA-18

Public Power Week



Each year during the first week of October, we celebrate Public Power Week. Why is public power important and how does it benefit customers? My main answers are choice and input.

Your Public Utility District is governed by three commissioners who live in our communities and are elected by you—our customers—to represent you and your input. When Klickitat PUD commissioners consider electric, water and wastewater rates, or any other difficult decisions regarding the services we provide, they receive input from the community to aid in setting policies and the direction of the utility.

Your input is important. Klickitat PUD customers are encouraged to provide feedback to staff and commissioners. Public commission meetings are the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, and public comment can be made virtually or in person. It is recommended, but not required, that you contact staff in advance to be added to the agenda. Another way to provide input is to attend your local community or public service meetings when we provide updates, or to stop by KPUD offices in Goldendale and White Salmon.

This fall, we will talk about financial stability, reliability, maintenance, and electric, water and wastewater rates. I encourage you to participate as we discuss your PUD's future. Electric markets continue to impact us, especially with changing carbon legislation. Proposed legislation could increase volatility in wholesale market prices. Ever-increasing Bonneville Power Administration fish and wildlife costs—which are borne by us as customers—will impact rate discussions. These are things you should know and understand, because this legislation will impact our community.

What will the decisions be going forward?

The beauty of public power is these issues and decisions are made locally. We see you on a regular basis and we know our decisions affect our friends and our neighbors. Public power is about local control. It's why the citizens of Klickitat County voted on November 8, 1938, to form a Public Utility District.

While we cannot celebrate Public Power Week in person this year, please see page 5 of this issue of the Ruralite for more on what we are doing to celebrate the week.

Jim Smith
General Manager