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Be Sure To Protect Your Costly Electronic Equipment

The first day of school this year was quite eventful. We had a lightning storm come through Klickitat County. Lightning struck a transmission pole just outside Goldendale. The pole caught fire, and the resulting outage darkened more than half of the county. A breaker in the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) substation was damaged.

Klickitat PUD (KPUD) and BPA crews responded to the outage and had service restored to most people at 9:30 a.m. The excitement soon returned to normal once the power was restored. For most of us, anyway.

A few weeks ago, a local businessman was in the office and said the outage caused his computer to fail. Lightning can do that. His business is near the pole that was hit.

But it doesn't take a nearby lightning strike to harm your sensitive electronic equipment. Sags and surges coming over the power lines, through telephone and cable lines, or even through the ground can be just as costly. It isn't always the first one that causes the failure, either. The surge, spike or sag that causes the failure can just be the final straw that ends the life of your expensive electronics.

Protect your investment by installing a surge protector. KPUD offers a whole-house surge protector for \$4.50 a month. This device is installed on your electric meter and protects against surges from the power system.

But that isn't the total answer. The device is available for only 200-amp residential services, and it doesn't protect against sags or surges coming into your home from communication lines or through the ground.

A surge protector at the device is recommended for total protection. Some manufacturers will warrant their surge suppressors, including the equipment they protect. They may cost more than a plug-in strip, but the extra protection is definitely worth it.

I may sound a little like a salesman, but I can't stress enough the importance of being proactive in protecting your investment. Electricity is a great servant. Don't take it for granted.

Call KPUD and talk to Sharon, our Energy Services Specialist. While you are at it, ask Sharon for some advice on saving energy.

Tom D. Svendsen, General Manager

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