

Celebrating Our Tradesworkers

National Tradesworker Day is September 16; join KPUD in thanking those who help keep the utility running

A trade job is any occupation typically requiring specialized skills learned through advanced training rather than a four-year college or university. Common types of career preparation for trade jobs include vocational training at a trade school, an apprenticeship or on-the-job training.

Tradespeople are usually in the fields of building, maintenance, carpentry, plumbing, electricity and similar industries.

We would like to highlight these often unseen employees for their hard work and contributions to the utility. They each play a unique role and possess skills that make them valuable assets.

The KPUD meter shop employs five full-time wiremen: Jeremy Kerns, Jared Mooney, Craig Osborne, Darren Shattuck and Rylee Van Belle. All have completed an apprenticeship that requires a combination of 48 to 60 months of on-the-job and classroom study. These individuals install and maintain various electrical systems in commercial and industrial facilities.

These employees also perform routine maintenance and emergency repairs on field equipment. They build, test and maintain substation relay and control systems. They maintain and inspect electric meters. They perform load calculations and evaluate load variations that can affect customers or the overall system.

Sohn Kartes and Del Eldred are KPUD mechanics. They maintain and repair utility vehicles and equipment. They literally keep the utility mobilized.

Casey Scholdebrand is responsible for KPUD grounds and maintenance. In the summer, he often is outside caring for the lawn and plants. In the winter, he clears sidewalks of snow and lays de-icer. He also completes projects inside the offices, whether it is building desks and furniture,



LEFT: Operator Travis Heilman. RIGHT: Mechanics Del Eldred, left, and Sohn Kartes.



ABOVE: Buildings Maintenance Casey Scholdebrand. RIGHT: Warehouse-men Kirt O'Leary, left, and Bill Rogers. BOTTOM: Meter Readers and Field Service Reps Matt Olson, Danny Smith, and Mike Wynhoff.

repairing appliances or handling general projects.

Bill Rogers and Kirt O'Leary work in the warehouse as storekeepers/warehousemen. They organize, track and maintain inventory for all the crews. This includes everything from power poles to nuts and bolts. They are the go-to employees for shipping and receiving questions, and ensure materials are delivered and



available at job sites.

The water-wastewater operators work diligently to provide safe, reliable drinking water to nine rural water systems owned and operated by KPUD. The operators work in the field testing, treating



LEFT: Wiremen Darren Shattuck, left, Jarred Mooney and Jeremy Kerns. **CENTER:** White Salmon Field Service Representative Dan Charters. **RIGHT:** RNG Technician Pat McLagan.



and repairing the systems. They also are responsible for six wastewater treatment plants owned and operated by KPUD. This requires them to have extensive knowledge of each system. They are trained on the job and take or attend training courses that advance their certification levels.

Operators perform a variety of tasks, including collecting samples for testing, monitoring well and reservoir levels, replacing water meters, checking for leaks and doing in-house testing. The crew is comprised of Noah Halm, Cameron Keith, Rod Kiser, Michael Krause and Greg Watson.

The primary role for KPUD Meter Readers Matt Olson and Mike Wynhoff and Field Service Representatives Danny Smith and Dan Charters is collecting monthly meter reads for electric and water. However, they also report meter failures or issues such as a stopped meter or meter tampering. Field service reps also do disconnects and reconnects and are backups for electric locates.

Travis Heilman is the equipment operator, digging trenches for customer or utility work.

Dale Stelter is KPUD's journeyman tree

ABOVE LEFT: Water-Wastewater Department staff, from left, are Operator Mike Krause, Lead Operator Greg Watson, Superintendent Brandon Walter, Operator Noah Halm, Operator Cameron Keith, Operator Rod Kiser and Coordinator Sharon Blodgett. **ABOVE RIGHT:** RNG employees Daniel Bartholomew, Hart Shelden, and Mike Hauner. **FAR RIGHT:** RNG Operator Mike Ashby. **RIGHT:** Tree Journeyman Dale Stelter.



trimmer. Dale completed a two-year, 4,000-hour apprenticeship to obtain his journey-level training. He and Groundman John Tallman make up the KPUD tree crew. They help maintain KPUD rights-of-way by removing dead and dangerous trees, responding to customer problem tree calls and mulching.

The renewable natural gas facility has several skilled employees who operate and maintain the facility. They make repairs and handle routine maintenance, monitor the control room that alerts them to system issues and ensure gas output is high quality. The RNG crew is Michael Ashby, Cody Austin, Daniel Bartholomew,

Michael Hauner, Jonah Humphreys, Pat McLagan, Dale Ransom, Hart Shelden, Torrey Spaulding-Jimenez, Doug Stratthdee and Leonard Swift.

Klickitat PUD is proud to have so many skilled tradespeople contributing to the success of the utility and supports the wide variety trades career paths—from the meter shop and wireman who attended vocational school and completed apprenticeships to the water-wastewater operators and RNG operation and maintenance technicians who acquired their skills and knowledge through on-the-job training. These individuals are valuable assets to KPUD and the community. ■