Safety Samaritan Award Winners

Klickitat PUD began its Safety Samaritan recognition program following a dangerous situation in 2018. White Salmon Staking Engineer Aaron Estey was flagging for a night windstorm outage near Glenwood. An impaired driver sped past his flagging stop, and Aaron's quick action prevented a potentially fatal accident. He notified the crew ahead over the radio, and because they were aware of the approaching vehicle, they were able to get out of the car's path.

Because of this event, the PUD createdthe Safety Samaritan Award to recognize employees who go above and beyond on and off the clock.

In 2022, GIS Specialist Phillip McMillen received a Safety Samaritan Award for stopping and extinguishing several small fires along Glenwood Highway. Once he was in cell range, he called into the office for help on a larger fire he was unable to put out by himself. Had it not been for Phil, the fires could have been significantly more dangerous.

This year, KPUD awarded the Safety Samaritan Award to two worthy recipients for their quick response and call for help. Journey Lineworker Gregory Dechand stopped to assist victims of a car accident and radioed in for help.

Customer Service Field Representative Danny Smith was our second recipient for assisting at two car accidents. The first occurred while on vacation in Missouri when Danny stepped in to help provide traffic control to keep people away from the scene of a car that collided with a transformer. With his utility knowledge, he knew the transformer was potentially still energized, so he kept the driver from trying to re-enter the vehicle. Danny also got bystanders to call 911 and stayed on the scene until help arrived.
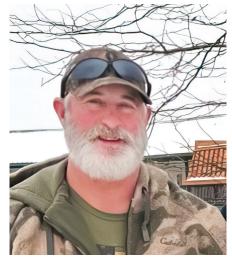
While at work, Danny was first on scene at another accident. He helped passengers get out of their vehicle and let them sit in his truck with the air conditioning on until help arrived.

The Safety Samaritan Award allows KPUD to express gratitude for our employees who go the extra mile and represent the utility with integrity. ∎

Aaron Estey

Phillip McMillen

Gregory Dechand

Danny Smith