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**www.klickitatpud.com**

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**Goldendale Office**  
1313 S. Columbus Ave.  
Goldendale, WA 98620  
509-773-5891  
800-548-8357

**White Salmon Office**  
110 NE Estes Ave.  
P.O. Box 187  
White Salmon, WA 98672  
509-493-2255  
800-548-8358



WA-18



The Newell Fire has threatened many KPUD power lines and resources.

## Words of Thanks

As I write this in late July, our county is experiencing one of the worst fires in memory. During the past few days, I couldn't help but appreciate the immense number of volunteer firefighters and all who are supporting them.

One of the things I noticed most was the selflessness of so many people. They were spending most of the day working in incredibly hot and dangerous situations, then stop on the way home to help their neighbors with everything from moving cows to evacuating animals to setting sprinklers. Last week, while my family and I were away, a friend and neighbor picked up our dog when our area was put on evacuation notice. The best in so many people shines through, and I can't help but feel proud of where I live.

I am also very, very proud of our PUD employees. Since the Newell Fire started, our employees have worked around the clock to ensure your power stays on, your water and waste water systems are running and our Renewable Natural Gas facility operates safely.

We have had staff in the field 24/7, inspecting lines in the areas near the fire, putting out burning poles and replacing damaged equipment. They deenergize lines if necessary for firefighting, but I am very pleased with how few outages we have had due to their diligence. Any outage during these times means people are without power for water, lights or air conditioning. As of the night of July 23, we have had five customers out of power for a very short time.

Our staff prewired generators at water and waste water treatment facilities near the fire area to ensure these services were not crippled if we incurred major damage to our electrical system. We shut down the RNG facility during the worst of the fires around the landfill, but it was brought back online within six hours, continuing to create revenues for customers.

We also had staff in the office and warehouse supporting field personnel, planning and guiding inspections and repairs while keeping everyone safe. I am proud of their dedication to looking after our customers. You can see it in their faces and hear it in their voices.

I am thankful most days for my community, and in times like these, I am even more so. Thank you to firefighters, KPUD employees and everyone who supports them.

**Jim Smith**  
**General Manager**