

KPUD Welcomes New Equipment Operator

Travis Heilman began his first day at Klickitat PUD (KPUD) October 1.

Travis is filling the position of equipment operator previously filled by John Moore.

Travis comes to us from Herling Construction, where he worked as an equipment operator on various projects, including the construction of the concrete pads for the wind turbines for KPUD's White Creek Wind Project.

Travis is a Goldendale High School graduate, and was born and raised in the community. After high school, he joined the Operators

Union in Tacoma. He is eager to start a new career with KPUD and recently bought a house near Goldendale. He says he is pleased to be able to work closer to home.

When Travis isn't working on his new home or behind the controls of the backhoe, he can be found hunting and fishing.

He also enjoys golf.

Travis was especially intrigued when he learned about the safety awards banquet in May, where he plans on showing off his "mad golf skills." ■



Travis Heilman

Why Is My Electric Bill So High?

This is the time of year customers notice an increase on their electric bills. Here are some things to think about before calling Klickitat PUD.

To figure out why your electric bill is higher, you need to determine what is normal. That is your base load. To find this, identify your three lowest usage months, cross off the lowest, add the remaining two together and divide by two.

Subtract this number (your base load) from the usage in question to determine the portion that may be attributed to seasonal factors of heating or cooling.

Sometimes, a simple breaker test can help you locate the culprit consuming a large portion of your load. Turn all the breakers off—this works best with two people—wait for your

meter to stop, then turn on one breaker at a time. Knowing what that breaker feeds, check the meter. Is it running slow or is it really starting to spin? If it is spinning fast, you may have found your culprit.

You may notice after a shower or two, your meter will start to spin. That is because your water heater is replenishing and heating the water just used.

Identify the cause of your increased electric bill.

1. Increased household size, new baby, guests, more time at home, holidays? More laundry, showers, baking, and lights? How many days are included in your bill? If you read your own meter, plan to read and report your read at the same time

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Community Calendar

December 1-31	Golden Art Gallery open daily, except Christmas Day for holiday shopping. Call (509) 773-5100.
December 6	"I'm Dreaming of a White Salmon," from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., sponsored by White Salmon Arts Council. Call (509) 493-4487.
December 6	Trout Lake Holiday Market, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., school multipurpose room. Call (509) 395-2294.
December 7	Christmas Bazaar at Bickleton Grange Hall.
December 7	Goldendale Community Christmas Bazaar, Goldendale High School, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call (509) 773-4393.
December 13	Candy Cane Lane Parade, Tree Lighting and Santa, downtown Goldendale.
December 12-13	Goldendale Christmas Home Tour and Gift Show. 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. December 12, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. December 13.

Electric Bill

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every month for a more consistent bill.

2. Well water pump. Problems sometimes occur and make the motor run continuously. Are you heating your well house?

3. Leaking electric hot water tank. Check to see if there is water at the base. Are both heating elements working?

4. Cold weather. If you have electric heat, you will see an increase. Using a heat pump? Below 30 degrees, the efficiency of the heat pump using resistance heating (your indoor furnace) drops quickly. At 0 degrees, the typical air-source heat pump has basically stopped producing any heat and is using only its electrical-resistance heat.

Baseboard heating is electric resistant heat, which is generally more expensive than other systems. The only way to turn off baseboards is at the breaker. One 1,500-watt space heater used 12 hours a day for one month can cost \$35.91. The same space heater on all of the time would cost \$71.82 for the month.

5. Appliance efficiency. A clothes washer that takes most of the moisture out of your clothes will force your dryer to run less time. If the washer is not working properly, you could be using more drying time. Check the dryer vent. If it is full of lint, this will increase drying time. Check the seals on your refrigerator and freezer. A bad seal will cause the appliance to run more often. Turn off your computer monitor when you walk away from it.

6. Heating water outdoors. Stock tank heaters 300 to 1,500 watt could use 216 to 1,080 kilowatt-hours a

month.

With hot tubs, remember the colder it is outside, the longer it will run to heat up. Be sure to have a good insulating cover. A floating thermal blanket along with your cover will reduce your energy requirements further.

Your neighbor has a larger house than yours, yet her bill is lower.

It is hard to compare one home's electric bills with another. Here are some factors to consider.

1. Are the homes the same size, one or two stories?

2. Do the homes have the same number of windows and window coverings?

3. Are appliances identical in both homes?

4. If in an apartment, do both have the same amount of exposed walls?

5. Are both homes insulated equally?

6. Habits. Check the number of showers, number of times the washer and dryer are used, number of hours heat is on, the temperature thermostat settings on all appliances, if the curtains are open during day and night and the number of hours the TV, computers and the stereo are on.

Here are some ways to cut home heating costs:

- Repair leaky or disconnected duct work. KPUD has a \$300 rebate for duct sealing. To qualify, you must heat your home with electricity and have the minimum required leakage. Duct sealing needs to be performed by a certified representative.

- Seal around pipes. Use foam switch plate and outlet gaskets to seal electrical penetrations on ex-

terior walls.

- Weather-strip and insulate your attic access. Add attic insulation to R-38. Insulate under floors and walls. KPUD offers rebates up to \$500 for insulating an electrically heated home.

- Weather strip doors and windows. KPUD offers rebates on window replacement with U-factors of 0.30 or lower, and sliding glass and French doors with a U-factor of 0.35 or lower in homes that heat with electricity.

- Home lighting. Switch to compact fluorescent lighting (CFLs), where possible. Use dimmer switches. Replace incandescent outdoor lighting with high pressure sodium, halogen or outdoor fluorescents.

- Clothes washing. An Energy Star clothes washer will reduce your electric and hot water consumption. KPUD offers a rebate of \$60 to \$70 on a new qualifying washer. Dry only full loads of clothes.

- Run the dishwasher when full and on energy-saver setting.

- Install a heat pump. KPUD offers an \$800 rebate for heat pump upgrades or from another electric heating source installed by a certified installer.

- Solar and net metering. If you are serious about offsetting your electric usage, you could install solar on your property and decrease your need for KPUD power. KPUD's rebate on solar is \$400 per kilowatt, up to a 3-kilowatt system.

Before you start your project, call Sharon Obnstad at (509) 773-7622 or (800) 548-8357 and ask more about KPUD's rebate program and other state incentives on solar and wind. ■