

KPUD's Friendly New Faces

Three new faces have joined the KPUD staff at the H.W. Hill Renewable Natural Gas Project. The RNG plant is state-of-the-art and requires diligent and constant maintenance and monitoring to ensure optimal output. Meet the folks working behind the scenes 24/7 keeping the system up and business moving forward.



Cody Austin was hired as a landfill gas operations and maintenance technician at the RNG plant in July.

"I complete daily routine maintenance and am training in the control room right now," he says. "I am very much enjoying my time with RNG."

Cody is a Marine Corps veteran. Before joining Klickitat PUD, he was a locomotive engineer with BNSF Railway for eight years.

Cody is married and has four children. Most of his free time is spent with them.

"I am grateful for the opportunity with Klickitat PUD, RNG and look forward to a bright future helping wherever I can," he says.



Michael Ashby was hired as a landfill gas operations and maintenance technician at the RNG plant in June.

"The position is to help keep up with maintenance as well as to combat any problems that the plant operator might encounter when they are running the plant," he says.

Michael grew up in the area, graduating from Goldendale High School. After high school, he served six years in the Army.

Michael now lives in the Tri-Cities with his family.

He and his wife, Brianna, also from Goldendale, have two children: Gunnar and Kennedy.

For the last seven years, Michael worked for the BNSF Railway as a train engineer.

"I wanted to work for a smaller, more employee-friendly company after BNSF," he says. "Being from the area, I always kept a sharp eye on the PUD openings."



Michael Hauner was hired as a landfill gas operations and maintenance technician at the RNG plant in July.

He is originally from Arlington, Oregon.

"I started my utility career with Portland General Electric at the Boardman 600-megawatt coal plant," Michael says.

His responsibilities varied from heavy equipment operator to coal yard plant operator. During plant outages, he worked as a power plant mechanic.

Coal plants throughout the region continue to be decommissioned, so when faced with the change, Mike found an opening at the RNG plant that "looked fascinating and seemed like a great fit."

Mike's background is in industrial operations and maintenance. His position with KPUD allows him to use his skills and continue to learn from veteran RNG technicians.

"I feel very fortunate to be a part of the PUD team," he says.

In his spare time, Michael enjoys fishing, leatherwork and guiding hunts.