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Power Lines



Winter 2016

Enter the 2018 Calendar Photo Contest Now

It's not too early to begin thinking about submitting your photos for the 2018 Columbia River PUD Calendar Photo Contest. We are accepting photos from now until September 8, 2017. Customers will vote for their favorite finalists next October.

We accept scenic photos of Columbia County suitable for printing at 9" tall by 12" wide. Email up to 10 entries to kbo@crpud.org, or learn more at www.crpud.net/calendar.

Photo by Rosemary Jeffrey



A Message From the Interim General Manager

As the new year approaches, we are taking the opportunity to look back on our accomplishments in 2016, and forward to what lies ahead in 2017.

We have stayed under budget in 2016 while completing several projects to ensure we can serve you reliably and affordably:

- We replaced a 54-year-old transformer at Rosehill Substation and completed routine maintenance at Tarbell Substation and St. Helens Substation.
- We installed a feeder tie from Fairgrounds Substation to St. Helens Substation.
- We replaced overhead lines along Columbia Boulevard.
- We upgraded underground primary cables at multiple locations.
- We replaced transformers on the docks of three marinas in our service area.

Additionally, we received a \$379,600 from FEMA to cover a majority of the costs from the December 2015 windstorm.

Our Energy Services department has provided \$350,733 in rebates to customers who completed energy efficiency upgrades at their homes and businesses.

Our Customer Accounts Department helped nearly 400 customers enroll in our new low-income senior discount program.

We participated in local parades and festivals, taught students about energy, and served lunches at the St. Helens Senior Center.

As we look toward 2017, we are preparing for growth in our community. We are



purchasing land for a new substation in Scappoose. This will be our ninth substation and will accommodate growth as companies and residents continue moving here.

We have several system maintenance and improvement projects planned for 2017:

- Replacing overhead power lines on Merrill Creek and McDermott Roads in Deer Island, Bennet and Hazen Roads in Warren, and Parkdale Road in Rainier.
- Replacing underground lines at Paradise Moorage, St. Helens High School, Old Bunker Hill Road, and along NE Sawyer Street in Scappoose.
- Upgrading equipment in 3 substations.

On behalf of all of us at CRPUD, I wish you a safe, happy, and prosperous 2017. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

- John Nguyen, Interim General Manager

How Our Crews Handle Restoring Power in Severe Outages

When a severe storm or serious accident causes major outages affecting large numbers of customers, our line crews start by protecting public safety and addressing any potentially life-threatening situations.

After public safety is addressed, substations take priority. "If a substation is down, our primary goal is to get that back up and running because it's going to get the most amount of people on," explains journeyman lineman Jake Feakin.

When the substations are energized, crews advance to main feeders and then distribution lines. To re-energize these lines, crews first identify the problem spot. Then they test and ground the line to ensure that there is no alternate power source.

"At that point we're able to go to work and repair the lines," Feakin says.

Once distribution lines are re-energized, crews can work on service lines following the same repair process. These lines deliver power to individual homes and businesses.

Sometimes, it takes days before our crews can begin working on service lines because they are prioritizing their stops to restore power to the largest number of people. This can cause confusion for our customers. People without power may see a PUD vehicle drive by their house without stopping.

"A lot of times people don't realize we're driving past them to get to the problem," Feakin says. "It could be that they're part of a bigger problem that we're going to fix."

Our crews often work around the clock to ensure the lights go back on as quickly as possible. Support from PUD office staff, board members, retirees, and family members helps keep them going. These groups prepare meals and coffee for delivery to our linemen so they have plenty of energy to turn the power back on.

"The hardest part is driving from one place to the other when you're riding in the vehicle. If you've got the heater on trying to dry out your gear, it gets really hard to drive," Feakin says. "If you're riding in a truck with somebody that's driving, you try to stay awake too to help that person out and talk to them. It makes a big difference. You just keep moving, keep working."



Crews replace a broken pole in Scappoose after a car crash caused a major outage.

Major Storm Dos & Don'ts from Our Line Crew

Do call and report your outage

When the lights go out, call us at (503) 397-1844 to let us know. It's also a good idea to check back every 24 hours or so.

"After a big storm or outage, two days later, someone will call in and say 'I'm still out of power.' We'll have thought everyone was back on, but they didn't want to be a bother," says lineman Jake Feakin. "They figured a neighbor called in. So they didn't call."

"There's quite a few times where we were close by and we could've gone there and turned it on real quick, but they didn't call in," adds lineman Kurt Nasshahn.

Don't drive around inspecting damage

It's human nature to be curious what effect a storm has had. Avoid the temptation and stay inside your house.

"Stay home. If we have to work around people and we're trying to get trees off the road, and cars are waiting to get through, it slows us down. Stay home," says Nasshahn.

Don't cut trees or branches on power lines

Let us do the work for you so we all stay safe. Always assume any power line is energized. Before clearing downed trees, our crews isolate the power line, test it, and ground it to make sure it's safe to work around.

"Even though we did that around the corner a quarter-mile, a lot of times they'll see us pull up and start cutting on a tree when

we just jumped out of the truck," Feakin says. "So they think, 'OK, I can just start cutting on a tree.' They don't realize that we've taken precautions prior to that."



Kurt Nasshahn, left, and Jake Feakin have a combined 24 years of experience with the PUD safely responding to outages.

Notice for Customers with Life Support Equipment or Special Needs

If someone in your home uses life support equipment, has a disability, or has other special needs, it is urgent you plan ahead to prepare for storms, outages, or other emergencies.

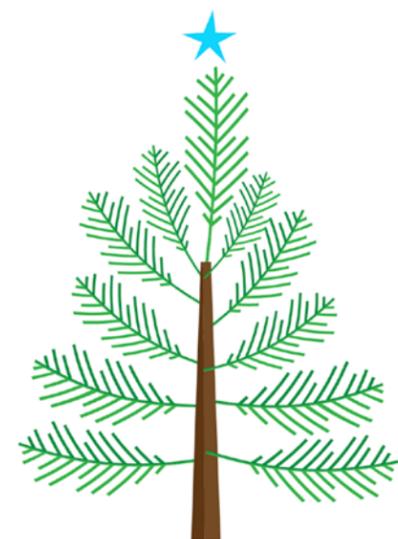
In a true emergency, always call **9-1-1**. Otherwise, report outages to **(503) 397-1844** and activate your personal support network. These steps will keep you safe and comfortable until power is restored.



We cannot provide estimates for how long an outage will last. Every outage is unique, and it's not always possible to estimate the extent of the damage or how long repairs will take. During outages, our line crews work safely to restore power to all customers as quickly as possible.

If you connect a standby generator to your home's electrical system, always use a transfer switch. A GenerLink transfer switch automatically disconnects your home from the power grid and connects it to your generator. We offer GenerLink transfer switches for \$11 per month. For details, contact our Energy Experts at **(503) 366-5470** or experts@crpud.org.

Learn more about outage preparation at www.crpud.net/prepare.



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