



Jefferson County  
Public Utility District

## CUSTOMER CONDUIT



**Meet Dan Toepper,  
Commissioner District 3**

### **EXCEPT FOR A FEW YEARS IN PORT HADLOCK,**

newly elected PUD Commissioner Dan Toepper has lived his entire life in the district of Jefferson County he now represents. Toepper was born in Port Ludlow and along with his wife Robin, lives there still.

Toepper's father worked for the Forest Service out of the Quilcene Ranger Station when Toepper was born. Toepper said he "grew up in the outdoors" and at two months old was taken by horseback up to the abandoned Tubal Cain mine on the trail his father was working on.

As a younger man, Toepper worked in the fishing and timber industries. For the last 28 years, Toepper worked in union construction as a heavy equipment operator. Toepper learned a lot about the installation of utilities during those years. He worked on fiber optic cable installation along the Hurricane Ridge road, sewer infrastructure in Sequim Bay State Park, and many other projects around Western Washington.

In September of 2018 Toepper retired to focus full time on the final stretch of his campaign. During the first half of his campaign for PUD commissioner, Dan often left home before dawn to work in the South Sound, then raced back to attend campaign events in the afternoons or evening.

Toepper credited his election win in part to the deep roots he has in the county. Toepper graduated from

Chimacum High, and many of his four children and six grandchildren have gone or are going to school in the county. Toepper also coached little league for many years, and he believes those connections have been invaluable in helping him stay informed about what residents of this county want and need. He hopes to use those same channels to keep his neighbors, friends, and family members informed about issues related to the PUD as commissioner.

Dan is proud to carry on his predecessor's role as the rural, blue collar voice of the PUD. Previous District 3 Commissioner Wayne King lives in the woods of Gardiner, owns and operates a machine shop, and is renowned for his hydraulic repair skills. He was also known for being a passionate and blunt-speaking advocate for the rural residents of Jefferson County. Toepper praised King's many achievements as commissioner, as well as his commitment to improving and advancing the PUD, something Toepper intends to continue, though with his own personal style.

In his first few months as commissioner, Toepper says he looks forward to working with the other commissioners and staff to improve the PUD's organizational stability and structure.

"The PUD is a work in progress," said Toepper. "We have moved

forward on the initial promises of local jobs and local investment. But there's been a lot of turnover at the PUD in the last five years, and we need to find more ways to keep the people we have and to attract good people to work here."

Toepper's other priorities as a new commissioner are to increase the PUD's participation in local emergency management preparations and to do what he can to keep PUD rates low for customers, though Toepper explained that doesn't mean lowering existing rates. Rather his goal is to keep the PUD efficient and proactive, with an enhanced focus on conserving power and resources to reduce expenses.

*Commissioner Toepper can be reached by email at [dtoepper@jeffpud.org](mailto:dtoepper@jeffpud.org).*

## MEETINGS/EVENTS

Regular meetings of the PUD Board of Commissioners occur monthly on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 5pm.

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*Check our website for more details or changes.*

Come see us at the  
**JCHBA Home Show**  
Blue Heron Commons  
March 2nd, 9am - 4pm

# SPACE HEATERS: COMFORT OR MENACE?

**COMFORT:** Space heaters are generally inexpensive, portable, and easy to operate. They provide heat quickly and directly. For many of our customers, space heaters are an essential part of staying warm during the winter and cooler months of the year.



If you are using a space heater to heat or supplement heat for your home, use it wisely. The US Department of Energy recommends those shopping for new electric space heaters buy UL-tested, thermostatically controlled units, with tip-over safety switches that will automatically shut off the heater if knocked over.

**MENACE:** According to the National Fire Prevention Association, space heaters account for 43% of home heating fires and 85% of associated deaths. Unvented, combustion-based space heaters have asphyxiated homeowners or led

to explosions. Portable electric space heaters plugged into overloaded outlets or circuits can lead to burning wires inside the walls of homes. Unattended heaters left too close to drapes, couches, or other household items can lead to damages or fires.

Also: never plug space heaters into power strips, they are not designed to handle the high current flow and can melt or burn. Try to leave 3 feet of clearance around space heaters and avoid operating them unattended.

## CHECK YOUR GFCI's AFTER FLICKERS OR OUTAGES



Jefferson County has experienced a number of outages over the last two months, and we're not even halfway through storm season. Even for those customers who didn't lose

power, there were flickers where the lights blinked on and off repeatedly. Outages and flickers can send short power surges through our electrical grid and can trip the breaker in GFCI-protected outlets. GFCI outlets are most often found in kitchens and bathrooms, but in some homes are also found behind refrigerators, freezers, sump-pumps, or hot-tubs. Our friends at Frederickson Electric suggested we remind folks to check their GFCI outlets after outages

or flickers, especially those that might be hidden, or connected to appliances that aren't used often. To avoid a freezer full of thawed deer or u-pick berries, or a sump-pump that fails to activate during a home flood, do a search around the home and reset any tripped GFCI breakers by pressing either the reset button, or the off button and then reset.

## LETTERS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

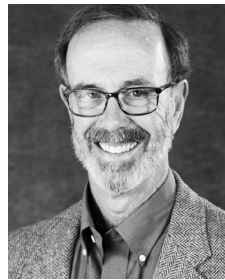


### Jeff Randall, District 1

Thank you for your support and business as a PUD customer over the past year. As 2018 draws to a close I am pleased that our PUD is in a strong financial position and that we received clean financial and accountability audits from the Washington State Auditor's Office.

Looking ahead, we will break ground in 2019 on an expansion to our PUD building at 310 Four Corners Road. If you visit this office, you will notice it is crammed to overflowing. This facility was originally built by Puget Sound Energy (PSE) to serve as a storage yard with limited quarters and office space. This expansion will allow us to consolidate our staff together for the first time since 2013 when we began electric utility service and our staff grew from about 8 to more than 40. The new larger office will allow us to sell one administrative building and end the use of a second building we currently lease in Port Hadlock. All this we plan to do for a budget of about \$4 million which will come from reserves. We will take on no additional debt. Best wishes to you and your families in the coming year!

*Commissioner Randall can be reached by email at [jrandall@jeffpud.org](mailto:jrandall@jeffpud.org)*



### Ken Collins, District 2

Why can't the PUD do more to prevent outages? If you are living in an area that has experienced a number of outages already this season, you are probably asking yourself this question. It is very frustrating to have the lights and everything else suddenly go out when the wind starts

howling. Generally speaking, there are two times when customers think about the PUD; when there's an outage and when the monthly bill arrives. Over the last few years, the PUD has spent between one half to three quarters of a million dollars each year on tree trimming. The PUD's goal is to eliminate trees that are close to transmission and distribution lines. However, wind gusts of 40 miles per hour plus will cause nearby trees to fall into power lines, even though they are not directly adjacent to them. Currently, the PUD is spending several million dollars per year replacing aging infrastructure, which is another (but less frequent) cause of outages. For PUD staff and Commissioners, it's a balancing act to allocate the right amount of resources for prevention, maintenance, operations and emergency response, and also avoid shocking\* customers when the bill arrives.

*Commissioner Collins can be reached by email at [kcollins@jeffpud.org](mailto:kcollins@jeffpud.org)*

*\*pun intended*





**Jefferson County**  
Public Utility District

**Public Power,  
Local Services,  
Community  
Connections.**

**February 2019  
Newsletter**



**L-r: Jeff Gordon, Brian Van Ness, Colton Worley, Gerrit Van Otten**

## LOCALLY GROWN: THE CHS CLASS OF 2008 AT THE PUD

Chimacum grows a lot of things, including, apparently, PUD employees. Nearly a dozen PUD staff members and one commissioner attended or graduated from Chimacum schools. Four employees even graduated in the same year.

The Class of 2008 includes SCADA Apprentice Colton Worley, Journeyman Lineman Brian Van Ness, Customer Service Coordinator Jeff Gordon and Warehouse Storekeeper Gerrit Van Otten.

Two of the four, Worley and Van Ness, have known each other since grade school. They were some of the earliest hires in the electrical department, joining the PUD in 2013. Van Otten and Gordon first met in freshman year of high school. They joined the PUD in 2014. All four have since moved up.

Worley was originally hired to

work in the warehouse, but soon moved over to work on the PUD's Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition System (SCADA), which is both the brain and central nervous system of the PUD's electrical grid. Worley monitors and controls the system, and helps to build and expand it. He also helps manage metering and substations.

Because he can monitor the electrical grid from his office at the PUD, Worley helps dispatch for the line crew during outages. In some cases Worley can reroute power from his office remotely, other times he directs the crew to manually close and open switches in the field, restoring power to an area affected by an outage before repairs are done.

As a lineman, Van Ness is in communication with Worley to coordinate work restoring the

electrical grid. Van Ness was the only one of the four who knew he wanted to work in the utility industry after high school.

"Pretty much every task associated with the job sounded good to me," said Van Ness. "I get to climb and operate equipment." Van Ness was one of the first apprentice lineman hired in 2013 and achieved his journeyman status in 2017.

As Storekeeper, Van Otten makes sure Van Ness has the supplies he needs to do the work in the field keeping the power and lights on. Van Otten was originally hired as a Customer Service Representative...

*continued on back*

## ROUND UP FOR THE RAINY DAY FUND CHECK THE BOX ON THE FRONT OF YOUR BILL

Winter is not over and many residents still need help affording basic utility services. A lot of us take power and water for granted, but even short times without make clear how dependent we are. Help ensure some of our most struggling citizens can afford access to light, heat, and clean water. If you haven't already, consider checking the box on your bill to round up for the Rainy Day fund. Or consider making a larger monthly or one time donation.



## MEETINGS/EVENTS

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**Kevin Streett**, Acting General Manager

# MEET JAKE SWAN, OUR NEW STAKING ENGINEER



As soon as it was clear that predecessor, grew up in the Potelco before coming to the utility world. Swan's father PUD at the start of 2019. Jake Swan was a top candidate for the open Staking Engineer spot at the PUD, his future works for Portland General Electric (PGE) as a repair to Jefferson PUD because he co-workers began referring to him as Jake 2.0. dispatch supervisor. His uncle was looking to settle down and cousin also work for PGE, in smaller, more picturesque town with better quality of life

Swan was hired to replace as project managers. town with better quality of life Jake Medley, and in addition Swan has worked in the than he experienced stuck in to sharing a first name utility world since 2016. He traffic between job sites in the and title, Swan, like his was a project manager at Portland Metropolitan Area.

## WHO'S ON FIRST? PRIORITIZING POWER RESTORATION

On Thursday, December 20th, 2018, Jefferson County was hit by one of the most damaging storms the PUD has experienced since taking over electrical service in 2013.

Though less than 6,000 customers experienced outages (out of over 19,000) and all but ~1000 had their power restored that same day or by the next morning, some customers remained without power until 10pm on Sunday night, four days later.

Why did it take so long to restore power to those last homes? Unlike the transmission line outages that occurred in November, where one incident of a tree falling on a wire took out power to 16,000+ customers, the Dec 20th storm led to 69 separate incidents of trees damaging lines, or trees damaging poles, or other weather induced damage to the grid.

That means instead of going to one location to fix one problem restoring power to all customers, PUD crews had to attend to nearly 70 locations. And not just once.

Because so many live electrical wires had been knocked down in the first day, a lot of the initial work involved driving around the county de-energizing downed wires, or

cutting them from roadways.

Safety is the PUD's first priority, and PUD crews had to eliminate any dangers to the public before they could start on repairs. This is why some customers saw PUD trucks working near their home soon after the storm, but remained without power for hours or days after.

So how does the PUD decide who gets restored first? According to Acting General Manager Kevin Streett, once the immediate threats to public safety are taken care of, the PUD prioritizes repair work based on the type of system affected:

1. Transmission Lines
2. Substations
3. Three phase distribution lines
4. Single phase distribution lines
5. Secondary distribution lines.

Additionally, the PUD prioritizes restoration of power to the hospital and emergency management facilities. Restoring power to grocery stores and pharmacies is also high on the list. After these locations are restored, the PUD responds to incidents in order of largest number of customers affected, and works down from there.

Secondary distribution lines are the lines leading to homes or businesses, and the majority of the outage incidents that occurred on the 20th were of this type and spread across the entire county.

PUD crews worked around the clock during the four days during and after the storm. Two private crews were also brought in to assist. The storm was declared a FEMA event.



## THE CLASS OF 2008 *continued...*

then became a meter reader before moving to the Warehouse/Storekeeper position in 2018.

In his current position, Van Otten is responsible for maintaining all the supplies needed by PUD crews. During an outage situation, he is often contacted by Worley or Van Ness to pack up supplies and deliver them to the crew in the field. Van Otten also fills in as a flagger when

repair work requires road closures or blocking of lanes.

Jeff Gordon was promoted from Customer Service Representative to Coordinator in 2018. In this role, he helps lead the PUD's interactions with customers. More than half of the work performed by the PUD is a result of customer interactions with customer service, whether because of an outage report, an application

for new service, or problems with a bill. When a customer reports an outage, Gordon will take the call, enter it into the system and then pass it on to Worley in dispatch.

Gordon says growing up here has helped him with some of the more difficult parts of his job. "Knowing a lot of people in this county and the culture here helps me customize my approach." Gordon has two children of his own, The oldest attends Chimacum Middle School.





**Jefferson County**  
Public Utility District

Public Power, Local Services,  
Community Connections.

March 2019 Newsletter

## WHAT EXACTLY IS BROADBAND, AND WHO HAS IT?

Most people know if they have internet service. Whether or not they have broadband can be harder to determine.

For a fixed, wired internet service to be considered “broadband” by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), it must have the ability to deliver download speed of 25 megabytes per second (mbps) and upload speeds of 3mbps.

Wired broadband service can be delivered by fiber, coaxial cable, or even copper wire as long as it has the potential to meet prescribed speeds.

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) currently self-report both their delivered speeds and coverage areas to the FCC. Using that self-reported data, the FCC concluded that at the end of 2016, 92.3% of Americans had access to broadband internet.

However, according to a study by Microsoft, cited by the New York Times in a December 2018 article titled “Digital Divide is Wider Than We Think,” only half of Americans are using the internet at speeds approaching the broadband rate, and many areas in the US considered by the FCC as having broadband,

especially rural areas, do not.

The problem, as stated in a post on Microsoft’s website titled “Better Broadband Data Can Lend a Voice to Rural Americans,” is that ISPs “are only required to report areas where they *could* hypothetically deliver broadband access, not just the areas where they *actually* do provide broadband access.”

The New York Times article focuses on Microsoft’s work in Ferry County, WA. 100% of Ferry County is considered as having access to broadband by the FCC, while Microsoft estimates that only 2% of the population use it. The mayor of Republic, in Ferry County, is quoted saying “we don’t really have broadband coverage across the county.”

Jefferson County does not have 100% access to broadband either. The FCC’s 2016 year end report says only 81% of Jefferson County residents have access to broadband. What Jefferson County residents actually have or use has not been fully surveyed, but will be soon.

As part of a strategic planning process the PUD has undertaken to

determine possibilities for expanding access to broadband infrastructure, the PUD is partnering with Team Jefferson EDC and others to survey households & businesses about how they connect to and use the internet.

The survey will be available online late March through April. This is not the same survey the PUD issued in 2017. Data gathered will help guide decisions about locating future fiber, and will help support applications for federal and state broadband infrastructure grants.

Per state law, PUDs cannot provide retail internet service to end users. PUDs can build telecommunications infrastructure for both internal use and for wholesale lease to ISPs who provide the retail service to end users.

The PUD owns over 45 miles of fiber optic cable. About half connects to community institutions and businesses, and half is used to monitor and control electrical infrastructure. For more info, and to take the survey later this month, visit the Broadband tab on our website.

## REPORTING TREES IN POWER LINES

This winter, PUD customers experienced quite a few outages due to trees and branches interacting with power lines. Now that winter is over, we need your help to prevent more outages from occurring next year as those trees and branches begin to start growing again. Though you can report trees and branches in contact, or potential contact, with power lines by calling customer service, **the best way to report** is to use the automated form on our website at [jeffpud.org/report-tree-problem](http://jeffpud.org/report-tree-problem). You can report the issue, the location and upload photos of the problem tree right from your phone, on the scene. Please see the back of this newsletter to identify the type of line on a power pole that might be affected. Not all lines on the pole deliver power, some are phone or cable lines that lease space on PUD poles. Noting which lines are impacted helps us gauge the priority of the response.

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**Kevin Streett**, Acting General Manager

# UNDERGROUND vs OVERHEAD LINES

After storms and outages, many customers ask why the PUD doesn't put more of its lines underground. After all, the number one reason the power goes out is because of the wind blowing trees and branches into powerlines.

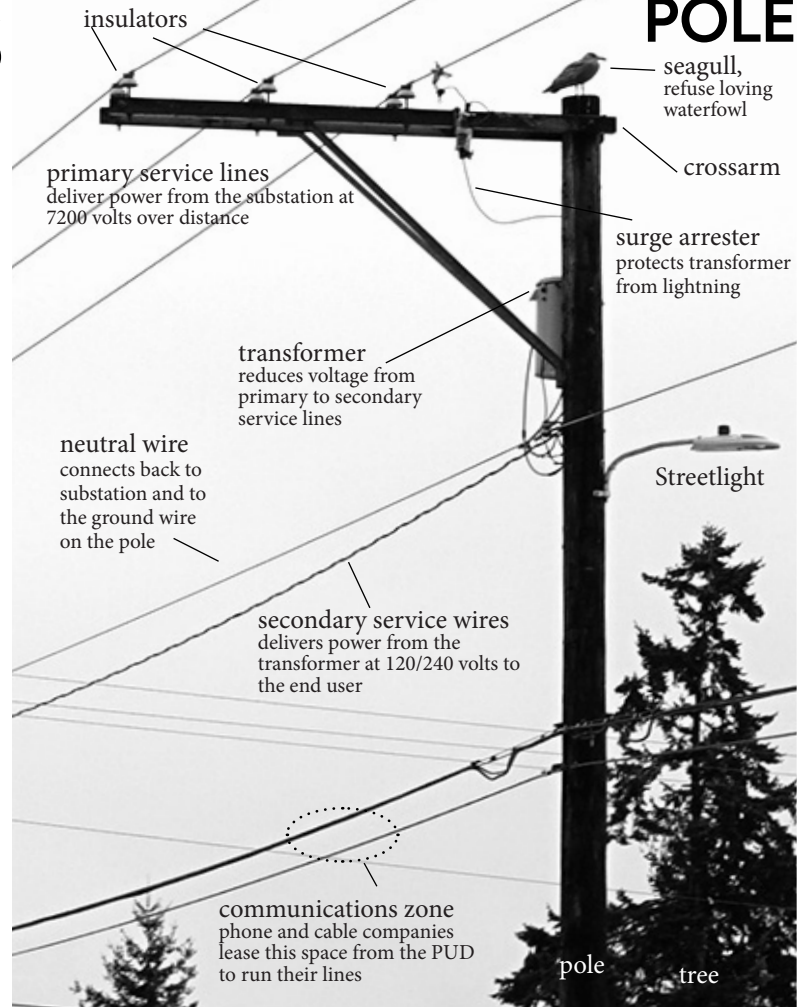
Of the PUD's 765 miles of electrical lines across the county, 373 run overhead on power poles and 392 miles are buried underground, either directly in the dirt, or run through conduit.

According to Senior Electrical Engineer Jimmy Scarborough, underground electrical lines are often the better choice from a reliability standpoint, but have drawbacks that lead the PUD to stick with overhead wires in some scenarios.

The reason not to put lines underground generally has to do with price. Scarborough estimates it costs 2-3 times as much to put primary service lines underground rather than to run them overhead on poles. It's also more expensive to repair lines that are buried underground, and they take longer to fix than lines above ground. Underground faults are also more difficult to locate. The PUD must call in excavating contractors to dig up the line before a crew can access the wire to make the repair.

In residential and commercial new construction, the PUD generally does prefer that powerlines are placed underground. In the City of Port Townsend, this is required in the code. Outside of the city it is advised but not mandated.

# ANATOMY OF A POWER POLE



# HOW SHUTOFFS HAPPEN/HOW TO AVOID THEM

The PUD does everything it can to help customers avoid losing their utility services.

Shutoffs for non-payment, when they occur, only come at the end of a lengthy process, with many notifications and chances to avoid shutoff along the way.

The soonest a shutoff can occur is 56 days after the original bill for service is generated. Payment for that bill must be received within 21 days of generation, which is the "payment due date," and is printed on the bill, not 21 days after it is received or opened.

If the payment is not received within 3 business days of the printed due date, the customer is charged a

\$5 late fee on the next bill, which is generated approximately 30 days after the last bill. If payment has not been received in the 14 days after the original due date, the customer will receive a termination notice.

If payment has not been received 49 days after the first statement was generated, the customer will then receive an automated call notifying them of the potential shutoff. If there is no phone number associated with the account, a door hanger will be left on the premises.

If no payment is received by day 56, the customer will be shutoff. Shutoffs will not occur for accounts that owe less than \$75. If the date of a shutoff falls on a Friday, Saturday,

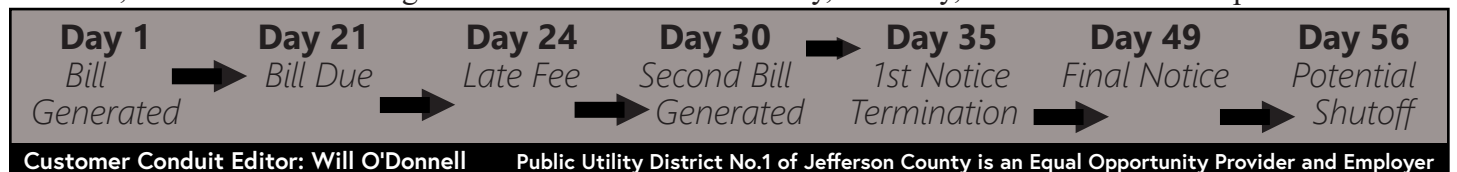
Sunday, or Holiday, the PUD will postpone the disconnect to the following business day. Shutoffs may also be postponed for weather.

Customer Service does everything it can to work with customers to avoid shutoff. We offer low-income support, payment plans, online payment, and the Rainy Day funding program via our partnerships with OlyCAP and the Society of St. Vincent De Paul which supports our most at-risk customers.

If you are struggling to pay your bill, don't wait to let us know.

Call Customer Service as soon as you can at **(360) 385-5800**, Monday through Friday, 9am-4:30pm.

We are here to help.







*pictured: Acting General Manager  
Kevin Streett at the Irondale Substation*

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AROUND THE COUNTY

The spring of 2019 is a busy time for the PUD, with multiple projects to improve reliability and service underway, wrapping up, or beginning in all corners of East Jefferson County.

### **SOUTH DISCOVERY RD**

As of late March, the PUD's work converting four spans of overhead service to underground along South Discovery was wrapping up. The PUD put the service underground as part of a Jefferson County Public Works road widening project.

### **IRONDALE SUBSTATION**

Just north of the PUD's Customer Service and Operations Center off 4 Corners Rd. sits the PUD's now largest substation. The five year, \$3.5M project is almost complete. The Irondale substation was doubled in size from 20 to 40MW capacity to serve as a back up for other substations around the county in the event of large scale outages. Though construction concluded in March, testing and troubleshooting will continue into the summer.

### **PORT LUDLOW SUBSTATION**

The PUD is preparing now for summer work on the Port Ludlow substation. The substation's aging and undersized voltage regulators

will be replaced with new and larger models that will better manage high demand in the winter months. The building housing the control panels will be replaced and switches and insulators will receive maintenance.

### **SWANSONVILLE RD**

In February, the PUD Board of Commissioners rescinded a previous emergency declaration for replacing the ailing and aging electrical cable buried directly in the dirt along Swansonville Rd. This cable shuttles much of Port Ludlow's power from its substation to its largest concentration of homes and businesses. Work to replace the cable is underway, but according to Acting General Manager Kevin Streett, the most problematic sections of the cable have now been removed and replaced with new wire run through conduit. Streett explained that the emergency declaration was no longer needed to complete the work, and that normal bidding procedures would be employed for replacement of the additional length of cable.

### **CHIMACUM CREEK ESTATES**

Work continues to replace the aged and failing electric cable in Chimacum Creek Estates. Conduit

has been installed underground and vaults for new transformers have been set. The project is on track to be completed in June, with road and driveway patches expected in April and wire pulling and transformer setting to follow.

### **KILISUT HARBOR**

The PUD is preparing for the upcoming proposed replacement of the section of Highway 116 (Flagler Rd) between Indian and Marrowstone Islands. The PUD will temporarily move its power, water and fiber service lines during the construction, which is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2019.

### **UNDERGROUNDING POWER IN DOWNTOWN PT**

The initial work of undergrounding electrical service along Water Street between the Ferry Terminal and Taylor Street is on schedule to be completed by May as planned. The PUD has also been prepping to put electric service underground along portions of Jefferson, Adams, and Quincy streets... *Continued on back*

## **6 YRS OF PUBLIC POWER IN APRIL!**

In April of 2013, the PUD took over operation of East Jefferson County's electric utility from PSE. At the time, no public agency had taken over electric service from a private company since 1949. Though there have been many challenges and learning opportunities along the way, the PUD's purchase of E. Jefferson County's electrical system has resulted in 40 new living wage and professional jobs, better service, and tens of millions of dollars reinvested in the community. As you can see above, the PUD continues to invest in modernizing our grid, increasing reliability, and improving quality of life. After all, you own it!

Thanks from all of us at Jefferson County PUD for giving us the chance to serve you with 98% carbon-free public electricity over the last six years.

## **PUBLIC MEETINGS**

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# INFRASTRUCTURE CONTINUED...

Conduit was buried underground in conjunction with the new sidewalks that were installed this winter. However, all downtown work will be placed on hold until the fall of 2019 as the PUD does not want to impact downtown businesses during

the busy summer months. Power poles and the remaining overhead wires will begin to be removed starting in late fall.

## PUD FACILITY UPGRADE

Plans and drawings are being finalized for the PUD's remodel

and expansion of its 40 year old Customer Service and Operations Center. The project is anticipated to go to bid in May with construction starting in late summer or fall.

Modular buildings have been ordered to house staff during construction, which is anticipated to take up to one year to complete.

# CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD EXPLORES OPT-OUT PROGRAM

In February, the Board of Commissioners tasked the Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) with modeling an opt-out program that would allow customers to have their current electric meters replaced with non-broadcasting meters.

For the last 15+ years, every electrical meter in the PUD's service territory, regardless if it has a digital or analog display, has been set up to broadcast its customer usage data for remote read via radio frequency signal. Contracted and PUD staff meter readers collect the meter data either by driving past

the home to pick up the signal, or, in some cases, using an electronic reader to collect the signal on site.



The majority of these meters were installed or retrofitted by PSE years before the PUD acquired the electrical service.

The current meters are "one-way," capable of sending a signal but not receiving signals. In 2017, the PUD proposed a plan to replace the current and aged meters with "two-way" or "smart" meters.

Among other benefits, "two-way" meters would have allowed the PUD to collect meter data from its operations center without sending trucks out for reads. After months of public discussion, the replacement project was put on hold. An opt-out program for "two-way" meters was discussed but never approved.

Clallam PUD is moving to replace its meters with "two way" or "smart" meters later in 2019. Clallam also approved a two-tier opt-out policy allowing for a pilot project that lets opt-out customers read their own meters and report the readings back to the PUD online or via email.

# BALLOON TAKES OUT POWER TO PORT LUDLOW

It was a warm sunny day on March 19th: over 70 degrees, hardly a cloud in the sky and little wind to speak of. And then, at about 3pm, most of Port Ludlow lost power. Calls began flooding the PUD with customers wanting to know what had happened.



What happened was a mylar balloon. According to Acting General Manager Kevin Streett, mylar balloons are a menace to electrical utilities. Mylar balloons

have a metallic coating that can conduct electricity. They also stay inflated longer. When allowed to float off into the air, they have a bad habit of hitting electric lines and causing damage. In 2018, mylar balloons took out power to Dodger Stadium for 2 hours during a game.

The mylar balloon that took out power to 1200 customers in Port Ludlow was a green St. Patrick's day balloon that floated up into the crossarms of a powerpole, causing an arc between the phase and neutral that opened up a feeder at the nearby Port Ludlow substation, said Eric Tharaldsen, the PUD linecrew foreman who discovered the balloon and made the repair.



# DO I HAVE PUD WATER?

If you were to ask our water crew (pictured above) this question, they would tell you that if you see a line item on your bill charging you for water, then yes, you have PUD water. If not, you don't.

Despite it being that simple, at the recent Jefferson County Home Show, it became clear to PUD staff that many people who don't have PUD water think they do, and some folks who have it weren't sure if they did. Many (but not all) misunderstandings came from PT residents. The PUD provides power to the residents of the City of Port Townsend, but not water. The PUD does

however provide water to customers in unincorporated Port Townsend. Glen Cove, Woodland Drive, Kala Point and east Discovery Bay all have developments supplied by PUD water. These areas are part of the Quimper system which also extends into Irondale, Hadlock, Marrowstone and Oak Bay.

Other smaller PUD water systems are located in parts of Gardiner, Quilcene, Brinnon, and near the Hood Canal Bridge south of Port Ludlow.

In total, the PUD supplies water to approximately 5,000 customers in Jefferson County. Visit [jeffpud.org](http://jeffpud.org) for more info.





Public Power,  
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May  
2019  
Newsletter



L to R: Eric Tharaldsen, Dylan Brackney, Bo Lee, Jeremiah Jones, Jon Dehnert, Casey Alm, Kurt Anderson

## MEET YOUR LOCAL PUD LINECREW

Being a lineman isn't easy. Beyond enduring long hours in the worst weather, linemen have to be skilled climbers, machine operators, truck drivers, electric and construction workers, and more. And they are constantly training to keep up with new codes, safety practices, materials, and technology. Our crew does a lot.

**Eric Tharaldsen** worked at Clallam PUD for 24 years before coming to Jefferson PUD in early 2013 to join the fledgling electric division. He was one of the first crew members hired and was promoted to foreman in 2014. Tharaldsen has lived on the Olympic Peninsula all of his life, and loves the outdoor recreation opportunities that come with it, as he says: "from sea to ski."

**Bo Lee**, like Tharaldsen, is part of the original early linecrew and is also a Foreman. Lee came to Jefferson County from New Mexico. He was intrigued by the opportunity

to be part of a newly forming electric utility. Lee appreciates not working in an office, getting to be outside, and building things that will be up for decades. Lee has four children, ranging from age 13 to 1 years old.

**Kurt Anderson** has been a journeyman lineman for 16 years. He came to the PUD from Crescent City, CA, where he worked for Pacific Power. Anderson came to Jefferson PUD because "all of my family is in the Seattle area. I grew up here and wanted to come back home." Kurt is an avid mountain biker and has two grown children.

**Casey Alm** is a second generation lineman. He graduated from Chimacum High and worked as a lineman for a variety of private line contractors around the country before coming back home to Jefferson county to work for the PUD and raise his family in 2017.

**Dylan Brackney** grew up in

Quilcene and was a groundman on the original crew with Bo and Eric in 2013, moving up to apprentice and then journeyman. Brackney knew he wanted to be a lineman early on, attending line school right after graduating high school. He enjoys the hunting and fishing opportunities the Olympic Peninsula provides.

**Jon Dehnert** is the most recent addition (late 2017) to the PUD line crew. He and Alm had previously met working in Oakhurst CA, Dehnert was raised in Eatonville WA, and also wanted to come back to WA state to raise his two young children.

**Jeremiah Jones** grew up in Gig Harbor but worked for a co-op utility in Texas before coming to Jefferson PUD. Jones is glad to be back home in the northwest. He has a daughter at Chimacum High. He enjoys being a lineman and getting to do something different every day.

## ENGINEERING OFFICE HOURS



In an effort to serve customers better, the PUD has recently established regular, set office hours for Staking Engineers Russ Miller and Jake Swan. They are available to meet at the PUD's 4 corners office between **1:30 - 4:30pm, M-F**.

The PUD provides free initial consultations and site visits for all electric service projects. Meet

with our Staking Engineers before beginning construction to avoid costly redesigns or service re-routes. Call (360)385-5800 and choose the option for engineering. Or email [engineering@jeffpud.org](mailto:engineering@jeffpud.org). They can also take appointments outside of normal office hours. Our engineers are here to help.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the PUD Board of Commissioners occur monthly on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 5pm.

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District 1 Commissioner: **Jeff Randall**  
District 2 Commissioner: **Ken Collins**  
District 3 Commissioner: **Dan Toepper**  
**Kevin Streett**, Acting General Manager

310 Four Corners Rd. Port Townsend WA 98368 (360) 385-5800 [jeffpud.org](http://jeffpud.org)

# BROADBAND SURVEY NOW ONLINE, PLANNING UNDERWAY

From May 1 to June 30th the PUD, in collaboration with Team Jefferson EDC, is conducting a survey to help understand the availability of and evaluate the future demand for internet services throughout East Jefferson County.

The information gathered will be aggregated and used to pursue funding opportunities, if and when they become available, to build broadband infrastructure in the years ahead. This survey is funded by a grant from the Washington

State Community Economic Revitalization Board, with matching funds from the PUD.

Neither the PUD, nor Magellan Advisors, the consulting firm assisting the PUD with this survey, will share your information or use it for any purpose other than assessing the availability and quality of internet services in your area.

The internet survey is a component of the PUD's strategic plan for expanding access to broadband infrastructure. The PUD hired

Magellan Advisors to lead the process. Magellan has worked with utilities, cities, and counties around the country to plan for or build out broadband networks.

Magellan will advise the PUD on: how to best operate and make use of our existing fiber network; how to expand the network in ways that benefits PUD operations; and how to provide more access to reliable, affordable, highspeed broadband internet, esp. for customers who are currently unserved or underserved.

# MARROWSTONE BRIDGE WORK BEGINS IN MAY

Starting May 6th, the PUD will begin relocating power and water lines between Indian Island and Marrowstone Island. The water and power lines will be moved temporarily in anticipation of the removal of the roadway and construction of a new bridge between the islands to allow for

better fish passage.

New, temporary power poles will be set farther back from the roadway. After the service is relocated to the new poles, the existing poles will be removed. The service will be moved again when the bridge is completed, with power lines run through conduit placed under the bridge.

Waterlines will be moved in mid-May. Some service interruptions will occur, as will some changes in pressure. As with power, water will be channelled through temporary pipes during bridge construction, then routed back through permanent piping under the bridge upon completion.

# CONSIDER GOING PAPERLESS W/ OUR ONLINE BILLING APP ALSO CONSIDER ROUNDING UP ON YOUR BILL EACH MONTH

Paperless billing offers a number of benefits to both the customer and the PUD. We encourage any customer with regular access to the internet to consider switching to our online account management system Smart Hub.

Beyond saving paper and stamps, moving to Smart Hub gives you more information and more control over your utility use. View monthly or in many cases daily power use. Compare use over time. Set up auto-pay to make sure you never miss a payment, or store your debit or credit card info to pay at your convenience. You'll get email reminders when your bill is due. Download the Smart Hub app on your phone and managing your account is even easier. Go to [jeffpud.org](http://jeffpud.org) now to sign up.

One of the easiest ways to be a good neighbor and citizen in Jefferson County is to check the monthly box on the front of your PUD bill that says "Round Up for Rainy Day." It's right below the "total due" bubble on the bottom of the bill.

Just a few cents a month from every customer would go a long way towards helping some of our most at-risk residents keep their heat on and water flowing.

Once you check the box we automatically round up your bill each month to the nearest dollar. The extra change is distributed to OlyCAP and the Society of St. Vincent De Paul. They use the funds to help their clients avoid utility shut-offs. In the winter they have long lists of residents who need help. Every cent provided when you round up helps neighbors in need.

# SUMMER IS COMING, WATER YOUR GARDENS WISELY

On average, our customers use more power in the winter and more water in summer. Because the increase in power usage as the weather cools usually happens gradually, most customers aren't surprised by rising bills.

Our water customers, however, are sometimes alarmed to see their bills double or triple from the previous month once the heat summer of begins. Why? Outdoor watering.

Lawns and gardens can consume a lot of water if care isn't taken. So can

other popular summer activities like car, boat, and RV washing, or pressure washing homes or driveways.

Not only does heavy summer water use lead to high customer water bills, PUD aquifers can be strained when an entire community begins consuming high amounts of water simultaneously.

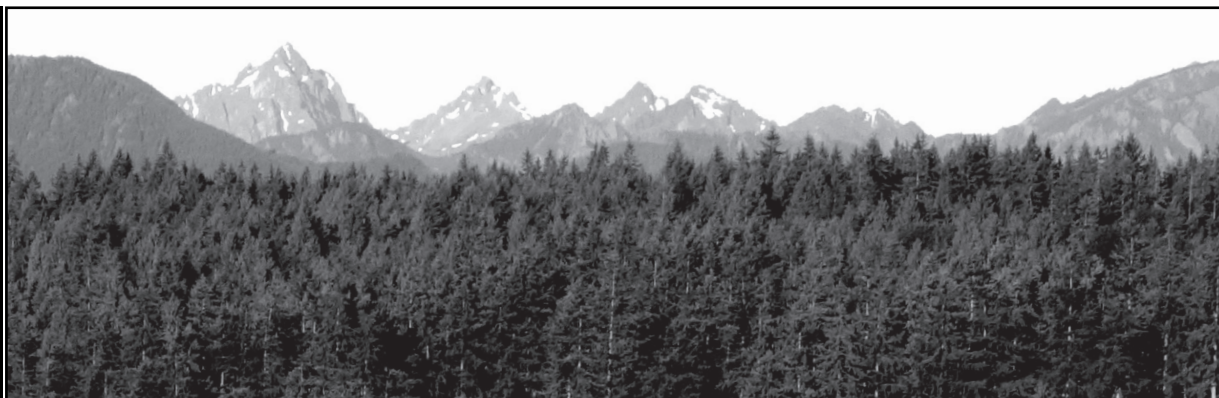
The solution? Water wisely. It doesn't take much extra effort to both keep a lawn or garden green, bills manageable, and aquifers stable.

The first rule of watering wisely

is to eliminate leaks. If your hose is leaking at the spigot, check for worn thread or worn or missing washers. If the hose has sprung a leak somewhere along its length, either cut and splice the hose or replace it. Also consider specialized soaker hoses or drip tape for permanent plantings..

The second rule is timing is everything. The best time of day to water is early morn. And consider watering every other day. Get an automatic timer to keep on schedule, either simple mechanical or digital.





## SUMMER IS HERE:) SO IS DROUGHT AND FIRE SEASON:(

In late May, rapidly melting snowpacks led Governor Jay Inslee to expand a previous drought emergency declaration to a total of 27 watersheds, with Jefferson and Clallam counties included in the areas affected.

According to Peninsula Daily News, snowpack for the Olympics was down to almost 20% of average in late May. Though Memorial Day weekend started off very wet, Washington State Climatologist Nick Bond is predicting above average temperatures and below average precipitation for our area during June, July, and August. Depending on the severity of the conditions, this kind of weather can lead to reductions in water supplies and increased risks of wildfire on the Olympic Peninsula.

**WATER CONSERVATION:** Unlike the City of Port Townsend and other municipalities, the PUD does not rely on snowpack for its water systems. The PUD draws on a number of groundwater wells to supply safe public drinking water to its approximately 5,000 water customers. That means that PUD water systems aren't as susceptible to low snow years or fast melt offs..

However, according to Interim Water Supervisor Bill Graham, repeated drier than average years will lower capacity for the PUD's underground aquifers.

Conservation is the PUD's first line of defense against drought, said Graham. Though the excess capacity is built into every system, peak demand for water usually coincides with lower supplies during the hottest months of summer. Customers can help ensure the sustainability of the systems by using water wisely: watering in the early morn, using efficient low flow systems, fixing leaks, alternating watering on odd or even days (depending on your street address). Graham urges all customers to adopt these practices.

**FIRE PREVENTION:** After the fires in California, electric utilities are taking a harder look at how their infrastructure can be affected by or contribute to wildfires. The PUD's first line of defense against fires is tree-trimming. Dry limbs on live wires are a major concern, and we have increased trimming as a result. But to keep fires from spreading to homes, PUD customers are urged to study up on fire prevention. Creating a buffer between your home and nearby shrubs, grasses and trees is essential. East Jefferson Fire Rescue offers free fire prevention training and inspections to residents. Learn more at [ejfr.org/customers/fire-safety](http://ejfr.org/customers/fire-safety) or call them at (360) 385-2626 to schedule training for a group.

## BROADBAND SURVEY ENDS JUNE 30TH

### WE STILL NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Thanks to all of our customers who have taken the survey.

We received around 1000 surveys in May, but with over

19,000 customers in East Jefferson County,

there are many more customers we haven't heard from.

The online survey takes only minutes to complete.

There are separate surveys for homes and businesses.

Please take care to answer all of the questions completely.

*Your answers will help our Broadband Strategic Planning Process.*

**go to: [jeffpud.org/broadband/survey](http://jeffpud.org/broadband/survey)**

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Kevin Streett, General Manager

# KEVIN STREETT NAMED GENERAL MANAGER



After appointments as Electrical Superintendent, Assistant General Manager, Interim General Manager and Acting General Manager, the Board of Commissioners (BOC) removed the modifier and named Kevin Streett General Manager of Jefferson County PUD at its May 7th regular meeting.

Streett was the PUD's first hire for its fledgling electric division back in November of 2012. It was his job to add the staff, equipment, and oversight that would allow the PUD, which up until that point had been an 8-employee Water and Sewer District, to take over operation of Jefferson County's electric grid from Puget Sound Energy (PSE). In the process the PUD went from 5,000 customers to 19,000; from a budget of \$2 million to almost \$40 million and nearly 50 employees today.

In naming Streett General Manager, the Board of commissioners cited his years of service to the PUD, and the stability his leadership would provide to the organization. "I personally feel indebted to Kevin," said District 1 Commissioner Jeff Randall at the May 7th meeting. "He was here from the beginning and he left when we had some challenging things going on and he came back when we needed him to."

The board expects to finalize terms of the new title with Streett in June (ed. note: this newsletter went to print in late May). Streett and the board have already been in discussions about additional staffing. There are nine open

positions at the PUD currently. The PUD is advertising for journeyman lineworkers, a GIS specialist, a Customer Service Representative, Water Superintendent, and an HR manager. Other positions are likely forthcoming, though according to Streett some of those positions depend on a redrafting of the organizational chart, which he is working on in consultation with the board.

Streett's other priority is to continue to make community a bigger priority at the PUD. By community Streett means working in partnerships with other local organizations to make life better for Jefferson County residents.

While his early efforts at the PUD were largely internal, in the last couple of years Streett has enjoyed working on larger joint infrastructure projects with both Jefferson County and the City of Port Townsend. He has also worked to build better ties to emergency responders and local builders. Streett is currently working to develop an electrical safety demonstration to deliver to area schools in the fall.

Though he'd spent the vast majority of his life in the inland west, Streett and his wife Dawn have loved living in Jefferson County. "It's different than any place I've been. People are more extroverted. Which I like." The weather isn't too bad either according to Streett.

Streett's other priorities include finishing up a large number of projects currently on the PUD's plate. A six year water plan and four year electrical plan are expected this fall, as is a broadband strategic plan. Work on South Discovery Rd and Chimacum Creek Estates is nearing completion. Work on Water Street is on hold for the summer but will begin again in the fall.

Another big project looming is the PUD's facility consolidation and expansion. Final drawings will be sent out to bid in June. Streett hopes to see a contractor selected and construction starting this fall.

## HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR WOODCHIPS?

The bulk of Jefferson County's tree trimming takes place in the summer months, at various locations around the county. The PUD hires contract trimming crews like Asplundh and Kemp West to perform the trimming and clearing of branches from power lines. These crews typically turn the trimmed limbs into piles of woodchips that are highly sought after by local customers for landscaping and gardening.

How to get those woodchips? You need to live near the area where the trimming occurs, and you need to get on the waiting list. In some areas the demand for chips

is quite high, and the list can be a dozen deep. In others you may be first on the list by default, though unlikely.

Signing up for the woodchip waiting list is easy:

**Email** Special Projects Coordinator Scott Bancroft at [sbancroft@jeffpud.org](mailto:sbancroft@jeffpud.org).

Put **Woodchip List** in the subject line and put your **address in the message body** as well as the *location you would like the woodchips dumped*. Scott will contact you when and if chips are available.

And a reminder: **PLEASE DO NOT APPROACH TREE TRIMMING CREWS WHILE THEY WORK!**





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## A WASH, WAX & A TUNE UP



Tod Eisele, PUD  
Substation Technician

## SUPING UP THE PORT LUDLOW SUBSTATION

If you don't wash your car for a few years, it's likely to show. No one at the PUD was quite sure when the Port Ludlow substation had last been washed (the PUD has only owned and operated it for the last 6 years), and it definitely showed: grimy insulators and dirty switches and bus conductors covered in baked-on soils.

Though dirty substations aren't unheard of, heavy build-up on insulators and other equipment can lead to electrical faults. Dirt can carry electrons from conductors across the insulators (which are designed to prevent current from passing) to the metal frames that keep the infrastructure off the ground. If this happens, it can lead to lights out for thousands of customers.

So when the PUD de-energized the Port Ludlow substation in June to replace failing voltage regulators, it remained grounded and offline for an additional week to receive a thorough pressure wash and scrubbing. PUD SCADA apprentice David Elias even tested out a new

buff and wax product on one section of insulators, which he applied by hand from a ladder. While the washing and waxing were largely preventative, the trio of newly installed regulators will improve service and reliability by automatically adjusting to demand lulls and spikes to provide all customers

on the distribution lines with the proper regulated voltage to power their homes or businesses. Taking a substation offline isn't something that a utility elects to do very often. Not because customers lose power, they don't, but because another substation has to pull double duty to handle the load. This can only be done

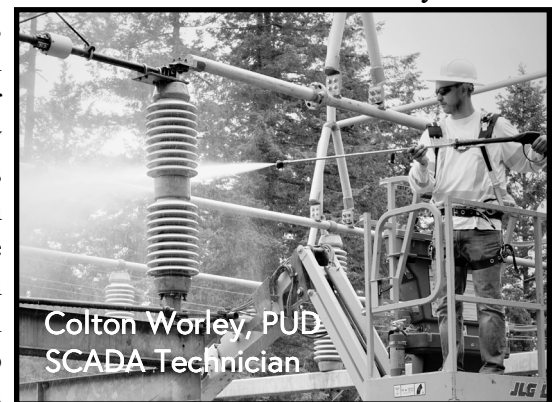
in summer, when demand for electricity is at its lowest. In this case the

Chimacum substation had to handle its

normal load of transforming and delivering power for customers along Center Road and down to the tip of the Coyle as well as for the Port Ludlow community.

The Hastings substation in Port Townsend received a similar treatment last year, and the Quilcene substation is likely next up in the rotation for cleaning and upgrades.

The PUD recently ordered a new substation transformer that is expected to go to Port Ludlow next summer to replace the current model: a 1969 Allis Chalmers. Another transformer is expected to be ordered in 2020 for installation in Quilcene later in 2020 or in 2021. Substation transformers are big purchases, with price tags over \$500K and delivery of six months or more.



Colton Worley, PUD  
SCADA Technician



New Voltage Regulators

### JEFFERSON COUNTY PUD SUBSTATIONS

Hastings	Dana Roberts	Irondale	Chimacum	Discovery Bay	Quilcene	Port Ludlow
Outer PT- Cape George	Downtown PT- Ft Worden	Kala Pt- E Disco Bay	Marrowstone to Coyle	Gardiner to S Disco Bay	Pretty much Quilcene	All of PL and Shine

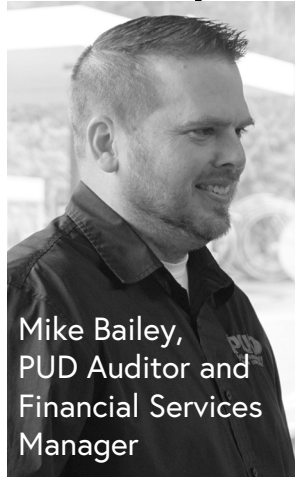
310 Four Corners Rd. Port Townsend WA 98368 (360) 385-5800 [jeffpud.org](http://jeffpud.org)

# NEW AUDIT, AUDITORS, & ACCOUNTING SUPPORT

At a special meeting on June 19th, Jefferson County PUD Board of Commissioners (BOC) received a clean audit report for the 2018 financial statements. This was the first audit performed for the PUD by Jackson Thornton, a private firm hired in 2018 to solve a problem that has vexed the PUD for some time.

The problem was a timing discrepancy between state and federal governments. The State of WA is required to audit the PUD's financial statements annually, but does not provide its final audit report until after the due date required by the USDA Rural Utility Services (RUS). RUS was the lender for the PUD's \$115M purchase of the electrical grid.

The State of WA will review Jackson Thornton's audit report later in the year, and will also perform their own accountability audit, which focuses more on internal controls, processes, and asset management.



Mike Bailey,  
PUD Auditor and  
Financial Services  
Manager

PUD Financial Services Manager Mike Bailey coordinates with both the State and Jackson Thornton to provide the data they need to do the audits. Bailey was appointed District Auditor by the BOC in March. Bailey lives in Port Townsend with his wife and teenage daughter. He worked at a rural electric co-op in Oregon prior to joining the PUD in 2017.

Bailey is joined in the PUD's finance department by Nate Tantom, Utility Accountant and Melissa Blair, Accounting Technician. Tantom has been with the PUD since 2012, and was originally hired as a Customer Service Representative during the transition to electric power. Tantom handles payroll for the PUD. Blair joined the PUD in early 2017, and manages accounts payable, aka paying the bills.

Seattle-based accounting firm Moss Adams is also providing the PUD with additional accounting guidance and oversight. "Moss Adams works with a number of utilities in Washington State," said GM Kevin Streett. "They know the RUS requirements that drive a lot of our accounting practices inside and out."

## DROUGHT CONTINUES, USE WATER WISELY!

Washington State is leading the nation in drought status this year. And Western Washington is facing the most severe drought conditions of all, including higher than average temperatures. Plus water use in our county is highest in the summer, just when water supplies are lowest. While PUD water supplies are stable as of July 1, we ask that water customers practice watering wisely:

- Limit lawn or garden watering to early mornings.
- Water on odd or even days (depending on address).
- No more than 1" per week (use a gauge).
- Consider using drip tape or soaker hoses.
- Fix any leaks in hoses or nozzles.
- Water less by mulching more!
- Bucket wash vehicles, boats, or RVs.

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#### General Manager

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## PUD FACILITY EXPANSION/REMODEL HEADS TO PERMITTING & BIDDING

The PUD has applied for building permits on its facility expansion and remodel project. The project, which is estimated at \$4M, will allow the PUD to consolidate its employees on one campus and provide for board and conference meeting

rooms which the current facility lacks. Construction is not expected to begin until late 2019 and will continue to late 2020. The project was put out to bid in early July. Bids will be reviewed in September with an award expected in October.

## COME SEE US AT THE FAIRS!

Hadlock Block Party! Saturday, Aug 3: 10-5pm

Jefferson County Fair! Fri-Sun, Aug 9-11th

All County Picnic! Sun, Aug 18: 11-4pm

Quilcene Fair! Saturday, Sept 14: 9-4pm





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Various electrical meters pulled from service on the loading dock at the PUD's Operations Facility

## PUD TO STUDY METER REPLACEMENT THIS FALL

In March of 2018, after months of discussion, the PUD Board of Commissioners voted to table its discussion of plans to replace its aging and ailing electric meter system.

The need for a new meter system, however, never went away. For Kim Holt, PUD Billing Coordinator, every day brings some new complication from a meter that's either failed or failing, or needing an additional reading. For Holt and her team in the billing department, new meters can't come soon enough.

General Manager Kevin Streett feels much the same as Holt. Upon hiring in late 2012, he saw that the county's residential electric meter system (which was installed by PSE) was at the end of its useful lifespan and recommended full replacement. In 2017, then Assistant GM Streett brought a proposal to the board to replace all of the PUD's meters with an AMI (advanced metering

infrastructure, aka smart meters) system. Though common in the industry and used by many neighboring utilities, the proposed AMI system met opposition from customers who brought concerns about electro-sensitivity and privacy to the commissioners at successive meetings.

Streett says he and the Board have listened to customer concerns and plan to take a more agnostic approach to studying meter technology this time around.

"We want to hire a consultant to look at multiple types of metering systems and compare the technological and business case for each," said Streett. "We're drafting a request for proposals that we'll have ready this fall. We want the whole process to be open and transparent, and we'll allow for public input every step of the way."

Streett and the Board have also been discussing an opt-out program for current and future broadcasting meters.

## MEET OUR NEW CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES!

Amanda Isaak comes to the PUD from QFC where she was a manager on the night crew. As a mother of three, Isaak is very glad the PUD's Customer Service Department operates during normal daylight hours.

Isaak grew up in Portland, but moved to Jefferson County after her oldest daughter was born. Isaak's husband had family here and both felt the slower pace and smaller, tighter knit community would be better for raising children in.

Living in Port Hadlock, Isaak was already a power and water customer of the PUD. Now she'll be working with customers across the county to assist with their utility services, whether water, electric, sewer, or broadband.



Shortly before her hiring at the PUD, Dawn Crocker's previous employer awarded her with a trip to Florida in honor of her exceptional customer service skills.

Though she appreciated the honor, it had already been Crocker's goal to work at the PUD. She'd originally applied for the customer service position in November of 2018, but hiring was delayed until this past spring.

Crocker has also worked for Hadlock Building Supply and Wave Broadband. She, like Isaak, was introduced to the area by her husband, who grew up in Port Townsend.

Crocker has two grown daughters, each of whom graduated from Chimacum High School. Originally from Arizona, she loves living near the water now.



## MEET OUR 2019 SUMMER INTERNS

Though they hadn't met previously, PUD interns Emmett Erickson and Seth Richey were both former "CowHawks." Erickson graduated from PT, and Richey from Chimacum, but each played on the combined tennis team made up of students from both districts, hence "CowHawks"

Evan Mickelson graduated from Tahoma High School in Maple Valley. He'll be a second year student at the University of Washington this fall. His family moved to the Coyle in 2018. Mickelson loves life on the Coyle, and is happy to have his new home base in Jefferson County. As an electrical engineering major, the PUD internship program has

served him perfectly. He's been placed in the engineering department, and is receiving on the job experience and training.

This fall, Erickson will be entering his second year at Hamilton College in New York state where he's studying Computer Science. He started out providing administrative assistance to PUD staff but in July moved to help the Water Department.

Richey was placed in the finance department, and tasked with data entry for PUD accounting. He's been enjoying the office job. Richey will



attend BYU Hawaii in the fall where he plans to earn an English degree before heading to law school.

PUD interns work full time, June to September, and earn \$13/hr. The program accepts applicants every spring, but is limited to Jefferson County residents enrolled in a college program at the time of application.

## NEW HIGH USAGE WATER RATE EXPLORED

PUD staff are currently exploring adding a fourth tier of water rates for residential customers consuming over 30,000 gallons of PUD water per month. The average customer uses less than 5,000 gal/mo.

Staff presented a rate study performed by EES Consulting to the Board of Commissioners at their regular meeting on July 16th. The PUD currently has 3 tiers to its residential water rates, all billed per 100/gal used. \$0.29 for 5,000 or less; \$0.40 for 5,001 to 10,000; and \$0.54 for usage over 10,000. The fourth tier proposed

by EES was \$1.00. It would apply to less than 50 of the PUD's 4800 customers, or about 1%.

Discussion of the proposed rate at the board meeting centered around whether the 4th tier rate was needed to increase revenues or to encourage reduced consumption. According to Interim Water Supervisor Bill Graham, both are needed. Consumption by high users has led to the need to expand some water systems earlier than planned. The new higher rate would help recover those expansion costs. No action was taken at the meeting.

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## ENGINEERING DEPT MOVES TO 211 B CHIMACUM RD OFFICE

In preparation for the PUD's planned upcoming facility remodel and expansion this fall, the Engineering Department has moved to the PUD's secondary administrative office in Port Hadlock. The office is next to Double D Electric at 211 B Chimacum Rd. The Engineering Department includes Interim Engineering Supervisor Jimmy Scarborough, Staking Engineers Russ Miller and Jake Swan, and a soon to be hired GIS specialist. Electric service customers who need to meet with engineering will be routed to this office. Staking Engineers maintain office hours from 1:30 to 4:30pm, M-F

## BUDGET BILLING RECALCULATION

Reminder to those customers who are on the fixed budget billing program. It's that time of year again. Time for the annual recalculation of your budget. Your August statement will reflect any changes in your budget amount due. Questions? Call Customer Service: (360) 385 5800, M-F, 9am - 4:30pm.





L to R: Bo Lee, Jon Dehnert, Casey Alm

**PUD**  
Jefferson County  
Public Utility District

*Public Power,  
Local Services,  
Community  
Connections*

**SEPTEMBER  
2019  
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## POWERTOWN: TEACHING SAFETY AROUND POWERLINES

In addition to removing branches from lines, repairing or replacing fuses and transformers damaged by squirrels, or poles hit by cars, PUD Linemen Bo Lee, Jon Dehnert and Casey Alm were busy with a new task this past summer: teaching electrical safety around powerlines.

Lee, Dehnert, and Alm met with members of East Jefferson Fire and Rescue three times in order to present to each shift crew. The linemen met with City of Port Townsend Public Works Staff. And they spoke with dozens of children and adults at the Jefferson County Fair, All County Picnic, and Quilcene Fair (Sept 14th).

The goal of each event was to teach safety around power lines. To do it, the linemen bring along a tabletop model

of energized powerlines running through a miniature community: PowerTown. The model helps show what happens when people aren't careful around power lines, both above and below ground, making the results audible and visible with flashing and crackling arcs of electricity. Kids viewing the demo received plastic hardhats and safety stickers. When the three linemen talk with other professionals they pair the demo with real life stories. "Two victims don't make a rescue," Alm explained. Though it goes against the first instincts of many, there is no safe way to intercede in an electrocution without specialized tools and training or cutting the power supply first. That's just what the PUD lineman are here to do.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFICE MOVES 500 FEET NORTH TO 210 FOUR CORNERS ROAD STARTING SEPT. 16TH AT 1PM

Starting Monday, September 16th, customers wishing to pay bills or speak in person to a customer service representative will need to come to 210 Four Corners Rd. In preparation for planned remodeling and expansion, the PUD's 310 Four Corners Rd office will close to the public at noon on Friday, Sept. 13th. Customer service will reopen in its new location at 1pm on Monday, Sept 16th. The new office will house both customer service and some administrative staff in a semi-permanent, triple-

wide office building located on a smaller, PUD-owned lot about 500 feet north of its longtime operations center.

"All PUD functions involving the public have to be moved off the main campus during construction," said PUD General Manager Kevin Streett. "In August, we moved engineering to our Hadlock office at 211 B Chimacum Rd. Regular board meetings are held at Jefferson Transit, and any special meetings of the commissioners take place at the Chimacum Fire Hall."

"It's not ideal," said Streett, "but we've been spread out like this for years. One of the main goals of our facility construction project is to try to bring all of our staff and all of our meetings onto one campus."

The PUD's estimated \$4.4 million remodel and expansion project is expected to begin Oct 1st. Bidding closed Aug. 29th, and contractor selection is scheduled for the Sept. 17th meeting of the board. The expanded 310 Four Corners Rd. campus will reopen in 2021.



Port Townsend WA 98368

(360) 385-5800

jeffpud.org

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: PLANNING FOR THE BIG ONE *and* SOME LITTLER ONES

Though our crew members don't wear the same kind of uniforms as other first responders, the PUD works in close collaboration with police, fire, and other local agencies to respond to emergencies when they occur. In the past year, the PUD has been working to strengthen its relationships with other first responders. According to Jefferson County Department of Emergency Management Director Willie Bence, building relationships is key to preparedness, both between agencies and individuals. PUD

District 3 Commissioner Dan Toepper sat down with Bence for a half hour discussion on Emergency Preparedness on KPTZ in August (you can find it under the news tab on our website). Toepper and Bence talked preparedness for events like the dreaded 9.0 Cascadia earthquake and other smaller but severe emergencies like wildfires and major storms. While the PUD regularly advises customers store up to 3 days of water and supplies for the winter outage season, Bence says

residents need to stock up to 30 days of supplies to prepare for a major disaster. PUD GM Kevin Streett concurs with the 30 day assessment. "Our power comes all the way from the Columbia River. It will take the BPA at least 30 days to get its transmission lines back to us if there is a massive quake. We'll be able to supply some power with generators, but in a major disaster our goal will be to make sure people can get safe drinking water first."

## SNOW CREEK WINS WATER TASTE TEST

For the past two years, the PUD has been running a water system taste test at the Jefferson County Fair in mid August. Each year we've brought samples from 5 of the 9 Group A water systems the PUD manages for fairgoers to taste and vote on. Both years, water from the Snow Creek system received the most votes.

The Snow Creek water system is located just south of Hwy 104 along Hwy 101 in Quilcene. The water comes

from a well and is treated, unlike some of the other water systems it competed against, which do not require treatment before consumption, though all are thoroughly and regularly tested. Why did Snow Creek win? We don't know, but what was clear was that the treated water repeatedly outscored the untreated, which often has a more mineral or "hard taste." Snow Creek, according to many, was softer and even a little bit sweet.

## 2020 BUDGET HEARING OCTOBER 7TH

PUD staff will present the proposed 2020 Operating and Capital Budget to the Board of Commissioners in a public hearing on Oct 7th at 5pm in the board room of Jefferson Transit at 63 Four Corners Road. Plans for staffing,

maintenance, meters, rates, and facility improvements will all be discussed. Public testimony will also be taken. The budget will not be approved at the hearing. It will come back to the board for a vote at later meetings.

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### SOLAR APPLICATION FEE REDUCED

At their August 20th regular meeting, the PUD's Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a recommendation by General Manager Kevin Streett to remove a \$100 application fee for new solar power and net metering customers. According to Streett, the application fee was created to cover a cost of service the PUD no longer provides to solar power generating customers.

"In the past, the PUD installed what is called a production meter, which reads the total output of a customer's solar panels. Our meter readers would read these meters once a year and we would report the total production to the state. The state needed the information to calculate the customer's incentive payment. But since late 2018, the state program has been full, and new customers can't get the incentive."

The PUD will continue to read existing production meters for customers still eligible for production incentives from the state, said Streett. New net metering customers will be charged the same \$350 fee that past customers have paid. According to Streett, the \$350 fee covers the cost of the net meter, its installation, and any administrative costs incurred by the PUD.

There are currently 396 net metering customers in Jefferson County.





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**October  
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*Pictured right: PUD linemen  
installing new three-phase  
switching at the Hastings  
Substation in Port Townsend.*

## BUDGETS, METERS, BROADBAND, BUILDINGS & MORE

Jefferson County PUD's Board of Commissioners have lots to review and discuss in October and November.

At the top of the list is the PUD's 2020 operating and capital budget. General Manager Kevin Streett is presenting the budget at a formal hearing on October 7th, but adoption will not occur until later meetings. Updated drafts of the budget can be found on the [Budgets and Financials](#) page under the [Archive](#) tab on our website. The approximately \$40 million operating budget assumes revenues to be flat from 2019, and forecasts a general rise in expenses by 2.5%. No changes to electric rates are proposed. The operating budget does include an increase of nine additional employees as well as \$750,000 for tree trimming. Falling trees and branches are the number one cause of outages in Jefferson County, said Streett.

On the capital side of the budget, \$4.25M has been set aside for the remodel and expansion of the PUD's main

facility at 310 Four Corners Rd. Bidding on the project closed at the end of September. The commissioners will review the bids at their October 7th meeting, with construction likely to start by November. Meters and broadband will also be on the board's agenda in Oct and Nov. The PUD received a grant from the WA State Dept. of Commerce to explore planning for a potential expansion of its broadband infrastructure. Magellan Advisors was hired to assist the process, and presented a first look at its recommendations to the PUD on Sept 30. A final plan incorporating initial feedback will be presented later this fall. On October 16th, a special meeting will be held to discuss opt-out policies and procedures for customers wishing to have current or future broadcasting meters replaced with non-broadcasting meters. For more info on board meeting times and agenda topics visit the [Calendar](#) link at the top of our website: [jeffpud.org](http://jeffpud.org).

## WHERE DOES YOUR PUBLIC POWER COME FROM?

Public Power has its privileges. Besides local ownership and local control, being a publicly owned electric utility allows the PUD to purchase nearly carbon free electricity from the federally owned Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Prior to going public in 2013, the largest share of Jefferson County's electricity came from coal-burning power plants, and more than 60% of its power was generated by fossil fuels. In 2018, more than 86% of the electricity the PUD purchased from the BPA came from river water flowing through turbines at the dams on the Columbia River. 10.75% of our power was generated by a

nuclear power plant in the Tri-Cities. Added together, more than 97% of Jefferson County's power comes from carbon-free sources. That makes Jefferson County's power some of the cleanest and greenest in the nation. The numbers in the table to the right were provided by the WA State Dept. of Commerce as part of their annual utility fuel mix disclosure. The report is linked under the [Sustainability](#) tab on our website. NOTE: Unspecified sources are small power purchases from various sources that WA state does not require BPA to report.

Fuel Source	%
Biogas/Biomass	0
Coal	0
Geothermal	0
Hydro	86.47
Natural Gas	0.1
Nuclear	10.75
Petroleum	0
Solar	0
Waste	0
Wind	0
Unspecified	2.77

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# PTHS SENIORS VISIT PUD ON CAREER DAY IN SEPT.

How do you become a lineman? Or a substation technician? Or a meter reader? Do you need a degree or special schooling? Those were some of the questions asked by members of the senior class of PTHS on Sept 6th as they toured the PUD and met with members of the electric division. The students were led through customer service and out to the PUD's warehouse for an electrical safety demo at the start of the tour. Next, they were given a pole climbing and bucket truck demonstration. Finally the students walked to the Irondale Substation (which adjoins the PUD's main facility) for an explanation of how power is brought into the county and distributed to homes and businesses. At each stop, PUD employees talked about what they do and how they got their start. So how do you become a lineman? You don't have to go to a traditional college, but you do need lots of training. Either through line schools or union apprenticeships. Or both. Apprentices, the linemen noted, get paid to learn.

# NEW 4TH TIER WATER RATE BEGINS IN JANUARY

At their regular meeting on Sept. 3rd, Jefferson County PUD's Board of Commissioners approved a resolution to create a fourth tier of water rates for residential water customers. The fourth tier, which doesn't go into effect until January 5th of 2020, will apply a charge of \$1 per 100 gallons to all residential water usage over 30,000 gallons per month. The current highest rate is \$0.54 per 100 gallons for usage over 10,000 gallons per month. According to Customer Service Manager Jean Hall, the average residential water customer uses around 5,000 gallons per month. Only 1% of PUD customers use an average of 30,000 gallons or more, said Hall. The PUD estimates that less than 150 water customers will reach the fourth tier at some point during the high use months of 2020. The new tier does not apply to commercial customers.

# HARPER HIRED AS WATER SUPERINTENDENT



Former City of Port Townsend engineer Samantha Harper has been hired as Jefferson County PUD's new Water Superintendent, overseeing all water and sewer staff and operations. During her 12 years with the City, Harper worked on engineering projects ranging from water distribution, stormwater management, roads, sidewalks, to facility construction. According to Harper, at the City her work was mainly on the "capital and development side." At the PUD, Harper's role will include more "operations" work, which is one of things that attracted her to the job. As Water Superintendent, she'll be managing a staff of seven and overseeing the PUD's nine group "A" public water systems and multiple community drain fields, serving over 5000 customers across Jefferson County. Harper and her husband are both engineers and have two sons at Salish Coast Elementary in PT.

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## NEW JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN, GIS SPECIALIST

Jefferson County PUD added two new staff members in September 2019.

Josh Garlock is the newest addition to the PUD line crew, bringing the total number of journeyman to 8. Garlock spent the previous nine years as a lineman with the City of Ellensburg, but has worked in Idaho, Oregon, and California as well. Garlock is married and has a daughter in second grade at Chimacum.

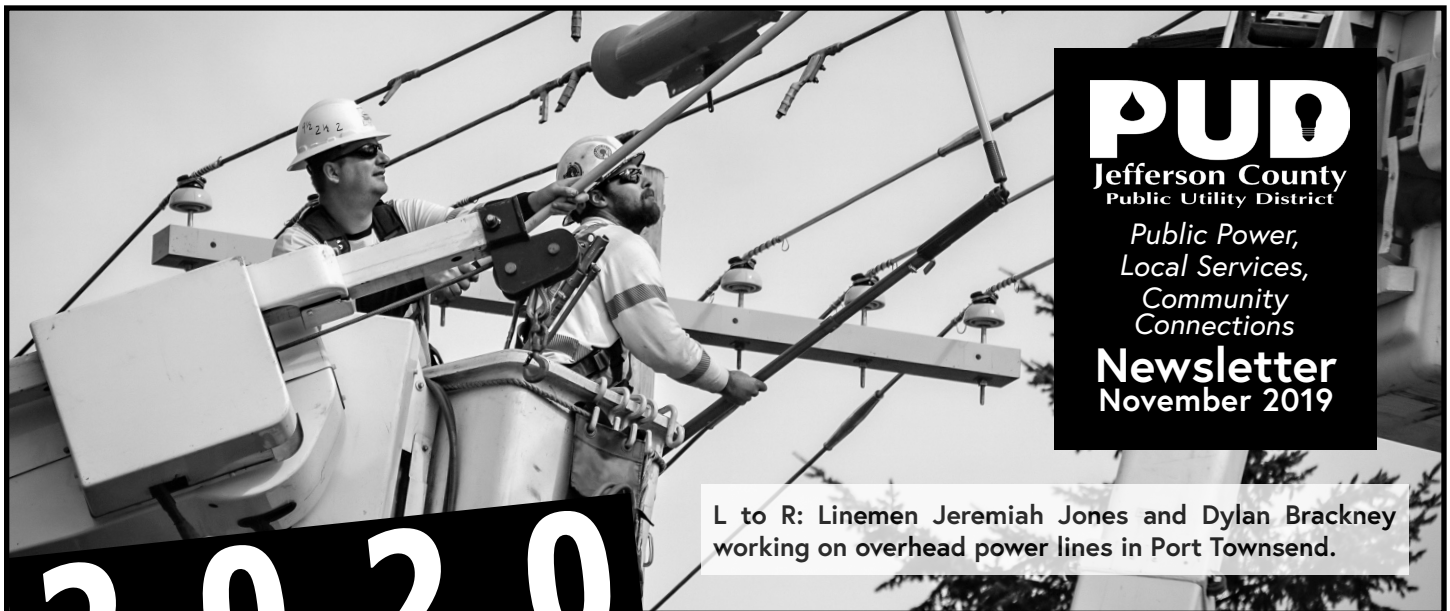
GIS Specialist Alex Gerrish comes to the PUD from Phoenix, Arizona.



Gerrish received his Masters degree from the University of Arizona-Tucson and prior to joining the PUD, he worked for Southwest Gas

and Freeport McMoran, a Phoenix based mining company. GIS stands for Geographic Information System, and as a GIS Specialist, Gerrish is in charge of the digital mapping of all of the PUD's assets, as well as keeping those maps up to date and accessible to crew members in the field. Gerrish is married and has three dogs.





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L to R: Linemen Jeremiah Jones and Dylan Brackney working on overhead power lines in Port Townsend.

# 2020 BUDGET OVERVIEW

The PUD's budget is unique among local governing agencies. Its largest source of revenue comes from the sale of electricity it purchases from another government agency, which is also its single largest expense. Much of the rest of the budget is the cost of keeping that electricity flowing.

In 2020 power purchases from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) are estimated at \$17.2

million, while income from the sale of electricity is projected at \$37 million.

Water revenues are expected to total \$3.6 million in 2020, with expenses of about \$3.4 million to deliver the services. Water revenues also include income from the PUD's 370 septic/sewer customers. Water and sewer customers total just over

5,000. The PUD has approximately 19,800 electric customers.

In preparing the 2020 operating budget, General Manager Kevin Streett and

Financial Services Manager Mike Bailey kept sales of power and water even with 2019, based on the actuals of the last twelve months. General expenses were raised 2.5% based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), however the PUD is projecting a 5% rise in fleet expenses based on the cost of adding new vehicles and a

dedicated fleet manager added to personnel.

The PUD's Capital Budget totals \$9 million, with nearly half

earmarked for the remodel of the PUD's operations facility. The bulk of the rest is dedicated to capital investments and improvements to the electrical grid. Around \$500K is dedicated to converting overhead lines to underground across the county. Another ~\$500K is dedicated to substation upgrades. Other funds

are dedicated to new customer connections, pole and transformer upgrades, SCADA improvements, and other system reliability and security measures.

Capital improvements budgeted for the water department include pipe replacement in the Coyle and Bywater systems, a replacement well in Gardiner, a new wellhouse in Triton Cove (Brinnon), SCADA improvements, and costs to finish the water connection on the bridge from Indian to Marrowstone Island.

view the full 2020 budget at [jeffpud.org/budget](http://jeffpud.org/budget)

**The PUD's 2020 Expense and Capital Budgets were unanimously approved by the Board of Commissioners on October 15, 2019.**

Expense Budget	\$
Revenue/Income	43.2M
Power Purchases	17.2M
Debt/Tax/Financing	10.7M
Operations/Staffing	12.9M
Net Margins	2.3M
Capital Budget	\$
Electric	3.3M
Water	540K
Facility	4.25M
Fleet	478K
Broadband	120K
Other	356K
Total Capital Budget	9M

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# SENIOR LOW-INCOME CREDIT RAISED TO \$39.50/Mo.

Jefferson County PUD's Board of Commissioners approved Resolution 2019-24 increasing the PUD's Senior Low-Income bill credit from \$20 to \$39.50 per month. The credit is available to customers aged 62 or older with an annual household income of \$30,000 or less and is applied to their electric bill each month. Once awarded, the credit is good for two years before a customer must re-apply.

For customers not aged 62 or older, the PUD has its Standard Low-Income bill credit, which is available for customers who earn up to 150% of the federal poverty rate. 150% of the federal poverty rate, for an individual,

is equal to about \$18,735 a year. For a family of four it's \$38,625. The Standard Low-Income credit is also \$39.50 per month, but lasts only 1 year before re-application. Customers who qualify for either the Standard or Senior Low-Income bill credit also qualify for a \$10 credit on their water bill and a 30% off of the sewer rate, should they receive those services from the PUD.

To obtain an application for either Low-Income program, please visit the PUD's website: [jeffpud.org/assistance](http://jeffpud.org/assistance) or stop in the Customer Service office, M-F. 9am to 4:30pm. For questions, call Customer Service Program Specialist Maureen Whippy at 360 385-8357.

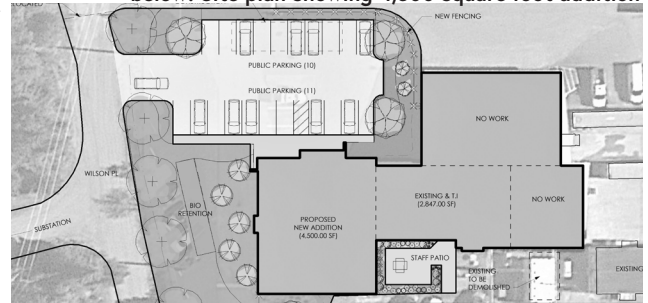
## PUD PICKS HOCH TO REMODEL/EXPAND FACILITY

Jefferson County PUD's Board of Commissioners awarded Hoch Construction of Port Angeles the contract to expand and remodel the PUD's main facility at 310 Four Corners Road.

Hoch Construction was the lowest qualified bidder, with a total bid of \$3.275 million. The bid was well below the projected \$4.25 million budgeted for the project by the PUD and its architect, TCF Architects of Tacoma. The PUD's remodel and expansion project will add an additional 4,500 square feet of meeting space and offices to the PUD's main operations center. According to General Manager Kevin Streett, the existing building has been vacated in anticipation of construction and will be gutted and remodeled to add additional and improved areas for staff. According to the plans drawn up by TCF, the new addition will extend west from the main entrance and out to the customer and employee parking area of the 310 Four Corners facility. The addition will house an expanded customer service lobby including a customer seating area and bathroom.



above: GM Kevin Streett (left) reviews facility construction bids  
below: Site plan showing 4,500 square foot addition



Construction is slated to begin in November and wrap in late 2020.

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Customer Conduit Editor: Will O'Donnell

## ZACH BARBIETO HIRED AS METER READER

Have you surfed Point Hudson? Our new Meter Reader has. He's also visited 47 states and makes and sells wood and steel furniture in his free time.

Before coming to the PUD, Zach Barbieto spent years in the hospitality industry, most recently at Fort Worden. He said he was attracted to the job at the PUD because he wanted to spend more time working outdoors. As a meter reader he does just that, traveling around the county either reading, installing, or inspecting meters, as well as locating underground utilities for 811 calls. Barbieto was born and raised in Hawaii. Though the water is much colder here, he said he's glad to still be living near both the mountains and the sea in Jefferson County. Barbieto is married and his wife works in the Orthopedics office at Jefferson Healthcare.



Public Utility District No.1 of Jefferson County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer





# GIVE YOUR HOME THE GIFT OF SAVINGS THIS HOLIDAY W/ ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES

There are some gifts that just keep giving. The PUD's energy efficiency rebate program is one of those gifts. You make an investment in your home or business and we give you money back on the cost of the purchase. Over time you're not only paid back the initial cost but save hundreds to thousands of dollars on your electric bills.

The PUD's rebate program is made possible by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). All of our 97% carbon-free electricity comes from the BPA. The BPA determined years ago that it was cheaper to incentivise customers to use less power than to build

efficiency upgrades to their homes or businesses. For the last five years, ductless heat pumps have been our most popular rebate option. During October alone, the PUD provided rebates of \$800 to 24 households for ductless heat pumps. Customers must demonstrate they heat their homes with electricity in order to qualify for the rebate.

For those with existing furnaces and ductwork, we offer up to \$1,600 on rebates for ducted air source heat pumps. If you have an older heat pump, we even have rebates for upgrades. To qualify for one of these rebates, the heat pump should be installed by an approved contractor. See our website for the current list.

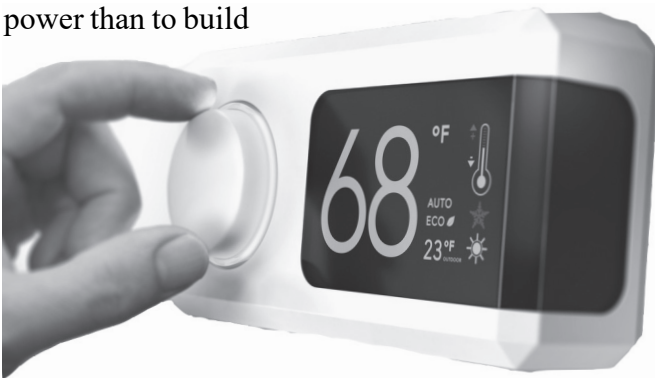
For big savings at a lower price point that the handy homeowner can install themselves, consider a heat pump water heater. Using the

units are 3-4 times more efficient than conventional models, and can save as much as \$3,000 over the life of the unit. Rebates from \$300 to \$600, or \$800 for new split units (compressor outside, tank inside).

Window and insulation rebates received bumps this last October, with the BPA now nearly doubling the rebated amount previously offered. Even heat pumps can't solve your energy use problems if all the heat is escaping the house. Adding insulation to roofs and walls is critical to saving money and electricity.

Another popular item? Smart thermostats, with rebates of around \$100 for approved models, or \$400 for low-income customers.

Visit [jeffpud.org/rebates](http://jeffpud.org/rebates) for details on more options and for rebate applications.



new generating facilities. Jefferson County PUD is allotted around \$900K every other year to provide rebates to customers who make BPA approved energy

same technology as the ductless, the heat pump water heater pulls heat from the air and transfers it to the water in the tank. These

# HELP KEEP OTHERS SAFE & WARM ROUND UP OR DONATE TO RAINY DAY FUND



The PUD's Rainy Day Fund was established to help some of our most at-risk customers maintain access to essential utility services. During the winter months, this fund is more important than ever. When the temperatures drop, it is not an exaggeration to say, in some cases, your donations to the Rainy Day Fund can help keep some of our customers and your fellow citizens alive.

We partner with OlyCAP and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to distribute the funding. They use the money our customers donate to help their clients facing impending power or water shut-off. These clients often live on the margins with little to no safety net and face severe risk if they lose access to these basic services.

Helping out is simple. Check the box below the AMOUNT DUE section on the front of your bill to round up to the nearest dollar each month. And consider making a larger one time donation to give a little extra this holiday when it's needed most.

## PRE-APPRENTICES HIRED, LINE CREW EXPANDED TO 10

In November, the PUD added Chris Pethtel and Josh Beadle, two recent graduates of the Northwest Lineman College to the line crew, bringing the total number to 10. Both Pethtel and Beadle were hired as electrical Pre-Apprentices. Both lived east of the Cascades prior to applying for work with the PUD, and were eager to relocate to the Olympic Peninsula. As Pre-Apprentices, Beadle and Pethtel are limited in their duties. Pre-Apprentices must be accompanied by and supervised by a Journeyman lineworker at all times. They are limited in their duties and cannot work on high voltage equipment and cannot climb as high on poles.

The Pre-Apprentices have one year to take and pass a test to begin their official union apprenticeship with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). After three years as Apprentice Lineworkers, they will be able to perform all the duties of a Journeyman as long as they are accompanied by a Journeyman.

Josh Beadle (left) lived in Pasco, working for a private electrical contractor, before applying to the PUD. Before that, he spent six years as a Munitions Specialist in the Air Force. Beadle has three children, age five and under.

Chris Pethtel (right) grew up near Lewiston, ID. He worked in construction and as a firefighter before beginning line school. He was excited to be hired by the PUD, as he wanted to work in a smaller community where, as he said, "you get to be in touch with the people you're doing the work for."



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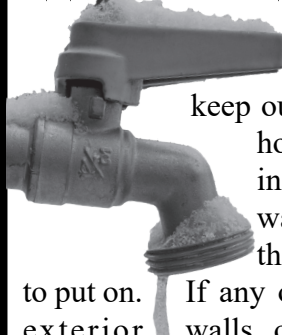
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## WINTER WATER WEATHERIZATION



Winter isn't coming. It's already here. If you haven't weatherized your house already, now is the time. To keep outdoor faucets from freezing, first remove any garden hoses, then, if possible, shut off the supply line from inside and open the outdoor faucet briefly to drain any water left in the pipe. Install insulated foam covers over the outside faucet. They're cheap to purchase and easy to put on. If any of your indoor faucets are located along uninsulated exterior walls, open them to a slow drip during periods of freezing temperatures. You might even consider leaving cabinets open to allow any indoor heat to reach the piping. Just remember, no amount of winter prep is more time consuming or expensive than a burst or frozen pipe.

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