



Photo: Contract crews plowing conduit underground for fiber installation along the BPA transmission corridor.

CALL IF YOU NEED HELP

(360) 385-5800

Our offices are closed to visitors, but customer service is available by phone
9:00am - 4:30pm,

Monday through Friday.

If you are having trouble paying your bills, contact us immediately. We have multiple programs to assist struggling customers.

Power Out?

Check your breakers and check your neighbors before contacting the PUD. Many non-storm related outage reports are due to issues within the home electrical system.

Familiarize yourself with your electrical panel and keep track of any GFCIs. Look outside to see if your neighbors are also without power before reporting an outage. It helps the PUD determine what kind of outage you may have (or not have). **Remember to keep flashlights and extra batteries charged and handy.**

2021 Goals & Plans

"2021 is shaping up to be a year of plans. Some were pushed back a year by the pandemic. While our main focus at the PUD continues to be providing safe, reliable, and affordable utility services, a major goal in 2021 is conducting or finishing up a lot of these long range plans so we can begin implementation."

10 Year Water System Plan

We've been working on this one for the last three years. We're seeking final approval from the state and board in the first quarter of 2021. The plan outlines the capital projects, policies, and programs to provide safe, reliable drinking water through 2030 and beyond. A copy of the plan is on our website.



Kevin Streett, GM

Broadband Business Plan

The pandemic made it clear: the PUD needs to help with broadband. We know how to build out fiber, but the challenge has always been price.

Can we build to people at a cost they'll pay for? We're working with some experts to crunch the numbers and explore different models. The plan should be ready for review in March.

3-5 Year Strategic Plan

Our last strategic plan was published in 2016, so it's time for a refresh. This plan is really about the board and staff coming together to establish high level priorities and metrics for operating the PUD.

Cost of Service & Rate Study

This is a review of what it costs the PUD to deliver electric, water, and sewer services to the customer. We started the process last spring and have delivered all the cost studies to the board. Next up is a look at our rates to see if they are in line with current and projected future costs, and how we might want to change them going forward.

Emergency Response Plans

Pandemics, earthquakes, wildfires, floods. 2021 seems like a good time to update the PUD's plans for responding to emergencies and catastrophes, as well as working on risk and resiliency.

New year, new bill design

Notice something different about your bill this month? The PUD updated the design to make it easier to find the information you need as a utility customer. The most obvious change is the bullseye target showing the payment due on the very top front of the bill. We've also added more info about business hours and contacts. The new Account Balance Summary section shows how your payment due amount in the bullseye was calculated. On the back you'll find new average daily use and cost amounts below the updated 24-month usage graphs. Solar Net Meter customers will see a revised service charge section clarifying how much electricity they took from and returned to the grid.

We know change can be confusing, call customer service if you need help understanding any of the changes to the new bill

PUD
Jefferson County
Public Utility District

Not For Profit/Community Owned
Providing safe, reliable, & affordable utility services.

PAYMENT DUE
\$180.00
DUE DATE: 01/22/21

REBATE OF THE MONTH:
Get \$600 from the PUD to replace your water heater with a new high-efficiency heat pump water heater. New qualifying models can be purchased for nearly as much as the rebate. Water heaters are consistently one of the biggest users of electricity. Cut your usage nearly in half by installing a new heat pump water heater with help from us. More info and applications at jeffpud.org/hpwh.

ACCOUNT BALANCE SUMMARY

Previous Balance	\$296.50
Payment Received	(\$218.50)
Balance Forward	\$78.00
Current Service Charges	
Electric	\$179.85
Water	\$129.80
Sewer	\$55.00
Utility Finance Charge	\$179.85
Rainy Day Donation	\$0.45
Total Current Amount Due	\$653.83
Budget Balance Payment	\$180.00
Budget Settlement Amount	\$1,888.00

CONTACT INFO UPDATE
Use the space below to update any contact info that may have recently changed.

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____

Round Up for the Rainy Day Fund
Help support our County's most at-risk customers with full payment assistance. The program is a voluntary fee added to customer disbursements and is administered by CyCAP and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

☐ Check box at left to round up your bill to the nearest dollar each month.
Make a one-time donation of _____

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUD M-F 9am-4:30pm (360) 385-5800 JEFFPUD.ORG

Rate Number	Service Description	From	To	Days	Previous	Current	Multiplier	Usage
01010101	Residential Electric	11/1/21	11/1/21	30	01010101	01010101	1	1

ELECTRIC SERVICE CHARGES

Base Fee	\$18.50
Usage	888 KWH @ \$0.08882 \$78.00
Usage	888 KWH @ \$0.10700 \$95.00
Other Charges	\$1.30
Low Income Credit	\$0.00
Total Charges	\$293.80

MONTHLY USAGE COMPARISON

Avg Daily Use: 60 KWH Avg Daily Cost: \$5.78/day Avg Used Year: 45 F

NET METER READING DATA

PUD power used by Customer-KWH: 888888
Customer power sent to grid-KWH: 111111
Net consumed-KWH: 555555
Net exported-KWH: 44
Net Balance-KWH: 789

MONTHLY USAGE COMPARISON

Avg Daily Use: 60 GAL Avg Daily Cost: \$1.78 Avg Used Year: 1600 GAL

CONTACT INFO UPDATE
Use the space below to update any contact info that may have recently changed.

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____

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☐ Check box at left to round up your bill to the nearest dollar each month.
Make a one-time donation of _____

New Year's wishes from the PUD Board of Commissioners



2020 was a challenging year for Jefferson PUD and its customer owners on many fronts and in multiple contexts. It is my hope

that everyone in Jefferson County enjoyed a healthy and happy holiday season. Customer satisfaction, customer service and safety are all top priorities for PUD employees, staff, and the commissioners. I do not have a New Years resolution per se, but a continued commitment to you that your PUD will do everything it can to achieve the aforementioned priorities. It is also my pledge to ensure that your PUD continues to be transparent, accessible, and sensitive to your needs. As we enter 2021, we thank you for your trust and your patience as we all navigate and endure these trying times.

Best Wishes,

Dan Toepper, District 3
Board President

The Covid-19 pandemic sickened nearly 200 of our friends, relatives and neighbors. It forced us to limit social contacts when we particularly needed those supports. It has taken jobs away, some permanently, from people with limited resources and forced many businesses to severely limit their operations. I am proud our utility acted quickly to postpone collections from our customers who could not pay their utility bills (before the Governor required us to do so) and provided broadband "hotspots" around the county so students could continue their education remotely. I am equally proud of our employees who have adapted to difficult working conditions and continued to prioritize customer service and prompt restoration of power as the winter storms arrived. My deepest hope is that 2021 will be a year of recovery for our community,

Ken Collins, District 2
Board Vice President



I know that I am not alone in hoping that 2021 will bring better tidings than the year before. 2020 was difficult on many fronts. With any luck we will be able to start helping our businesses and citizens recover from the effect of the pandemic by the summer or fall.

In 2020 the PUD worked closely with the Port, The City of PT, and Jefferson County and many local community groups on a plan for increasing our county's resiliency post Covid-19. Though the plan was completed in December, the partnerships continue. We have a number of challenges yet to face including climate change and housing shortages. However, I remain honored to serve as your elected representative to the PUD and wish all of our customers and staff a happy new year.

Jeff Randall, District 1
Board Secretary





Jefferson County
Public Utility District



A cool and sunny day in the Port Townsend Boat Haven

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

February 2021 Newsletter

Board Meetings Move to Zoom

Meetings of the PUD's Board of Commissioners are now held via Zoom. Please check our online meeting calendar for instructions on how to join or view the meetings in Zoom.

Have something to share with the Commissioners? Log on to speak during the Public Comment section of the meetings. You can also listen to recordings of past meetings on our website by going to the Meeting Audio Archive.

Remembering Marianne Kline



In January, former PUD Meter Reader and Customer Service Rep Marianne Kline lost her years long battle with cancer. Marianne was

a gregarious outgoing spirit. She was dedicated to her job and kept working bravely through multiple rounds of chemotherapy and radiation. She leaves behind three children and many friends.

Help for Past-Due Accounts

At the start of the pandemic, the PUD immediately suspended late fees and ceased shutoffs for lack of payment. Not long after, Governor Inslee instituted a statewide moratorium on shut-offs for non pay. Currently that moratorium is in place until April 30th, 2021.

Whether or not the moratorium will be extended we don't know. What we do know is that it will end sometime and very likely this year. At that time the PUD will return to its policy of instituting \$5 late fees for each service with a balance due beyond 24 days and shutting off services for customers with balances greater than \$75 past due more than 56 days after the initial bill was generated. When this happens hundreds of PUD customers will be at risk of losing services.

The PUD makes every effort to help customers avoid shutoff. We have multiple payment arrangement tools available for customers to manage larger unpaid balances. In December we also received \$40,000 in federal CARES Act funds from Jefferson County to directly help business customers who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses can apply for the funds on the PUD website or by calling customer service during business hours. Funds can pay down a portion of past due balances of 60 days or more on PUD water, electric, and sewer services. Apply ASAP as much of the funds have been expended. Deadline is March 15.

Household customers with past due utility bills who've been financially impacted by COVID-19 should contact OlyCAP, who also received CARES act funds from Jefferson County. OlyCAP's funding can be applied to non-PUD services like garbage, propane or City of Port Townsend water/sewer, as well as PUD utility services.

Call (360) 385-2571 or go to olycap.org to begin the process of applying for household utility bill help. Depending on income, OlyCAP may be able to offer additional services like rent relief, home heating help, or housing services.



Rogers hired as Engineering Admin Assistant



Kara Rogers and PUD Engineering Director Samantha Harper first worked together at the City of Port Townsend. Rogers left the City in 2018 to raise her children and manage the carpet cleaning business she owns with her husband. With her two kids a little older and the business nearly running itself, Rogers decided to rejoin

Harper at the PUD at the start of 2021. Rogers has an eye for detail hopes to help improve processes and efficiency at the PUD and in the engineering department. Rogers was born and raised in Port Townsend. Though she has deep roots here and lots of family, she admits she could use a bit more sun.

WHO'S ON FIRST?

How does the PUD decide who gets restored first in large outages? Safety is the PUD's first priority. PUD crews must eliminate any imminent danger to human life. The PUD also prioritizes restoration of power to the hospital and emergency management facilities, as well as restoring power to grocery stores and pharmacies. After these factors are considered, the PUD generally responds to outage incidents where the largest number of customers affected, with repair work often following this order:

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

Transmission lines take power to or between substations. Three phase lines deliver power from the substation into the community. Single phase lines carry power into neighbor hoods. Secondary distribution lines lead directly to homes or businesses.

After Hours Call Fee

On Jan 19th, PUD Commissioners approved a \$250 after-hours call out fee. The fee would be applied to the accounts of customers who request an after-hours visit from PUD linemen to address an electrical issue that does not involve PUD equipment. Responding to these calls costs the PUD and the ratepayers money and time that, to date, has not been recovered.

Customers who report an outage to our after-hours call service will now be made aware of the \$250 fee and reminded to check their breakers and their neighbors before calling. The \$250 after hours call-fee is not intended to discourage calls.

Please continue to report all outages or expected outages. The after-hours call service will walk you through the process of what to check before sending a line-crew to investigate. Isolated outage incidences of single or small clusters of homes are hard for PUD systems to detect. The only way we will know customers are without power due to an issue with PUD equipment in isolated incidents is if the customer calls.

The goal of the fee is to reduce repeat and frivolous calls that result from customers being unwilling to do the basics on their end. It is not intended to punish customers who made their best faith effort to report an outage. If a customer believes they have followed all the steps to properly check their system before reporting and a line crew arrives on site to discover the outage is on the customer side, PUD commissioners have allowed for customers to appeal the charge or request forgiveness.

A \$250 fee will now be charged to customers who report outages that are unrelated to PUD equipment


PUD Power
is nearly 95 %
Carbon-Free

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The recently completed Kilisut harbor bridge captured at low tide on a late February afternoon

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

March 2021 Newsletter

Letter from a Commissioner: The Non- Reimbursable Costs of Franchise Agreements

For this edition I would like to discuss the impact of Franchise Agreements on Jefferson PUD, in particular those associated with WSDOT franchises. One of the responsibilities of a Public Utility District are potential payments and/or obligations to municipal, county and state governments in its service area through Franchise Agreements.

Franchise Agreements between local and state government and the PUD allow the placement of PUD facilities in roadways. They require the PUD to perform utility relocation, improvements, or repairs within right of ways when local and state governments undertake projects. The most common scenario of a Franchise Agreement being needed is along city, county, and state transportation corridors when

expansion or repair of that infrastructure is undertaken. There is usually very limited ability for the utility to be reimbursed or compensated. Most often, there is no compensation granted to the utility.

An example of that scenario is the recently completed WSDOT bridge project between Marrowstone and Indian Islands, which cost PUD customer owners \$720,000; \$450,000 on the electric, \$250,000 to the water and \$20,000 for broadband departments, respectively. All non-reimbursable. Approximately \$214,000 of the total costs to the PUD were for state and county permits on a project in which we had no hand in planning. Beginning in 2021, future projects like highway roundabouts, fish passage culverts, bridge replacements and roadway intersection revisions will be initiated in our service area and will continue for the next couple of years. Most likely, the PUD will see little or no compensation for our involvement in those upcoming projects. Whether you are public or private utility, this is one of the costs of doing business. In the case of Jefferson PUD, the burden of covering those costs will fall on our power and/or water customers depending on the location of the project.

We are currently working with other PUDs to have a conversation with WSDOT on the impact that state highway projects will have on PUD finances, rates, and budgets. Having those conversations with WSDOT does not ensure that anything is likely to change on the financial cost's that PUDs will bear. There is a distinct need for better communication, coordination and continuity between entities like WSDOT and PUDs.

Unrecoverable franchise costs and required obligations are going to impact available funds and PUD budgeting as the utility contemplates or undertakes long term and/or high cost projects like broadband or a meter replacement program. I call this to your attention so that as we set rates, address strategic planning, and undertake capital projects to upgrade or maintain our aging infrastructure, that our customer owners are aware of one of the forces over which we have little or no control and that negatively impact our finances.



by
Dan Toepper



New LED lights installed over saltwater tanks



Brown algae feeds the oyster larvae

Grow Lights for Oysters

One of the longest running and most successful greenhouse grow-ops in Jefferson County doesn't produce marijuana; they grow oysters, or more specifically, oyster seed.

Pacific (formerly Coast) Seafood has been growing oyster seed along Linger Longer Rd. in Quilcene for decades. Production takes place in dozens of saltwater tanks under hundreds of lights in multiple metal framed hoopouses.

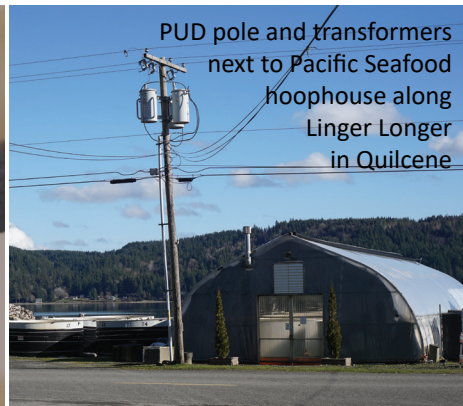
Growing anything under artificial light is likely to lead to high electric bills. Pacific's were especially costly as their long running facility used traditional large metal halide bulbs to provide the proper light needed to grow the hundreds of thousands of gallons of algae their oyster larvae consume to transform from microscopic organism to sand grain sized seed. With help from the PUD's energy efficiency rebate program, the crew at Pacific was able to swap out all of their older 1000 watt bulbs for new 250 watt LEDs, reducing power consumption by more than 75%. The conversion is estimated to save over 1 million kWh and \$130,000 per year in oyster and algae growing electricity at their Quilcene facility.

The PUD's energy efficiency program receives around \$900,000 in funding every other year from the Bonneville Power Administration to help PUD customers invest in energy saving improvements to their homes and businesses. In 2020 these funds helped pay for multiple commercial lighting projects, 261 residential heat pumps, as well as dozens of window, water heater, insulation, and appliance upgrades.

Go to jeffpud.org/rebates to learn more or apply now.



The finished product: Oyster Seed



PUD pole and transformers next to Pacific Seafood hoopouse along Linger Longer in Quilcene

Revised Water Leak Adjustment Policy

PUD Commissioners recently accepted an amendment of the Customer Service Policy allowing leak adjustments on home irrigation lines. The policy now allows all residential water customers experiencing a high bill due to a water leak the ability to qualify for a bill adjustment of up to \$1,000 **if the following criteria are met:**

- The leak must be in excess of 10,000 gallons greater than the Customer's average monthly usage for the most recent three years during the same time period.
- The Customer must not have been granted a leak adjustment for the same service location within the last 24 mos.
- The leak must have been repaired within 10 days of discovery.
- A leak adjustment request letter and all required documents must be submitted no more than two months after the repair of the leak.

Customers are required to provide proof of the leak. Proof may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Invoice from a plumber or contractor
- Parts receipt
- Repair photos and location of the leak
- Onsite verification by PUD water crew

Leaks that are not eligible for a billing adjustment may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Commercial accounts
- Leaks that are the result of owner negligence
- Leak of which the Customer should have been aware
- Pipes or equipment in plain sight
- Leaking toilet(s)

Formed in 1939
1st Water System 1981
Public Power
since 2013

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April 2021 Newsletter

Public Power, Local Services,
Community Connections

*pictured: BPA transmission lines
running next to the Quilcene
substation*

**Jefferson County
Public Utility District**

BOC Reviewing Rate Increase Proposal

This month the PUD Board of Commissioners will be reviewing a staff proposal to raise rates for all electric, water, and sewer services.

The proposed increases follow recommendations from a recently completed Cost of Service Study performed by FCS Group on behalf of the PUD. The study showed most current PUD rates did not match the cost of providing the services. Expenses outpaced revenues for water and sewer services in 2020, with a \$400,000 shortfall in net margins predicted in the 2021 budget. Though the 2021 budget for the electric department is forecasted at \$1.6M to the positive, FCS found that current rates would result in the PUD failing to meet required ratios for debt service beginning in 2023.

According to General Manager Kevin Streett, the PUD must raise rates. "Current water and sewer rates do not cover the day-to-day costs of providing the services nor the millions in capital improvements we know our aging water and sewer systems need. On the electrical side, upcoming capital improvements are also a driving factor. Most outages in our county are storm related, but more and more are due to aging equipment that we cannot improve or replace without adequate capital reserves."

Streett has proposed a series of gradual rate increases over the next 4 years. According to Streett, the PUD's low-income credit would increase at the same rate to ensure support for struggling customers. "Our current low-income budget is \$500,000 a year. We also collect and distribute on bill donations of around \$30,000 for customers who are really struggling through the Rainy Day Fund. We helped dozens of businesses affected by COVID get access to \$40,000 in CARES act funding to pay down past due bills. We know a lot of people are struggling and we do not take that lightly."

While Streett recommended increases for most commercial service rates, he did not propose any electric rate increases for schools. He invites customers to review the full slate of proposed rate changes on the PUD's website and welcomes customer feedback. "Staff can only make suggestions. The commissioners have the ultimate say on rates. They are elected by the public and they take public comment seriously." *Note: the PUD does not provide water and sewer services in the City of Port Townsend.*

Rate Decision Timeline:

Public Rate Hearing: Apr 6th

First Possible Vote: Apr 20th

2nd Possible Vote: May 4th

Proposed Electric Increases

2021: 3% avg across all classes

2022: 7% 2023: 3.5%

2024: 3.5%

Proposed Water Increases

2021: 16% avg across all classes

2022 & 2023: 16%

+\$5 Capital Surcharge

2024: 6.75%

+\$7 Capital Surcharge

Proposed Sewer Increases

2021 Increase: 22%

2022: 4% 2023: 18%

+\$5 Capital Surcharge

2024: 3.5%

+\$7 Capital Surcharge

Depending on who you talk to at the PUD, everyday is lineworker appreciation day and no days are ever Sewer Operator day, or Fleet Management day, Accounts Payable day, or Newsletter Editor's day. Customers may be upset at the PUD when the power goes out, but they couldn't be happier to see our line trucks heading into their neighborhood. The same is true on social media. Power goes out: "C'mon PUD, what do we pay you for?" Lights go on: "Bless you linemen!"

Sunday April 18th 2021 is National Lineworker Appreciation Day and the recognition is much deserved. The PUD is lucky to have a such a brave, hard working, and talented crew. They live here, many are from here, and put their bodies on the line to keep the power on no matter the time of day or weather.

If you see our lineworkers in April, tell 'em thanks.*

NATIONAL LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY APRIL 18

PUD Foremen:

Bo Lee

Eric Tharaldsen

PUD Journeymen:

Casey Alm

Kurt Andersen

Dylan Brackney

Jonathan Dehnert

Jeremiah Jones

PUD Apprentice:

Josh Beadle



*From at least 6 feet away. Actually more is better. Letters and cards may be best.

Apply for the PUD's Summer Intern Program!
Local high school grads or soon to be grads enrolled in college during fall 2021 can apply to work for the PUD this summer. Earn \$14/hr, work 30-40 hrs per week. Applications close May 8th. jeffpud.org/employment

What Caused the Most Outages this Winter?

TREES + BRANCHES

Trees and tree branches are the number one cause of outages in Jefferson County. Since Oct 1st 2020, trees have caused 127 outage incidences.

Trees and branches falling onto power lines left 18,310 customers without power a total of 73,944 hours at an average of 4 hours per customer affected.

How to prevent outages from trees? Trimming and removal of problem trees.

EQUIPMENT FAILURE

Material and equipment failures led to 31 outages affecting 2,621 customers for a total of 11,663 hours without power for an average of 4.4 hours each.

SQUIRRELS

More active in the summer, this winter squirrels, birds and other small animal conductors caused 15 outages for 4,154 total hours, affecting 1,618 customers an avg of 2.6 hours each.

**Celebrating
8 years of Public
Power in April 2021**

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



PUD Contractors work to install a new pole and service line along Sims Way above the Boat Haven in PT

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

May 2021 Newsletter

CALL IF YOU NEED HELP

360 385-5800

If you are experiencing financial hardships due to the effects of the COVID-19 virus and related shutdowns, don't wait. Contact Customer Service anytime between 9am- 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, to discuss payment arrangements and learn about payment assistance programs.

Water Rates to Increase June 1st

At their April 20th meeting, PUD commissioners approved a four year slate of water increases beginning with a 16% increase in June.

Bills are expected to go up an average of \$7 per month.

The PUD does not provide water service to the City of Port Townsend. Electric and sewer rates are being studied further and will be discussed by the board during meetings in May.

Base and Usage Rates what are the differences?

While the front of your PUD bill has a bullseye with the total amount owed each month, look on the back you'll see a detailed breakdown showing how you are charged for each PUD utility service received.

Usage Rate

The usage charge could be zero, or tens of thousands of dollars depending on how much of a service is consumed in a month. In theory, the usage rate recovers the cost of the service the PUD sells. Usage rates are calculated by multiplying the number of kilowatt hours (or gallons) used per month by the price for the service used. As shown above on a current residential electric bill, for usage less than 600 kWh per month, the cost is 8.8 cents. Usage beyond 600 kWh is billed at 10.7 cents.

ELECTRIC SERVICE CHARGES		
Electric Usage	600 kWh @ 0.0882	\$52.92
Electric Usage	1,069 kWh @ 0.107	\$114.38
Electric Base Fee		\$18.50
<i>Current Electric Charges</i>		\$185.80

Base fees

This is the flat, fixed fee customers pay each month for service received, regardless of how much is use. In theory, base fees are intended to cover the utility's fixed costs as well, including infrastructure, overhead, and general administration, and debt service. The PUD's current monthly base fee for residential electric service is \$18.50 as shown above.

Why the detailed explanation?

The PUD is in the process of adopting new water, electric, and sewer rates for the next four years. Part of the discussion has been over where to apply future increases. Is it more fair, or easier on customers to apply increases to base fees or usage rates? Should pricing be used as a signal to inspire customers to adopt behaviors that save energy and reduce total demand? All of these factors are weighed by the PUD commission as they studied rates over the past year and work to formulate new rates for the years to come.

Go Paperless, Sign Up For Auto-Pay, Get a \$10 Credit



There's not much you can't do with your phone these days.

Why not use it to manage your PUD account? By signing up for paperless billing and auto-pay, you'll save trees, paper, and staff time spent dealing with mail and processing checks. We'll repay the favor with a onetime \$10 credit on your bill after signing up. To start, click

Go Paperless on the home page of our website: jeffpud.org.

PUD Recieves Clean Financial Audit for 2020

District Finance Director Mike Bailey knew that the 2020 audit had gone well not so much when he received word that the auditing firm found no issues, but when the auditors reported to the PUD's Board of Commissioners that Bailey was perhaps the most responsive and prompt of all the clients they worked with. General Manager Kevin Streett also complimented Bailey and his team, "As a public utility, clean audits are a necessity. Mike and his team have worked to improve our processes and get our finances in the best shape they have ever been in."



Collins Elected President of WA PUD Association Board

District 2 Commissioner Kenneth Collins was elected President of the Executive Board of the Washington State Public Utility Association (WPUDA) at the association's monthly meeting in April, 2021. WPUDA represents 27 member PUDs in state, regional, and national legislative and policy processes, and offers training and networking opportunities.

Collins previously served as Vice-President and Secretary before being elected WPUDA President. He serves as Secretary of the Board for Energy Northwest, the joint operating agency responsible for the Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant and various solar and wind installations. Collins also serves on the boards of PURMS, the Public Utility Risk Management Service, and the Northwest Open Access Network (NoaNet).

Meter Study Underway

The PUD held its first public meeting with metering study consultant Gordon Wilson on April 22. The purpose of the study is to create business cases for four metering options for PUD commissioners to consider:

- 1. Status Quo.** Continue current mixture of metering systems, with limited annual replacements.
- 2. Manual Read System** Full Replacement with electromechanical meters.
- 3. AMR System** Full Replacement with meters that send signals out but cannot receive signals
- 4. AMI System** Full Replacement with two-way communication.

Wilson will meet with PUD staff, commissioners, and the Citizen Advisory Board over the course of the next three months as the financial models and analyses progress. The goal is to have the board weigh options and pick a plan later this summer.



Questions, Comments, Concerns?
Contact Us Anytime*

(At least by email. Calls preferred during waking hours)

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Jefferson County
Public Utility District



June 2021 Newsletter

Public Power, Local Services,
Community Connections

Call If You Need Help

360 385-5800

Our offices remain closed,
but customer service is
available by phone

**9am - 4:30pm,
Monday - Friday.**

If you are having trouble
paying your bills, contact
us immediately. We have
multiple programs to
assist.

Sign Up for our Email Newsletter

If you decide to go
paperless you can keep
up on the latest from your
PUD by signing up on the
NEWS page of our website
for our weekly or monthly
email newsletter.



Jean Hall
Services Director

Pictured above: A customer using the info on their paper bill to help sign up for Smart Hub

Consider Going Paperless

Customer service receives a lot of mail. While this was clear before the pandemic, it became even more clear a year ago when all mail received by the PUD has to be packed into plastic bags and piled up in separated stacks that were processed by employees wearing masks, face shields, and gloves.

The PUD sends out over 15,000 paper bills each month. Another ~5,000 are delivered digitally only, via email notification with a link to view and pay bills online. Excepting customer preference for paper or a lack of access to computer, phone, or internet, there is no reason why the majority of our bills couldn't be delivered digitally. The cost to send digital bills? Zero. The current cost to send paper bills? Over \$12,000 a month. The time spent by staff processing digital bills? Also zero. Paper bills and checks? Over 150 hours per month, according to Services Director Jean Hall.

In order to reduce costs and free up staff time for other projects, of which Hall says customer service has plenty of, the PUD is asking customers to consider going paperless and paying bills online. It's easily done through an application called Smart Hub, which can be accessed through the PUD's website or downloaded as an app on a smartphone. All it takes to sign up is an email, a password, your PUD account number, and five minutes of your time.

In addition to being able to pay your bill online, Smart Hub gives you access to additional electric or water usage data, lets you report outages automatically, or sign up for outage alerts. Once on Smart Hub you can also choose to Go Paperless and stop receiving a printed bill each month.

Customers who choose Go Paperless and sign up for Autopay will get a \$10 credit on their next bill.

**Go Paperless
& sign up for
Autopay to get a
\$10 credit on your
next bill.**

Autopay saves customers the time needed to log in and pay each month, and saves PUD staff time spent sending payment reminders when customers forget to log in (this happens with paper bills too, of course).

Hall thinks going paperless is a good deal all around, and would like to see as many customers who can receive the \$10 credit. "It saves a lot of time, money, and trees. 15,000 bills and envelopes a month is a lot of paper, believe me!"

(360) 385-5800

jeffpud.org

310 Four Corners Rd. Port Townsend WA 98368

Electric Rates May Rise in July

In early June the board is expected to vote on staff proposals to raise electric rates by an average of 4.25% per year each of the next 4 years. The first increase is proposed to go into effect in July. The goals of the increases are to bring rates closer to the cost of providing the service, and to assure key financial ratios are maintained and capital projects are funded.

2020 Water Quality Data Now Available Online

The PUD has posted Consumer Confidence Reports and Water Use Efficiency Reports for all of its water systems on our website under the WATER/SEWER dropdown tab. The Consumer Confidence Reports will also be mailed to PUD water customers in June. The Consumer Confidence Report is provided to educate customers about where their water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state standards. Our staff routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water in accordance with Federal, State or local laws. In 2020, overall drinking water quality met all drinking water standards.

DRIVE IN WIFI

Choose "JeffPUD_Community" to Connect



PUD

Jefferson County
Public Utility District
jeffpud.org | 360 385 5800

FREE WIFI HOTSPOTS

Up and running around the county: in Brinnon, Gardiner, Chimacum, Marrowstone, Quilcene, at the Airport and in multiple places in Port Townsend. Free, easy to connect, available 24/7, and depending on the location, fast! See the full map with associated speeds at:

jeffpud.org/wifi-hotspots



Pictured left: The Quilcene Substation along E. Quilcene Road at the head of Quilcene Bay has ample parking and some of the fastest internet on our free system. It's also the most picturesque spot to drive up and connect.

GET HELP FOR PAST DUE UTILITY BILLS

Barring any last minute extension by the Governor, **the statewide residential utility shutoff moratorium is currently slated to end on July 31st of this year.**

The PUD does not want to shut off any customers. It is our goal to connect every customer with a past due balance of \$75 or more with a payment assistance program and/or a payment arrangement agreement. But we can't do it on our own, we need customers with past due balances to contact customer service ASAP at (360) 385-5800 btwn 9-4:30pm, M-F.

We also urge customers with past due balances to reach out to OlyCAP. OlyCAP has funding assistance available through the following programs:

LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)

If your household income is at our **below 150% of the poverty rate, you may be eligible for anywhere from \$100 to \$1000** in utility assistance. The amount of funding offered is based on income, household size, and energy usage. Additional funds are available for those financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Apply online at olycap.org/energy-assistance-program or call 360-385-2571 for a mail-out application.

T-RAP (Treasury Rent Assistance Program) Available to renters **at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (though priority is given to those below 50%)**. Funds are intended to assist those experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 with past due rent and associated utilities. Up to 12 months of assistance may be available. Select the housing assistance option on olycap.org or call 360-385-2571

Apply ASAP to determine program eligibility and assistance levels from OlyCAP.

**Publicly Owned
Not For Profit
Locally Operated**
CONTACT US:

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Jeff Randall

jrandall@jeffpud.org
(360) 316-6694

District 2
Ken Collins

kcollins@jeffpud.org
(360) 316-1475

District 3
Dan Toepper

dtoepper@jeffpud.org
(360) 302-0448

General Manager
Kevin Streett

kstreett@jeffpud.org
(360) 385-8360

**July
2021**

*Public Power,
Local Services,
Community
Connections*

PUD

Jefferson County
Public Utility District

Independence & Obligation

photo by Jason Squire

In 2008, Jefferson County citizens declared independence from foreign and remote ownership of their electric grid when they voted to authorize the PUD to acquire the system.

It took another five years of struggle before the PUD was able to assume full ownership and operations, but since April of 2013 the wires and cables that supply power to the homes and businesses of East Jefferson County are owned by the people of Jefferson County, and governed by representatives they elect.

Instead of an ownership model where investments in the reliability of the system are kept to a minimum so profits can be maximized and returned to shareholders around the globe, public ownership of Jefferson County's power grid has resulted in the creation of over 40 new full time and fully benefited jobs, and the return of tens of millions of dollars back to the community in the form of reliability investments in the grid and local spending by employees who live in the community they serve.

In this month's bill, you will see the first in a series of electric rate increases passed by your locally elected commissioners. Rate increases are certainly not the most revered part of local and independent ownership, but in this case they are

needed to modernize and keep reliable an electric grid that has many components reaching the end of their useful life. Is your neighborhood prone to outages on a sunny day? You probably have 30 year old wires buried right in the dirt. Seem like every storm large and small takes out power to your home? You're probably served by a 50 year old substation transformer that lacks a back up circuit to feed power from another direction when one line goes out. (Could also be that you live at the end of miles of distribution line passing by thousands of trees).

Purchasing the electric grid cost the citizens of Jefferson County \$115 million dollars. That price was "as is." Keeping it up and running and getting it ready for the future will take millions more. Your independent and publicly owned utility must constantly balance its obligations to provide its customer owners the best possible service at a fair and reasonable price.

Mizner hired as new Staking Engineer



Though Calvin Mizner only graduated from WSU a few weeks before starting at the PUD, he'd already racked up an impressive resume. His degree is in electrical engineering, and he already had his Engineer In Training (EIT) certification. He'd interned at Snohomish, Grant, and Grays Harbor PUDs. Mizner's father is Operations Manager of Wanapum

Dam for Grant PUD and his mom grew up in Chimacum.

Electrical Engineering Manager Jimmy Scarborough said he had hoped to fill the Staking Engineer position earlier in the year, but Mizner's application and interview were impressive enough to wait for him to finish school. "It was worth it. He has great experience and he's a hard worker who learns quick."

PUD & City of PT win Preservation Award

The Jefferson County Historical Society honored the PUD and the City of PT with a joint Certificate of Merit for work on Water Street to place overhead power underground in the Historic District. The project began in 2016 and was completed in 2020. Powerlines that used to block views and access to historic buildings now run below the streets and into the tunnels.

Get \$10 off your next bill by going paperless and signing up for autopay

go to jeffpud.org
& click GO PAPERLESS
for sign up
instructions



After signing up,
a one time \$10 credit
will be applied
to your next bill

PUD Power
is nearly 95 %
Carbon-Free

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Newsletter Editor: Will O'Donnell wodonnell@jeffpud.org

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

Help for Failing Septic Systems

Jefferson County homeowners dealing with a failing septic system can find financial help through **Jefferson County Public Health's Cost**



Public Health's Cost

Share Program for Septic System Repair. The program provides up to \$20,000 for eligible property owners earning up to 200% of the federal poverty rate. The program offers funding on a sliding scale for applicants over 200%. See the website for more detail.

The goal of this program is to reduce the amount of bacteria making it to the shoreline from failed septic systems. Because of this, the location of eligible **properties must be within approximately 500ft of the shoreline or of a stream that discharges to the shoreline.** Nearly the entirety of the Jefferson County qualifies, with limited exceptions. Also, septic systems must have been permitted (or pre-permit if built before 1970) and found to be failing by a certified professional to qualify. Property owners must also live on the property with the failed or failing system.

For more info or to apply go to the county's website: jeffersoncountypublichealth.org and search for the **Cost Share Program for Septic System Repair** page. Or call (360) 385-9406.

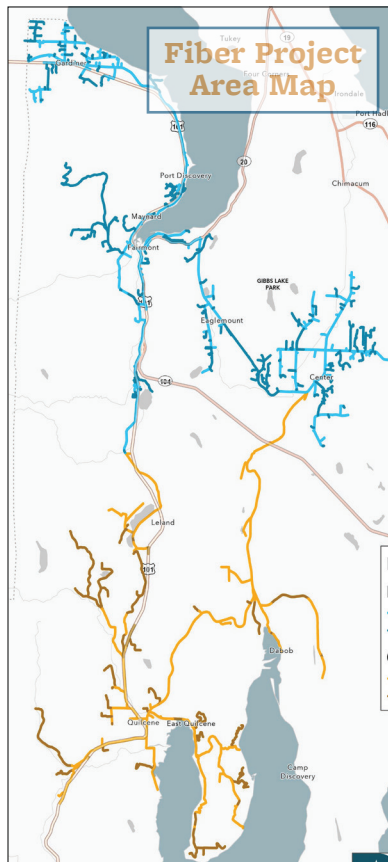
If worried you don't qualify but still in need of financial help for a failing system, Jefferson County Public Health asks property owners to reach out anyway as additional funding is being sought for future grant programs.

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement PC-01J18001 to the Washington State Department of Health. The contents of the document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.



photo by Jason Squire

**August
Newsletter 2021**
Public Power, Local Services,
Community Connections



Broadband Plans!

Jefferson County PUD is partnering with the State of WA on an application for \$12.6M from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Broadband Infrastructure Funding Program. **If awarded, the PUD would build more than 160 miles of fiber to over 1600 homes and businesses in Quilcene, Discovery Bay, Gardiner, and part of Chimacum in early 2022.**

This project builds off the PUD's recent lease of fiber owned by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) running from Olympia to Port Angeles. The PUD will connect to the BPA fiber where it passes through Discovery Bay and Quilcene. According to PUD General Manager Kevin Streett, the BPA fiber boosts the PUD's network capacity and stability as well as provides the PUD a secure second pathway off the peninsula. Currently the only fiber pathways into and out of East Jefferson County run across the Hood Canal Bridge.

Streett is calling the Quilcene and Discovery Bay project the first of what he sees as multiple phases in the PUD's goal of ensuring that all Jefferson County residents have access to affordable and reliable broadband internet service. He says future phases are dependent on funding availability and funder priorities. Currently, building fiber to rural unserved communities is paramount he says, but noted that the PUD is also working to make it easier for businesses and residents to connect to the more than 50 miles of fiber the PUD has already installed in the county. Visit the broadband tab on the website for more updates.

Watering Wisely

It's been a hot dry summer. Plants & lawns are thirsty.

It may seem hard to overwater in a record dry spell, but it's easy to waste water. Running sprinklers in the heat of the day guarantees that some of the water sprayed will simply evaporate. Running irrigation without a timer risks oversaturation and runoff. Due to capacity issues in our Bywater Bay water system, we are asking nearby customers to practice conservation to ensure enough supply for everyone: **Water every other day, water early in the morning, fix leaks,** etc. But this is good advice for all water users. Watering wisely avoids waste, protects water supplies, and keeps bills lower.



Dressler, Gale Hired as New Line Crew Pre-Apprentices



Willy Dressler

Finding linemen is hard. Nearly every utility has openings, and the supply is limited. Making linemen takes more time, but it's maybe just a slight bit easier.

In July the PUD hired two new electrical pre-apprentices to work and learn with the crew in the yard and on jobsites. If big outages come in the middle of the night, they go with. Their duties are limited though, and they cannot work without a journeyman. After a year as pre-apprentices, they can apply for the formal apprenticeship program, which lasts 4 years.

Willy Dressler came to the PUD from Frederickson Electric where he worked as an electrical apprentice.

Previously, Dressler worked at Finnriver Farm and Cidery but left after four years to attend line school in Texas. Dressler returned to his native Jefferson County with two small children and today he has three, ranging from 6 to 1 1/2.



Tyler Gale

Like Dressler, Tyler

Gale was also born and raised on the Olympic Peninsula, though for him Port Angeles is home. Gale attended line school in Boise before returning to take a job as Groundman at Clallam PUD. Two of Gale's uncles were linemen, he said, and he grew up aware of the trade and the good pay and solid benefits the career path offered. Being a lineman also meshed well with Gale's love of being outside and working with his hands.

UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE

LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)

- Covers electricity and heating costs (incl. wood, oil, etc.)
- Federal Program- lots of funding currently available
- 150% of poverty level or below (Some Flexibility- call again even if you have been denied funding before)
- Addtl. funding for Covid-19 & past-dues (up to \$2500)

Go to olycap.org or call 360 385 2571 for more info.

T-RAP (Treasury Rental Assistance Program)

- Help for past due rent and past-due utilities for renters
- Federal Program- lots of funding currently available
- Covers all types of utilities, up to 12 months past-due
- 80% of area median income or below
- Evidence of Covid-19 related impact required

Go to olycap.org or call 360 385 2571 for more info.

Rainy Day Fund (administered by OlyCAP & SVdP)

- Covers past-due PUD utilities (water, sewer, power)
- Funded by PUD customer donations
- Awards of up to \$500 per customer
- 150% poverty rate or below

Call St. Vincent de Paul at 360 379 1325 for help or

Go to olycap.org or call 360 385 2571 for more info.

Get \$10 off your next bill! GO PAPERLESS & sign up for Autopay

**go to jeffpud.org
& click GO PAPERLESS
under the
Sustainability
dropdown for
instructions
to sign up**



**After signing up,
a one time \$10
credit will
be applied
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**You have the
power with
a PUD**
Contact us Anytime!

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PUD

Jefferson County
Public Utility District

September
Newsletter 2021

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

Pictured: A PUD bucket truck being outfitted with paper rhododendrons prior to the start of the Rhody parade. The scaled back parade was held in mid August this year.

Deborah Shomer knew a ductless heat pump would help lower her monthly electric bills. And it did, decreasing her kWh usage by 52% after installation. But she remained skeptical of the heat pump's air conditioning ability. She just didn't think she'd need it in her well shaded home outside of Port Townsend. For all the 23 years prior she'd lived there, she never had.

But in July, when temperatures pushed 100 F and broke records across the northwest, Shomer described the air conditioning her heat pump provided as "a kind of miracle. I felt so lucky." According to Shomer, it was one of many minor miracles that occurred along the way to improving energy efficiency in her aging home.

Shomer, like many in our county, is a senior citizen living frugally off a very small fixed-income. She lives in and owns a manufactured home and grows vegetables and flowers in her own garden. Every expense is dear, and she's careful about every purchase. She worked with PUD staff repeatedly to go over rebate program details. Ultimately she was able to have the heat pump, a dozen new vinyl windows, and a new water heater installed at no out of pocket cost. How was she able to do it?

Because Shomer is enrolled in the PUD's low-income bill credit program, she qualifies for higher than standard rebates on approved home efficiency improvements. Also, when it became clear that no PUD rebated heat pump water heater would physically fit in her home, PUD staff referred Shomer to the local nonprofit Real Estate Professionals for Affordable Housing (REPAH), who help fund essential repairs and improvements for low income homeowners.

REPAH then brought in Habitat For Humanity to provide additional funding. Between REPAH, Habitat, and the PUD, all of Shomer's repairs and improvements were covered. Real estate broker and REPAH member Terry Smith also helped Shomer solicit and review bids. Alpha Builders, who are based in Port Angeles and have experience with low-income efficiency rebate projects, were picked to install the heat pump and windows. Coon Plumbing replaced the water heater.

Despite the many steps involved, Shomer says she couldn't be happier with the outcome, or the patience and generosity of the people she encountered along the way. She said having a little extra money to spend each month because of lower bills helps too. **Learn more about our programs at jeffpud.org/rebates.**

For more details and contact info on home repair and efficiency help, see the back of this newsletter



(360) 385-5800

310 Four Corners Rd. Port Townsend WA 98368

jeffpud.org

UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

WA State's shutoff moratorium may expire Sept. 30th. Don't risk losing service because of past-due bills. Call the PUD to talk about payment arrangements or seek financial help from one of the programs below.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

- Covers power & heating costs (incl. wood, oil, etc.)
- Federal Program- lots of funding currently available
- 150% of poverty level or below (please reapply if denied before, addtl. deductions may be accepted)
- Addtl. funding for Covid & past-dues (up to \$2500)

Go to olycap.org or call 360-385-2571 for more info.

Treasury Rental Assistance Program

- Help for past due rent & rental utilities
- Federal Program- lots of funding currently available
- Covers all types utilities, up to 12 months past-due
- 80% of area median income or below
- Evidence of Covid-19 related impact required

Go to olycap.org or call 360-385-2571 for more info.

PUD Rainy Day Fund

- Covers past-due PUD utilities (water, sewer, power)
- Awards of up to \$500 per customer
- 150% poverty rate or below
- Funded by PUD customer donations
- Donate on your bill to help others

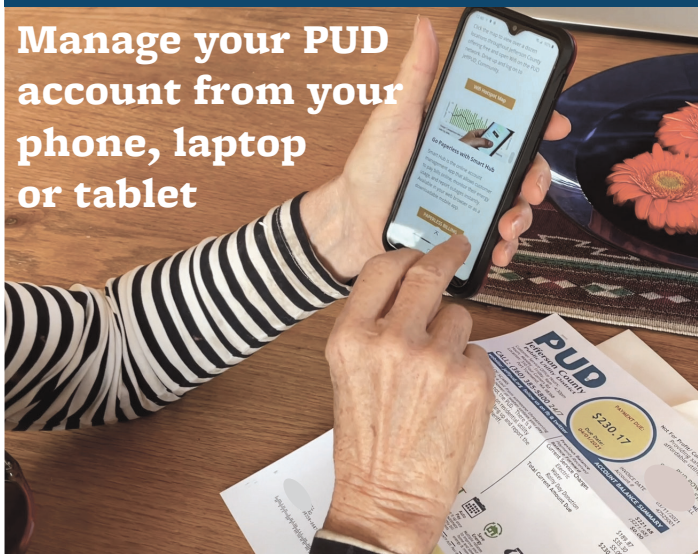
Call St. Vincent de Paul at 360-379-1325 or

Go to olycap.org or call 360-385-2571 for more info.

Get \$10 off your next bill!

GO PAPERLESS & sign up for Autopay

Manage your PUD account from your phone, laptop or tablet



2021 Summer Interns



Raphael Bakin

High School:
Port Townsend

College:
University of WA
3rd Yr Student

Major:
Atmospheric
Sciences/
Meteorology

PUD Tasks
GIS Mapping
and Data Entry/
Analysis



Daniel Paterson

High School:
Chimacum

College
Lewis & Clark
3rd Yr Student

Major
Computer Science

PUD Tasks
GIS Support
Finance Support
Water Crew Help
HR Support
Website Support



Zach Fagundes

High School:
Mukilteo
(also Chimacum)

College
Whatcom
Community
College
3rd Yr Student

Major:
Information
Technology
PUD Tasks
Website Support

The PUD offers summer internships for Jefferson County residents enrolled in a college degree program. Applications are accepted in the spring. The PUD also has an opportunity for a Broadband Intern this fall. See our website for more details.

Help For Home Improvements

REPAH JEFFERSON COUNTY

Emergency home repairs for low income homeowners

jcarwa.com/repah

360-531-1934

repahjc@gmail.com

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Must own home and have trouble making repairs due to age, income or disability. Focus on Quilcene & Brinnon area.

habitatejc.org/repair-a-home

360-379-2827

homes@habitatejc.org

OLYCAP WEATHERIZATION

OlyCAP provides free home energy-efficiency improvements to households that meet income guidelines. Eligibility varies by income type, household size, and other factors. Help for homeowners and renters. Home assessment provided prior to any work. Repair programs available.

olycap.org/weatherization

360-452-4726 ext. 6253

cgraham@olycap.org

**Commissioners
are Elected
to Alternating
6 Year Terms**

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Jefferson County
Public Utility District

October Newsletter 2021

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

PICTURED:
PUD staff posted to prevent cars from driving under a fallen tree and powerline blocking Oak Bay Rd during a September storm.

2022 Budget: Constants and Variables

There are ways the 2022 planning process has resembled past budget cycles: standard cost of living adjustments, requests for new trucks and tools, tax allocation talks, capital project lists, and debates about paying for large projects out of cash reserves or borrowing to spread the costs out over time.

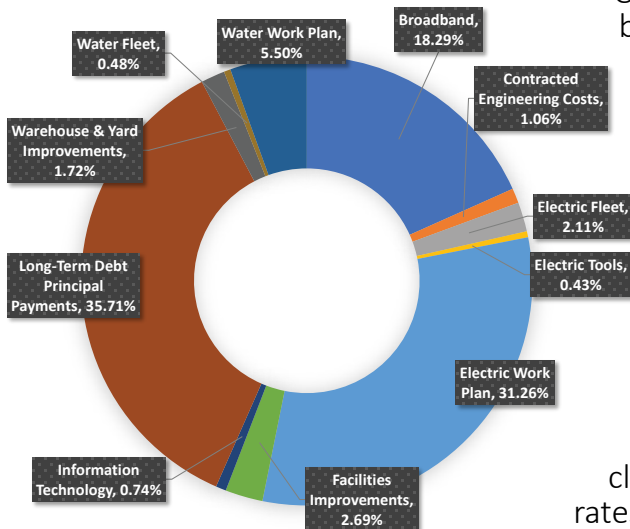
And then there's broadband. By the end of 2021, the PUD will have applied for over \$40M in federal and state funds to build fiber optic cable to over 4,000 rural homes and businesses in Jefferson County.

It's possible the PUD could receive all \$40M, or none of it, or more likely, some of it. Depending on its success with funding agencies, the PUD's 2022 capital projects budget could be under \$10M or approaching \$25M (as shown below, it's currently budgeted for \$11.5M). According to General Manager Kevin Streett, even a few million awarded in funding will create big changes.

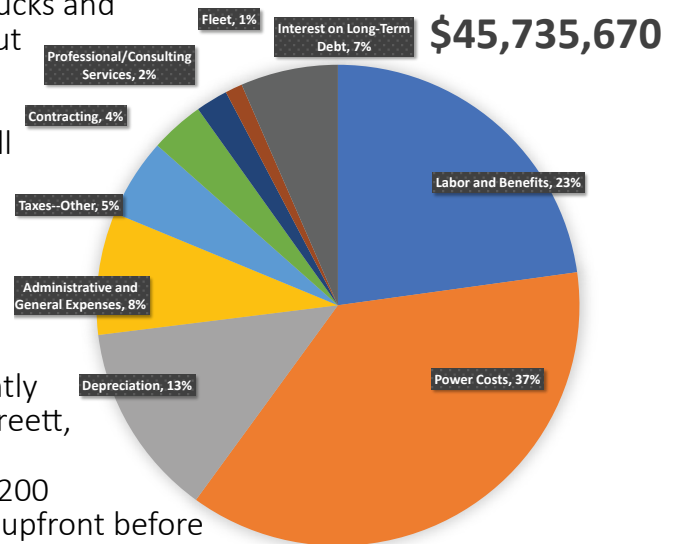
"Our smallest grant application has us installing fiber to over 200 homes. Still a big job. And with grants there's a big cash outlay upfront before reimbursement," said Streett.

Given the uncertainties around how much or little broadband projects will affect the PUD's cash reserves in 2022, Streett and Finance Director Mike Bailey have inserted what they describe as "triggers" into the narrative of their capital budget proposal. "The triggers are intended to let the commissioners know that some projects can either be postponed or delayed a bit if revenues are down or expenses are up," said Bailey. "Even if it's in the approved budget, we have options."

Capital and Debt Principal Costs \$11,520,225



Expenses by Category



On the expense side of the budget, Streett said staffing levels will be another trigger. "We've proposed adding 3 new broadband positions, but depending on grants, it could be 1 from the start or all 3 but only in the last quarter." Streett and Bailey have budgeted for 6 new positions in total for 2022, including a Finance Manager and another Lineman.

Tree trimming in 2022 is set at \$800,000, the same as 2021, though up from \$500,000 budgeted in previous years. The Water Department's Capital projects budget, which will see improvements to a number of wells and well houses, is set at \$633,105, similar to 2021's \$609,500.

As with 2021, 2022 will see rate increases set in for both water and electric services. A four year slate of increases was approved by the Commissioners in 2021 to help the PUD come closer to directly recovering the cost of each utility service. Sewer rates are expected to be revised before the end of 2021.

Meter Replacement Proposed for 2022



The PUD is budgeting \$1.5M for meter replacement in 2022.

After being delayed in 2018, and subjected to a lengthy cost benefit analysis in 2020 and 2021, meter replacement is moving forward with the issuance of a request for proposals in late October and the expected selection of a vendor in December. Installation of new electric meters would begin in the spring of 2022.

The PUD currently has around 20,000 electric meters installed in Jefferson County. Most of the meters are over 30 years old, and some over 50. Just over a 1/3 of the meters are more recent replacements installed by the PUD since 2013. The proposed plan is to replace all of the meters* with a new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. AMI was determined to offer the best features and value in the cost benefit analysis and allows for remote reading and better control. **Customers signed up for our meter Opt-Out program will not be affected.*

Sims Way Corridor Project

The PUD is collaborating with the Port and City of Port Townsend on planning for right of way improvements along Sims Way between the Boat Haven and Kah Tai Lagoon. The project, once complete, would allow the Port to add an acre of working space to the boatyard; the PUD to remove hazard trees growing into powerlines; and the City to replace the tall poplars bordering Kah Tai with smaller less hazardous plantings.

PUD Operations Director Scott Bancroft describes the trees adjacent to the Boat Haven as fire and outage risks and supports their removal. "They never should have been planted there because they've grown up right into our power lines. You can see a line of burn marks where they're contacting the wires. Trimming doesn't solve the problem. They need to come out."

Total project cost is estimated at \$1.97M, and includes undergrounding of powerlines and installation of a new walking path. According to Port staff, expanding the Boat Haven to the very edge of the right of way increases the yard size by 5% and could support up to 20 new jobs. And without overhead powerlines to worry about, taller and larger boats can be set up for repair in the acreage added by the project.

No start date has been given for the project, and it is not included in the PUD's 2022 budget. Port, City, and PUD staff plan to engage in public outreach and explore joint funding and design options in 2022.



CALL IF YOU NEED HELP!

There are lots of programs to help customers struggling to pay utility bills. Call PUD Customer Service to talk about payment arrangements or seek financial help from one of the programs below.

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PUD POWER
is 95%
CARBON-FREE

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Jefferson County
Public Utility District

November Newsletter 2021

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

Pictured: PUD
line crew working
to remove a
fallen tree from
transmission
lines

Why So Many Outages this Fall?

In September and October, more trees and more branches caused more outages than normally occur during the worst months of the winter. In fact we had the worst September and October for outages in more than five years, and maybe the worst September of all time. This despite having increased our tree trimming budgets for the past two years and having worked to remove additional problem trees from transmission line routes. So what happened? Well, to start with, a lot of extreme weather.

RECORD HEAT WAVE/ EXTENDED DROUGHT!

In late June, temperatures rose to record highs all over the Northwest, with Port Townsend hitting 104F and Quilcene peaking at 111F. The high temperatures cooked clams in their shells and scalded leaves on trees and bushes across the county. While 2021 didn't come close to matching drought records set in 2015, we did have 51 consecutive rain free days this past summer, and far below average amounts of precipitation. None of which was good for trees, and especially hard on edge trees, like those along roads and powerlines, which are more exposed to the elements.

WETTEST SEPTEMBER/ COLDEST OCTOBER!

Usually the first few storms of the season have higher than average outage counts, as they bring down limbs and trees that may have died or been damaged during the summer but were still hanging around. But more rain fell in the first weekend in September than in months, and here in Jefferson County, the winds converged from west and south, knocking what seemed like half of the Olympic National Forest onto PUD powerlines. At one time there were more than 30 locations without power in the county, and thousands of customers, from Coyle to North Beach. Complete restoration took over 3 days, and some customers were without power the entire time.

THE BOMB CYCLONE/ LA NINA RETURNS!

The wind and rain just kept coming right through October, culminating in a giant record breaking low pressure event off the coast in late October. And trees kept falling on our lines, week after week. Some heavily tree'd areas like Gardiner, East Quilcene, Port Ludlow South, had almost nightly outages. Our crews would cut a tree out of the lines one night only to have to return the next to remove a different tree. Conspiracy theories about the repeat outages started popping up on the internet. Some suspected grid hacking and a PUD coverup. Nope, just some of the most extreme fall weather we've had in years coming to a heavily forested county filled with increasingly stressed out trees. Our crews expect to keep busy all winter long.

Who's on First?

During outages, the PUD's first priority is to eliminate or contain any dangers to public safety before beginning repair or restoration work. For this reason, the PUD also prioritizes restoration of power to the hospital. After public safety is addressed, restoration work is prioritized in the following order:

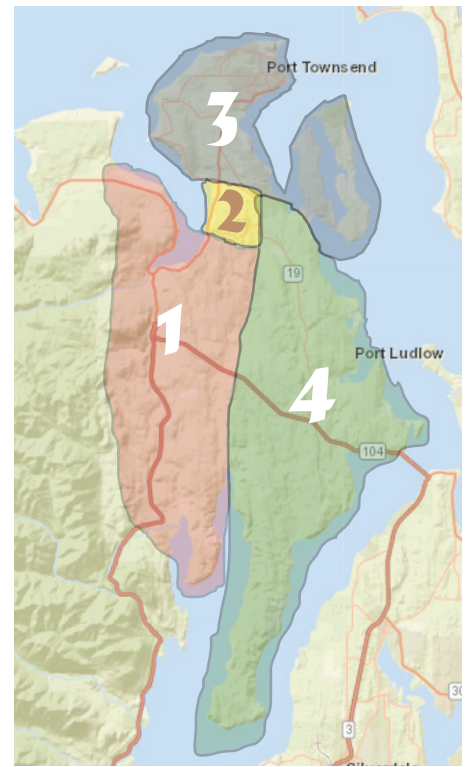
Transmission Lines
Substations
3-Phase Distribution
Single Phase Distribution
Secondary Distribution

The order above generally corresponds with the potential number of customers affected, with Transmission Line or Substation outages affecting 1000s, and Secondary Distribution lines affecting anywhere from 1-10 customers.

Broadband Projects Update

Jefferson County PUD is pursuing up to \$40M in federal and state grant funding to build fiber to all unserved areas of Jefferson County. We've currently broken out our grant requests into four project areas, pictured to the right. Project areas 1 & 2 have been submitted and are under review. If awarded, construction would begin in 2022. Project areas 3 & 4 are under development, and will be submitted this winter for construction in '23-'24.

Unserved is defined as lacking access to "terrestrial wireline" internet service capable of delivering download speeds of at least 25mbps and upload speeds of 3mbps. "Terrestrial wireline" means service from a wire, cable, or fiber crossing a distance of land, not beamed in by cellular, satellite, or radio signal. By this definition, the vast majority of the PUD's service territory is unserved, though many customers, especially those living in denser communities, such as Port Townsend, Port Hadlock, Port Ludlow, Cape George Colony, are considered served. As no grant funding can be spent to build to served areas, and some served areas are only a street away from an unserved area, PUD staff have been working to research and map service availability on a house by house basis. Want to help? Take the speed test under the Broadband tab on our website.



Blair Promoted to Finance Manager



Melissa Blair

Though Melissa Blair only moved to Marrowstone Island from the Seattle area in 2017, her husband's family has roots going back to the 70s. Blair said she loves the quality of life and recreation Jefferson County provides. Her family (she has a daughter in

preschool and a son at Chimacum Primary) even took their first sailing trip to the San Juans this summer. Blair came to the PUD after years working in the accounting departments of Seattle-area software companies. Since coming to the PUD, she's moved from Account Technician II to Utility Accountant II and now to Finance Manager. Blair said she is excited for the new expanded role and is looking forward to doing more expense analysis, grant reporting, and training & support of her team.



According to PUD Resource Manager Bill Graham, the "rising limb of the hydrograph is under way," meaning water levels in PUD aquifers have stopped dropping and are beginning to recharge. Graham said that during normal years, rising fall water levels are due more to decreased customer consumption than rainfall, though this year the two factors are likely working in tandem. "For the deeper aquifers and especially the bedrock aquifers like Lazy C, water level recovery actually *ends* in the fall" said Graham. "In our shallower sand and gravel motherload aquifers, like those serving the Quimper System, the bulk of the recharge usually takes place in the winter. With this fall's wet weather and a La Nina coming we should recharge quickly," said Graham.

**Regular Meetings
of the PUD Board of
Commissioners now
begin at 4pm.**

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December Newsletter 2021
Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

Tis The Season for Sharing

We live in a generous community. Our county benefits from the work of many community groups organized to help their fellow citizens. And these community groups benefit from a large number of citizens with the time and means to spend helping others. Especially this time of year.

But, not everyone in Jefferson County has an abundance of time, nor a lot of extra money to spare. If you fall into this category, but want to help contribute to those less fortunate, consider rounding up on your PUD bill each month. It's easy to do, just check the box on the back of your bill. Using Smart Hub, you can also choose to donate an additional \$5 or \$10 per month. If you have the means to share more, we also accept one-time donations of any amount.

All of the money collected goes to the PUD's Rainy Day fund.

The Rainy Day fund is used by OlyCAP and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to help Jefferson County residents on the verge of losing power or water service. For citizens struggling to find enough money to eat, winter power bills to heat often poorly insulated homes can be crushing, even with a PUD low-income discount. OlyCAP and St. Vincent de Paul use customer donated Rainy Day funds to make sure our most at-risk neighbors have heat, light, and clean drinking water.

Isaak Promoted, Geise joins Finance



Amanda Isaak

This fall, the PUD's finance department has promoted two members and added another. In October, Melissa Blair was promoted to Financial Services Manager. In November, Amanda Isaak was promoted to Utility Accountant II, and Theresa Geise moved from Customer Service to Finance to take the Accounting Technician I job. Both are excited for the new challenges and opportunities. Customer Service hopes to add a replacement for Geise in December.



Theresa Geise

Pictured Above: Mt. Olympus

Story and photo by

Resource Manager Bill Graham.

"I love this shot of the mountain. A friend of mine and I drove up to Hurricane Ridge on New Years Day right behind the snowplow, as if it was escorting us. We had the place to ourselves for almost an hour at sunrise. Doesn't get much better than that."



"Olympic National Park and Forest constitute 60% of our county lands and Mt. Olympus is right smack-dab in the middle. We can claim it more than any other PUD can, even if we don't supply power or water anywhere near there.

Jefferson County has one of the widest ranges of precipitation in the nation, with Mt. Olympus at 250+ inches annually and PT receiving around 19 inches."



Why is *Half* the Power Out?

When customers call to report an outage, one of the first things we ask is if they've checked their breakers. Many would-be outages are merely tripped breakers. If a customer hasn't checked their breakers (or generator, or security system) and calls afterhours, a \$250 charge may be assessed if the cause of the outage is customer equipment.

Sometimes however, power will be out to one part of the house and not the other without any breakers having tripped at all. Even stranger will be flickering lights, appliances or equipment that don't seem to operate properly, or don't operate at all.

While in a very old home this sort of problem could be caused by ancient wiring, rodent colonies, and/or ghosts, in homes with relatively up-to-code, modern wiring, the problem might be outside.

At most homes and businesses in Jefferson County, three wires run from PUD transformers to the meter at the home. Two of the wires are "hot." They supply the electricity from the transformer to the meter. Each carry 120V, and when combined by a double pole breaker, they can supply 240V to appliances like driers or electric ovens. The third wire is the "neutral" carrying power back from the house to the transformer.



Due to repeated expansion from heating when in use, and cooling and shrinking when not, over time the hot wires can sometimes work themselves loose of the connection that holds them in place. Or, if they get too hot, due to overloading or power surges, the metal wire itself might burn, melt, or otherwise degrade. At the transformer, connections can also be corroded by the saltwater that naturally makes up some of our coastal air.

So, if power suddenly goes out to part of the home, but no breakers trip, it could be that one of the two hot wires has become loose (causing flickering) or disconnected (no power). This can happen at the transformer, in the meter base, or at the connection to the main breaker in the panel.

Similarly, the jaws or sockets that hold an electrical meter in place and transmit power through it, can wear and weaken over time. As they heat and cool, the grip of the jaw loosens. If it loosens enough, it allows for minute arcing between the jaw and the meter, leading to melting or burning of the metal socket. Eventually this can lead to loss, or partial loss, of power.

If you're experiencing loss of power to part of the house, and your breakers remain untripped, give the PUD a call during working hours. We can schedule a crew member to inspect our equipment and repair any issues they find. It's a good idea to alert a licensed electrician at the same time, especially if we have to turn off power for repairs to be done inside.



Stay Away from Downed Power Lines

- Never touch a downed powerline. Assume all downed lines are energized.
- Never drive over a downed power line, or under a line that is sagging over the roadway
- Stay at least 35 feet away. The ground around a powerline may also be energized.
- Never touch trees, limbs, cars, fences, guardrails, or other items that are touching power lines. Anything touching a power line is just as dangerous as the power line itself.
- If a power line is touching someone, stay away from them. If you try to rescue them, you may also become a victim. Call 911 for emergency help.

Happy Holidays
from all of us at
Jefferson County
PUD!

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