



Jefferson County
Public Utility District

July 2023 Newsletter

*Celebrating
10 Years
of Public Power*

FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS AND FIVE HUNDRED MILES OF FIBER INTERNET FOR RURAL JEFFERSON COUNTY

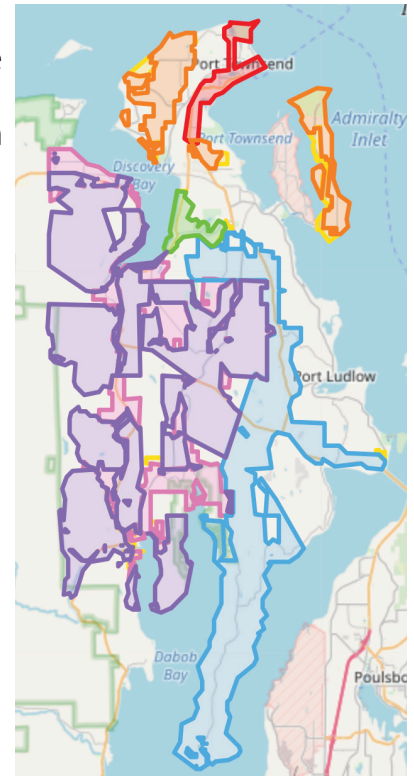
To date, the PUD has obtained more than \$51M in funding to build 540 miles of fiber in rural Jefferson County. We've won every grant we've applied for and will now be able to build fiber to just about every home or business in our electric service territory lacking access to broadband internet and stuck with outdated DSL, expensive satellite, spotty cellular, or in some cases, no internet at all.

The downside, of course, is that it's a huge task and a lot of work. Due to funding deadlines, we are installing fiber to all of Quilcene, Discovery Bay, Gardiner, and bit of Chimacum first (see PURPLE and PINK areas on the map). Work is underway now on the Bolton Peninsula. Residents in the area are urged to sign up for installation ASAP on our website

under the Broadband tab. In fact, residents and businesses in all of the colored areas are urged to register ASAP. There is no cost for installation for the first ~60% of signups. After that threshold has been met, a \$750 connection fee may apply.

Our smallest area, in GREEN, has already passed its sign-up threshold. Construction is expected to start in spring of 2024. The ORANGE area is at 42% and will see fiber installation begin in the second half of 2024. The BLUE area is our most recently funded project, thanks to the USDA and State of WA. Work begins in 2025. The RED area is for businesses only. There is no threshold and work will be ongoing starting this winter.

More info about service levels and our open access policy can be found at: fiber.jeffpud.org



PUD fiber buildout areas.

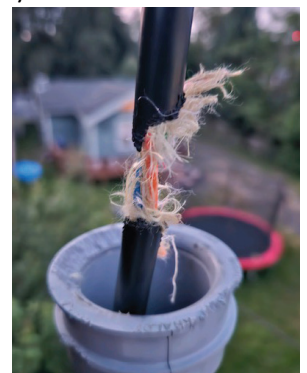
SUMMER MONTHS MEAN SQUIRREL OUTAGES

May through October are the peak months for outages caused by small animals (sometimes birds but usually squirrels). Small animals accounted for approx. 8% of JPUD outages in 2022. Outages declared "unknown" (12% of total) are often animal contact as well. In 2022, the number of hours customers went without power because of small animals totaled 1,148. Only non-snow related trees and branches account for more outages incidents (35.2%) and total customer hours out (436K) in Jefferson County.

Critter high wire acts don't always lead to outages. The unfortunate animal must contact both a "hot" line and a nearby ground, but the moment contact is made—*ZAP!*—The

resulting outage can be localized or broad in scale depending upon where in the system the fault occurred. Substations and larger transmission poles can also be impacted by wildlife, leading to larger outages. Birds can quickly build nests atop high voltage equipment, causing a similar fault to occur, but on a far larger scale.

Wildlife contact with utility equipment is expensive and, unfortunately, not going away any time soon.



Fiber cable chewed by squirrel.

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Pre-Scheduled Electric Rate Increase Begins July 5

The third of four rate increases approved by the PUD Board of Commissioners in 2021 goes into effect on July 5th. The rate increases were instituted gradually by the commission to reduce short term impacts on ratepayers while helping to cover long term capital expenses needed to provide safe and reliable service that improve quality of life. In 2023 the PUD replaced one 50+ year-old substation transformer and put out a bid to replace a second transformer that just turned 60. In the coming years, up to 3 additional transformers need replacement, as do multiple other large and expensive components in our substations. Also needing replacement are many

Effective Date:	July 5, 2021	July 5, 2022	July 5, 2023	July 5, 2024
Basic Charge:				
Single Phase	\$ 21.00	\$ 23.50	\$ 26.00	\$28.50
Three Phase	30.65	34.30	37.95	41.59
Low Income Credit:	(44.84)	(50.18)	(55.51)	(60.85)
Energy Charge per kWh:				
Tier 1 (0 – 600)	\$ 0.0882	\$ 0.0908	\$ 0.0936	\$ 0.0966
Tier 2 (601 – 1,600)	0.1070	0.1102	0.1136	0.1172
Tier 3 (Greater than 1,600)	0.1218	0.1254	0.1293	0.1334

30+ year old direct-buried cables. As mentioned below, the PUD is midway through a \$4M meter replacement project. In all the PUD anticipates nearly \$35M in capital improvements by 2030, including upgrades to meet increased demand and clean energy standards. Inflation, supply chain and labor shortages, and rising wages also add to the cost of providing power.

House Bill 1329: Extreme Heat & Service Disconnects

In April of 2023, Gov. Jay Inslee signed into law ESHB1329 prohibiting utilities from disconnecting water and electric customers for non-payment should the National Weather Service (NWS) issue an excessive heat watch, warning, or advisory for Jefferson County.

A **warning** means the heat index value is expected to reach or exceed 105 degrees within 12 to 24 hours.

A **watch** is issued when the heat index value has the potential to reach or exceed 105 degrees within the next 24 to 48 hours.

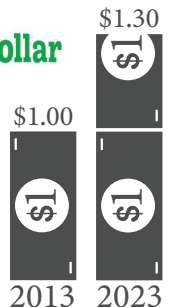
An **advisory** means the heat index value is expected to reach 100 to 104 degrees within the next 12 to 24 hours.

Customer-owners who have already been disconnected for non-payment have the right to request reconnection of services for the duration of a heat event. If reconnected, the customer is required to enter into a repayment plan to not exceed 6% of the customer's monthly income. The state law takes effect July 23, 2023.

The Decreased Power of a Dollar

In the 10 years the PUD has been an electric utility, costs have increased roughly 30%. Comparing costs, today we have to spend \$1.30 to purchase the amount of what a dollar purchased in 2013.

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics.



CLEARING UP CONFUSION ????? ???? ABOUT OPT-OUT METERS

In 2019, the commissioners approved a policy allowing customers to request a non-transmitting mechanical or digital meter. In order to receive the "opt-out meter," customers must pay an additional \$5/month and allow PUD staff unobstructed access to their property to read the meter. This last part is where the confusion comes in. Unobstructed access means that a PUD meter reader can walk across your property unannounced to read the meter that is likely attached to your house once every month. ***If access to the property is locked or gated, you will need to provide the meter reader a code or key.***

PUD meter readers have many duties and very full schedules. They do not read meters by appointment. If you do not want meter readers accessing your property randomly and unannounced, an "opt-out" meter is not a good choice. On the upside, both our old and new meters are read remotely, meaning no one has to walk up to the property, and no extra monthly charges apply.

The PUD is owned by the citizens of Jefferson County

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