



PUD fleet and facility manager, Kenny Yingling, latches the heated storage compartment on the side of the line truck. Inside, climbing harnesses rattle on hooks.

"Line trucks are basically a mobile office—our line crew has to have everything needed to fix an outage," Yingling said, noting the weight does wear on vehicles and parts, but it's essential for fast service.

"These are a different kind of dinosaur altogether," Yingling said, while continuing inspection of the full-size, 8-ton vehicle. The term "dinosaur" is apt considering the sheer size of the vehicle and its extendable 55' hydraulic arm with line crew bucket at the end.

"There is really nothing 'routine' about maintaining our fleet," Yingling said, adding that he enjoys the variety his job offers. Yingling, who was born and raised in Port Townsend, is a veteran of fleet maintenance, joining the PUD in 2019 after 10 years

with Jefferson Transit.

The PUD has 11 line vehicles: 4 full-size bucket trucks, 3 digger derricks (designed with a boring attachment for pole placement), and 4 smaller single-person truck-mounted buckets. Yingling handles maintenance for the entire line fleet.

Line vehicles, complete with powerful diesel motor and rugged build, allow line crews to access challenging outage areas. They also offer a unique challenge due to their almost continuous run time in the field. There's little downtime for a line truck, as the motor also powers the hydraulic system essential for boom operations. Heavy run time means constant maintenance from filter replacements, oil changes, and general

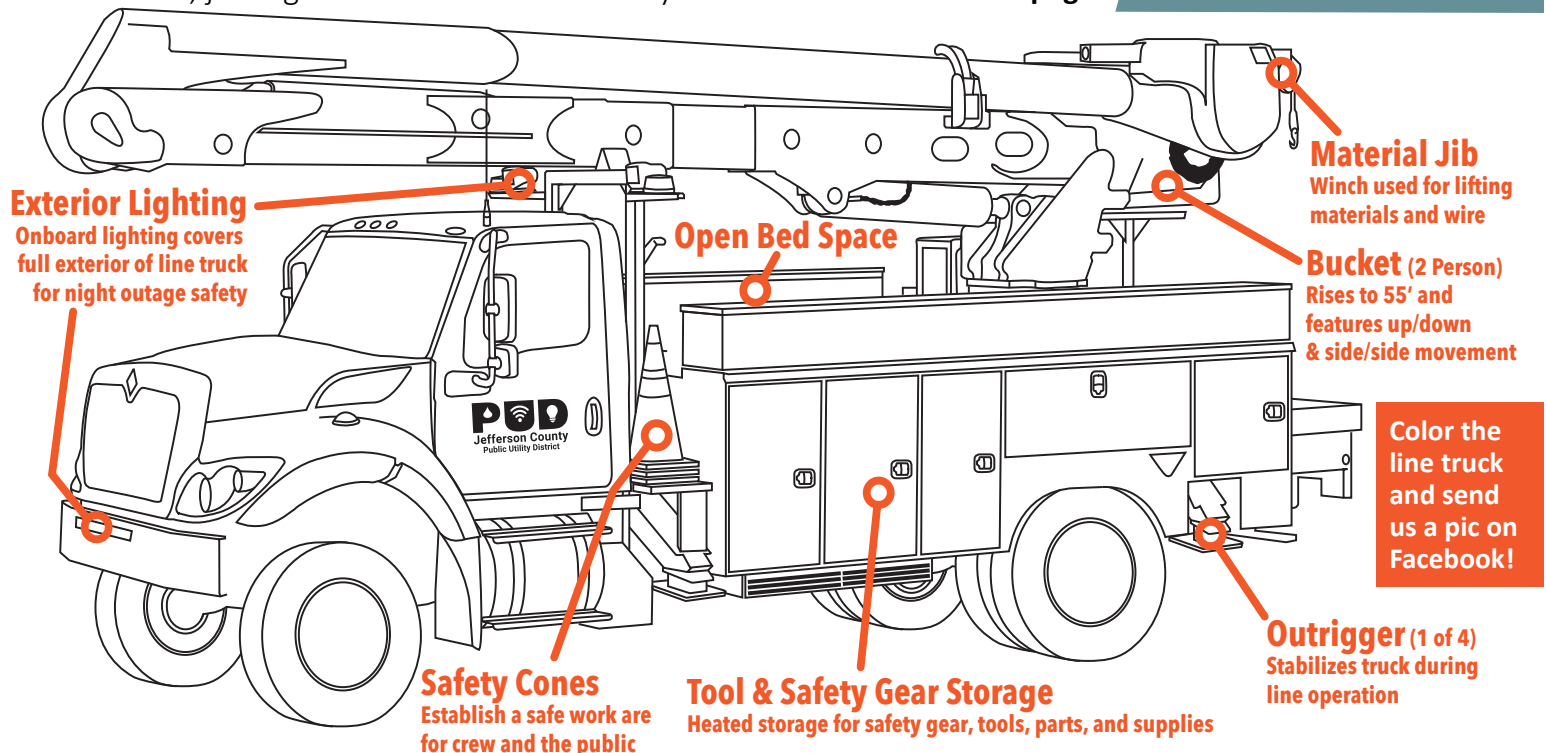
PUD FLEET

PUD-Owned Vehicles: 36

PUD Rental Vehicles: 8

PUD Trailers: 10

PUD Forklifts: 2



FLEET continued

wear items like exterior safety lighting. Even a simple tire change requires use of a forklift due to size.

Yingling's world extends beyond just the parts of a line truck contacting the ground.

Single and two-person buckets extend several stories in the air and can lift large loads like pole-mounted transformers with the material jib. Components must be in top working shape to operate in harsh conditions and for longevity of the vehicle.

"Many line truck manufacturers won't even take orders for new vehicles until 2026—and those have a price tag of at least \$500K," he said. Several line vehicles on the PUD fleet are long-term rentals. Yingling works to ensure all line trucks have annual inspections (to ensure line truck boom arms can handle contact from high voltage) for WSDOT certification and works with local service vendors for hydraulic operations and motor tune-ups. It's all in a day's work to keep the line fleet wheels rolling.

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Helping Charge the Future of Transit

Jefferson Transit is taking strides toward a zero-emission fleet with its first all-electric 35-foot bus. Transit received the bus in mid-2023 and secured \$567K in grant funding for electric bus infrastructure upgrades to their Transit Center.

Made by Gillig, the bus has a range of 160 miles per charge and an approximate run time of 4 hours.

Preparing for an E-bus fleet required considerably more power at the Transit Center site, prompting installation of a 480-volt, 3-phase transformer by PUD line crews. A traditional Level 3 fast charger

is currently in place for charging needs, with the transit center site being designed for up to 8 induction chargers. Induction charging does not require physically connecting the bus to power. Instead, a series of pads on the belly of the bus align with an array of in-ground chargers. Supply chain delays have pushed the induction charging project into 2024.

Route testing is underway, with the E-bus projected to enter the rotation by November of 2023. A second grant funded battery electric bus is anticipated to join the transit fleet by mid-2025.



The shift from a traditional diesel and bio-diesel fleet has meant new training opportunities for Transit staff. Here, Jefferson Transit Fleet & Facilities Manager, Desiree Williams, lifts the 'hood' where traditionally a diesel motor would be. The EV bus features 6 total battery packs—2 in the rear, 4 in the roof.

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