



**Jefferson County
Public Utility District**

April 2025

Strong Arms Keep Lines in the Air

Stacks of regionally-sourced utility crossarms await their time in the kiln at Brooks Manufacturing in Bellingham.

The heavy line hanging from the arm of the derrick digger tightened and strained, pulling the 55-foot utility pole out of the roadside ditch. Line crew descended upon it and in minutes had fastened a dual crossarm assembly to the pole.

A crossarm is the horizontal component mounted toward the top of a utility pole that supports the power lines a safe distance apart and provides a connection point for insulators.

Moments later the 1,000-pound pole was hoisted skyward and positioned in its new home. The ease of replacement, even under less-than-ideal conditions, is all by design. Components, such as utility crossarms by regional supplier, Brooks Manufacturing, make the work faster and easier.

Locally Made - Nationally Known

Bellingham-based Brooks Manufacturing produces a large percentage of wooden utility crossarms nationwide, including most crossarms used by Jefferson PUD. Brooks' 14-acre plant has been in operation since 1915 and is a blend of new age tech and tried and true old-world manufacturing.

Anywhere power goes in the U.S., there is a crossarm nearby designed to handle any weather Mother Nature doles out. The vast majority of crossarms in service are coastal Douglas fir harvested right here in the Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia region. Coastal fir is the material of choice due to its rot-resistant nature, fire-resistance, and because pesky boring insects tend to stay away.

How it's Made - Crossarm Production

To maximize working lifespan (and meet National Electric Safety Code guidelines) lumber goes through a unique process before it hits the field.

Rough milled lumber arrives by the truckload and is stickered, which allows air flow between pieces for the drying process. Brooks has four steam-powered kilns designed to gradually pull moisture from the wood. Time in the kiln depends on the material size



Line crew install a dual crossarm assembly to a new utility pole.

and can vary from 1 to 2 weeks at a consistent 180 degrees. The drying process is carefully monitored—drying too rapidly can cause twists, warping, and splintering.

Heat is a byproduct of steam pumped through piping from the 1950's-era steam boiler which is 100% fueled by a combination of chips, off cuts, and saw dust produced during the milling process.

The rough-cut, dried lumber is then sent single file through a massive four-sided planer. In the matter of seconds material on all four sides and the corners are rounded over. Indents are also placed on all surfaces to help with pressure treating.

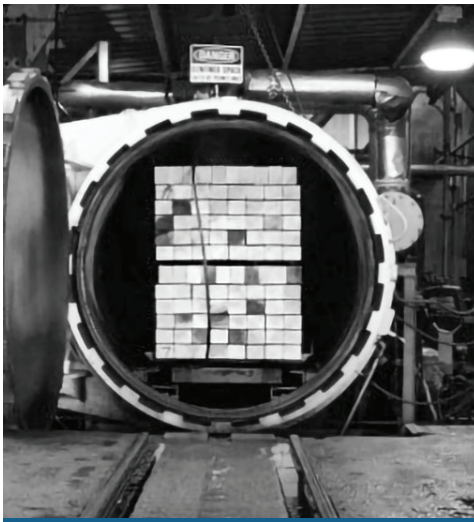
The smooth crossarms then pass through a cut-off saw for final sizing. Crossarms are graded and sorted as they make their way from conveyor to conveyor to the automated boring process.

Bore placement on the newly milled crossarms is essential for safely connecting support braces, insulators, or brackets. Large drill bits accurately chew through the material from the top and sides, and each crossarm receives a brand indicating the manufacturer,

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Scan QR code to see full video!

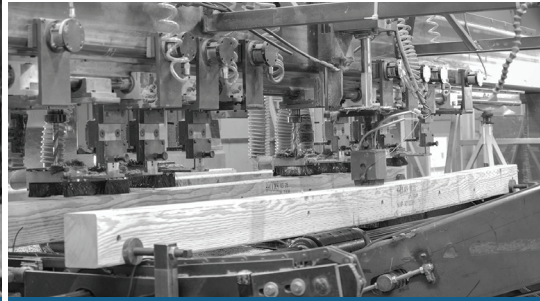


material type, and top for line crew.

The final step is pressure treating. Though naturally rot-resistant, pressure treating crossarms helps extend the usable life further, lasting up to 60 years under ideal conditions.

Crossarms are loaded into a submarine-shaped chamber which is flooded with treatment solution and pressurized up to 100psi—the equivalent of diving approx 200 feet underwater. Pressure forces air trapped inside the wood outward, replacing it with the preservative. A vacuum is then applied to pull excess solution and moisture from the wood. Total time in the chamber is approx 4 hours.

The crossarms are removed and placed under cover until they are ready to be loaded up and put into service.



The final step involves a pressurized bath in treatment solution.

A force test applies pressure to the crossarm before pressure treating.

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811 Call before you dig!
It's FREE!

Call 811 to locate any potential underground power, water, phone or propane lines within 2 business days.

New Energy Efficiency Funding Now Available!

What Qualifies?

- Heat pumps for heating & cooling
- Heat pump water heaters
- Electric panel upgrades needed for new electric service

Grant funding from the WA State Climate Commitment Act is now available to help households and small businesses upgrade to high-efficiency electric equipment at a significantly reduced cost—or even for FREE for eligible customers!

Who Qualifies?

- Households with income up to \$97,800 for a single person or \$135,000 for a family of four qualify for roughly double our usual rebates.

Additional tiers of assistance are available based on income level that can fully fund projects.

- Small businesses with 50 or less employees can also receive substantial rebates on equipment purchases and electrical upgrades.
- Fuel-switching – Customers transitioning from fossil fuel systems, such as propane for cooking or drying, to electric may qualify for additional incentives.

More Info & How to Apply:

- Households: Call our Customer Service at (360) 385-5800 or visit: jeffpud.org/efficiency-program
- Businesses please email: efficiency@jeffpud.org

Funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis and funding ends June of 2025. Upgrade your home or business with energy-efficient electric equipment today!



Scan the QR code to learn more!

Hutton's Vireo

Bird of the Month



Eastern Jefferson County is home to many unique bird species and with the help of our friends at the Rainshadow Bird Alliance, we want to highlight feathered friends commonly found in and around utility corridors, including this month's species, the Hutton's Vireo. A year-round resident, the Hutton's Vireo frequents forest edges along utility corridors. These edges provide an important habitat for this cup-nester who is often no larger than the palm of your hand.

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