

PUD CUSTOMER CONDUIT

Public Power, Local Services, Community Connections

Jefferson County PUD's Monthly Newsletter. September 2018

GO PAPERLESS! Sign up by September 30th and enter to win an Echo Spot



Jefferson County PUD's online bill paying application, Smart Hub, allows customers more control over their utility account. View and compare usage data, report outages instantly, or pay your bill anytime with the tap of a finger, either on your home computer or smartphone via downloadable mobile app.

To date, nearly 40% of PUD customers have tried Smart Hub. Only 16% have made the extra effort to go paperless. Going paperless saves trees, prevents waste, and reduces costs for the PUD.

We think the combination of more info, more control, and less waste that online paperless billing provides is worth rewarding.

Any customer who signs up for paperless billing during the months of August and September is eligible to win an Echo Spot.

To be eligible, sign up for Smart Hub (easy to do via our website, all that is required is an email and your PUD account number which can be found on your monthly bill) and then turn "Printed Bill Status" to off.

If you are already signed up for Smart Hub but haven't yet turned off the printed bill status, you too can be eligible to win by making the move to go paperless before September 30. On Oct. 1st, we'll compile a list of all the eligible paperless billing sign-ups from August and September and make



What is an Echo Spot?

The Echo Spot is a small smart home speaker with a touch screen display. It looks like a Magic 8-ball! Use it to play music, control your smart home devices, as a home video intercom, or to call your friends and family. Control it with your voice using Amazon's Alexa virtual assistant. Come by our customer service office to see one on display.

a random selection from that list. The name will be read at our Oct. 1 Board of Commissioners meeting. The winner will be announced on our Facebook page and contacted directly the next day.

SCOTT BANCROFT: NEW SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR

The Special Projects Coordinator has a unique and varied role: serving as a liaison to a variety of construction contractors; coordinating city county and state permitting for a variety of projects; and leading tree trimming and vegetation management.

It takes a special individual to do the job. Bob Phillips certainly was. He held the position for the last five years until passing away in April. And now we've found another in Scott Bancroft of Quilcene.

Scott comes to the PUD after nearly 27 years at the Port Townsend Paper Mill where he'd worked as an electrician,



machinist and a planner.

During his long tenure at the mill, Scott served in both the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also took night classes to receive an AA, then a BA in Organizational Leadership.

Scott is a third generation Quilcene High School graduate. His wife Shari was a Quilcene grad as well and their daughter attends the elementary school there now.

An avid hiker, Scott has traversed nearly every trail in Olympic National Park. He lists Boulder Shelter up the Big Quil and just past Marmot Pass as one of his favorite destinations.

CALENDAR

September 4 & 18, 5pm
Regular Board Meeting
Jefferson Transit Board Room

September 10, 2pm
Citizen's Advisory Board
PUD 4 Corners Meeting Room

September 18, 5pm
Facilities Project Presentation
Jefferson Transit Board Room

October 1, 5pm
Public Hearing: 2019 Budget
Jefferson Transit Board Room

October 1 & 16, 5pm
Regular Board Meeting
Jefferson Transit Board Room

Regular board meetings take place at 5pm on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. Agendas & minutes available on our website.



Customer Service Q&A

Jean Hall (second from left) first began working for the PUD in 2014 as a temp in accounting. She was hired nine months later as a Customer Service Representative (CSR). She became Customer Service Coordinator in 2017 and this past July was promoted to Customer Service Manager.

What is the hardest part of the job?

So much to learn. CSR's have to learn the ins and outs of the electric, water, and sewer utility businesses, which is a lot. PUDs are also governed by a very strict set of laws and policies. And the software we use is very complex, and it's changed twice since we took over electric, luckily for the better. Change has been constant at the PUD, which has been challenging as well, but worth it. We've made solid improvements.

What is the most common complaint you get from customers? My bill is too high! People can be upset when they get a utility bill that is much higher than they expect. Often times it's due to changes in the weather, or extended visits from friends or relatives. If you double the population of your house for a while it will show up on your bill. Adding a second fridge or freezer will too. Failing electric furnaces can drive up bills. Filling up pools in the summer often leads to surprises on water bills after.

How do you deal with challenging customers? Well most of our customers are great, very easy to work with. But we do get people who are upset or confused and the first thing we do is listen. We also deal with customers in financial stress who can't afford the essential services we provide. We try to connect them to social services and community support groups when applicable. When customers don't respond to our outreach attempts and then get upset when their service changes it's tricky. We need customers to keep in touch too.

What's the best part of your job?

Our Customer Service team is like a family. It's a fun group of people to be a part of, and we all have each other's backs.

LATE FEES BEGIN IN OCTOBER

Starting in October, a \$5 late fee will be added to any electric, water, sewer or combination residential account not paid by the bill's due date. A three business days' grace period will be given before the late fee is assessed, and fees will only be assessed to accounts owing \$50.01 or more.

For commercial accounts, the late fee is the greater of 1% of the amount due or \$5. Three business days' grace period applies to commercial accounts as well, as does the \$50.01 fee threshold.

FACILITY CONSOLIDATION PLAN

At the September 18th meeting of the Board of Commissioners, General Manager Larry Dunbar will present the PUD's proposed \$4 million facility consolidation construction plan for 2019.

The plan calls for the remodel and expansion of the 310 Four Corners Road operations and customer service center to be able to house all PUD employees, who are currently spread between multiple buildings across the county. Construction is proposed to begin in spring of 2019, and



finish in 2020.

TCF Architects designed the project. They also designed the Jefferson Transit Center.

View plans for the proposed facility consolidation project on our website: jeffpud.org

BUDGET HEARING OCTOBER 1

A public hearing will be held on Monday, Oct 1st during a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to discuss the PUD's proposed 2019 Budget. The ~\$38 million dollar budget assumes no proposed rate or staffing increases for the 2019 fiscal year.

The budget outlines a number of special projects like the facility consolidation, community solar project, expanded tree trimming, safety & training, and extensive strategic planning.

View the 2019 Draft Budget Presentation on our website: jeffpud.org

TOILET TRAINING: SAVE WATER & MONEY

According to EPA Watersense, the toilet is responsible for the highest water usage in the home, about 27% of total. Older toilets are major water users: 3.5 to 7 gallons per flush. Consider replacing with new low-flow models using <2 gal. per flush.

Leaky toilets can use up to 200 gal per day or 6,000 gallons per month. This is easily preventable

with a little maintenance. The usual culprit is the toilet flapper valve: a rubbery disk that opens when you flush and seals the basin afterwards. Over time, the material either degrades or collects deposits that weaken the seal. Get a new one every 4 or so years. Simply replace the flapper with another of like model and shape and you are done.



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