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WA-18

## Celebrate Public Power Week

Each year during the first week of October, publically owned utilities celebrate Public Power Week. This is a time to reflect on the benefits of public ownership and be thankful that the decisions about your electricity service—and the effects these decisions have on our county—are made in your community.

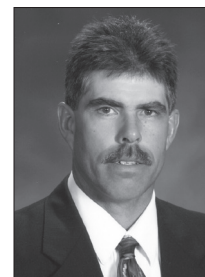
Your PUD is governed by three commissioners, who are elected by you. You choose who governs the PUD. A manager and staff are hired to operate the utility within the policies set by the board.

We are public. By that I mean we are not owned by shareholders. We are owned by you, and we are non-profit. Therefore, your PUD employees and commissioners do not represent shareholders, they represent you. As of the end of 2013, our net position was approximately \$100.5 million. This means each customer has about \$8,155 in value in this utility. This investment allows benefits to accrue locally.

When we talk of keeping the utility in good financial shape, we do it to protect your long-term rates and ensure the utility is healthy well into the future. What does that mean? We make long-term decisions we believe will benefit our utility and, therefore, you—not short-term ones that make our numbers look better and provide short-term profit for someone else.

When we make decisions—especially difficult ones—the people making those decisions are your friends and neighbors—the folks you see in the grocery store, at the soccer field or local chamber and other community meetings. We live and work here with you and understand

our local economy and culture. We pay the same rates and get the same service you do. At times it would be easier to make decisions from far away, but that is what helps make sure the decisions are the right ones.



We do not set our rates and make expenditure decisions we think will maximize profits, as private companies do. Private utilities go before utility commissions to justify the rates they charge. They don't go before their customers. They exist to create shareholder value, and to do that, they provide electric service. That's not bad, but it's not the way public companies operate.

We exist to provide electric, water and wastewater services, and we do it for cost. That's why the citizens of Klickitat County voted on November 8, 1938, to form a public utility district for local control.

In celebration of Public Power Week and our 76th year of providing service to Klickitat County, we are hosting an open house Friday, October 10, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in both PUD offices in Goldendale and White Salmon. I hope you stop by. You can pick up information on PUD programs and other topics.

Please bring your questions. We would like to talk about the issues facing your PUD and the challenges facing our industry in the coming years.

**Dan Gunkel**  
**President, Board of Commissioners**