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WA-18

## Proper Planning Keeps Costs Low

The Klickitat PUD Engineering Department addresses a range of projects, from working with individual customers for new electrical installations, to working with large developers on everything from subdivisions to wind generation projects.

We also complete electrical system planning and design electrical system improvement projects. Whenever we do design work, we always look ahead and try to plan for what might come next because we know what we build today will be in service for many years.

Our focus is always: "What can we do to keep our costs down, our rates low and encourage development?"

There are three ways to keep installation costs down.

First is keeping the design simple and our equipment consistent, so that our installation and maintenance costs are low.

Second, we make sure we plan our system so as we add customers and complete system improvement projects, the work is designed in a manner that supports future growth and decreases the likelihood we will have to do more improvements later.

Third, we look to see whether others can help cover the costs to install facilities and pay for some of the costs to maintain and operate them, which is a

relatively new concept.

We often are asked about the PUD's involvement with wind projects in Klickitat County, and how that involvement benefits the ratepayers?

By working with developers and using the transmission facilities and substations they require, the PUD does not have to pay the up-front capital costs of some new facilities that are a part of our future planning. Also, once these facilities are built, the developers pay the PUD to carry their generation to Bonneville Power Administration transmission lines, and to operate and maintain these facilities.

We pay our share, to be sure, but our loads are very small in comparison to the wind projects, so the costs we incur are quite low. This affects our bottom line and helps us maintain our rates lower than they would be otherwise.

What do the developers get out of this deal? We help them obtain transmission line routes, in some cases when they can't. We also make these lines available for more than one user, so developers share the cost of the transmission facilities, therefore reducing their costs. In effect, we are enabling the development.

Our goal for the future is to continue to keep the system up to date and economical for all of our customers. We endeavor to carry on in our efforts to be more efficient and ensure that our planning continues to move forward with ratepayer and developer interests in mind.

**Jim Smith, Engineering Manager**

