

During KPUD's annual safety training, Travis **Heilman and Todd Niva** operate the hand line to a fellow lineman. With the line, they receive the hot stick and lower Joe, a 180pound dummy, from a power pole.

Annual Rescue Training

Programs and training keep PUD linemen and tree trimmers safe while on the job

By Lori Froehlich

The utility industry loses linemen every year due to job-related injuries and accidents. Most linemen know a co-worker who has been injured or killed on the job. To prevent these tragedies, utility companies focus their resources on safety programs and employee training.

Klickitat PUD is no exception. Fundamental policies and procedures, monthly meetings and annual refresher training sessions are vital to the PUD's safety program.

One example of the focus on safety is the pole-top and bucket rescue. Klickitat PUD conducts this training every July. The purpose is to practice the quick and safe removal of a victim from a power pole.

"Joe," everyone's favorite 180-pound dummy, is belted to a power pole to represent the victim: a fellow lineman who may need rescue due to heart attack, electrical shock, heat stroke, injury or equipment failure.

The linemen are required to first assess the situation and call for help. Next, they climb the pole, use the hot stick to

de-energize the power by opening the cutout and then proceed to rescue Joe. A second man on the ground positions himself to receive Joe from the lineman on the pole, stabilize him and begin first aid/CPR.

KPUD's tree trimmers simulate this same scenario, with the victim being placed in a tree for recovery.

Emergency medical technicians from Skyline Hospital are instrumental in providing refresher CPR training to the crews, as well as use of the automatic external defibrillator, a device that shocks the heart back into rhythm.

Crews also practice bucket rescue during safety training. All crew members are required to familiarize themselves with the various bucket trucks and their controls.

This annual training enables KPUD employees to be ready for any situation that could occur while they are on the job, and better serve the public.

Keeping this knowledge current could mean the difference between life and death If safety procedures are followed and personal safety is never sacrificed for productivity, all employees can go home safely at the end of each work day.









Clockwise from top left, Ed Lexa uses a lasso method to tie off and get Joe to the ground. John Starr secures Joe with the rope to lower him. KPUD crews work with bucket trucks to familiarize themselves with the controls of each bucket, in case they need to perform a rescue. Lake Howard begins to lower Joe to the ground.