



# The Heart of Customer Service

Celebrate Customer Service Week—and the KPUD employees who work hard to help our customers

In 1992, the U.S. Congress declared the first full business week of October as National Customer Service Week. At Klickitat PUD, this week provides a perfect opportunity to highlight and honor the dedicated individuals in our customer service department who consistently go above and beyond to provide exceptional service to our valued customers.

In every organization, the customer service department serves as the front line, the welcoming face and the helping hand that customers turn to for assistance. At Klickitat PUD, our customer service representatives Erin Gray, Katie Kloster and Andrea Lucatero play a pivotal role in ensuring that our customers' needs are met promptly and efficiently.

These dedicated professionals are often the first point of contact for both new and existing customers. The representatives' responsibilities encompass a wide range of tasks, including setting up accounts, scheduling customer work, managing account information, processing payments, addressing billing inquiries and working at customer outreach events. Additionally, they promote and support customer tools like SmartHub, as well as convenient programs like AMI, auto-pay, budgets and paperless billing.

The customer service department assists customers in obtaining assistance through available programs. These programs include KPUD's Operation Warm Heart and Senior Discounts. During the past two months, these programs helped customers receive \$490,000 in bill credits. Our representatives' friendly and knowledgeable

assistance leaves a lasting impression on our customers.

Behind the scenes, Holly Thiele, our billing clerk, diligently manages the billing and collection process for utility accounts. She monitors meter communication and works with customers on adjustments. This critical role involves identifying any issues to ensure that our customers receive timely and accurate billing. Holly actively supports all functions of our customer service representatives, contributing to the overall efficiency of the department.

Anita Clever, our energy services specialist, extends her expertise to help residential and commercial customers apply for qualifying rebates. KPUD's low-income rebate offerings continue to expand thanks to Anita's grant writing efforts. Additionally, Anita guides net meter customers through the application and installation process. During the past year, Anita has worked with our representatives to incorporate more energy service functions within customer service and to promote energy conservation program offerings.

Leading this dedicated team is Brandy Myers, KPUD's customer and accounting services manager. Brandy's role goes beyond oversight. She develops and manages the department objectives and ensures continuity and consistency within customer and energy services. In addition to managing staff—which includes field staff Danny Smith and Matt Olson—Brandy plays a pivotal role in identifying and resolving customer concerns to ensure every customer's voice is heard.



Customer Service Rep. Erin Gray



Customer Service Rep. Katie Kloster

## Say Hello to KPUD's New CSR, Andrea Lucatero

As a customer service representative at Klickitat PUD, Andrea Lucatero handles the standard range of responsibilities, with a twist. A significant part of her role involves working with the communication team to develop customer messages in different forms, including bill stuffers, ads and social media outreach. Andrea is key in preparing important updates and utility information to keep our community informed.

Andrea was raised in Goldendale, alongside five younger brothers. She was part of the Running Start program in high school, before graduating with an associate degree in accounting from Columbia Gorge Community College. She transferred to West Coast Baptist College in Lancaster, California, where she earned a bachelor's degree in office administration in 2023.

While in college, Andrea gained valuable experience working at the campus post office and package annex. She also scheduled service appointments for car dealerships at a call center. During college breaks, she worked at KVH Hospital as a patient registration clerk.

"After graduation, I decided I wanted to explore a different facet of customer service to broaden my skills and experience," Andrea says.

Working at Klickitat PUD has been a great



Andrea, lower right, enjoys spending time with her family, whether it is watching them play sports or playing games with them. PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDREA LUCATERO

opportunity to broaden those skills.

"I've experienced significant growth and development, which has been instrumental in my career journey," Andrea says. "I truly appreciate our utility's commitment to putting customers first and the opportunity to serve my neighbors, friends and family."

In her free time, Andrea loves reading, going on road trips and spending time outdoors

with her two dogs. Most of all, Andrea enjoys time with family, whether that be engaging in friendly (or not-so-friendly) board game competitions, laughing until their sides hurt or watching her brothers play sports.

Please join Klickitat PUD in welcoming Andrea to the customer service team. Her positive attitude and drive to continue to learn and serve our community makes her a great fit.

The individuals in Klickitat PUD's customer service department are champions of our organization. Their unwavering commitment to excellence and dedication to serving our customers make them an indispensable part of our utility's day-to-day success.

During National Customer Service Week, and throughout the year, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to Erin, Katie, Andrea, Holly, Anita, Danny, Matt and Brandy.

Their interactions with our customers leave lasting and positive impressions, embodying the spirit of exceptional customer service. ■



Energy Services Specialist Anita Clever



Billing Clerk Holly Thiele