



CONNECTED

The Newsletter of Cowlitz PUD

Volume 14, No. 12

Lighting Up the Night at a Lower Cost



The long days of the year are upon us, which means anyone using security lights around their home or business will see those lights on much longer each day for awhile.

To help control your lighting costs, it makes a lot of sense to switch away from incandescent lights. The other options – a Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) and a Light Emitting Diode (LED) – cost more up front, but easily pay off over time.

LEDs and CFLs not only offer big energy savings compared to incandescent, both also have a longer lifespan. As shown in the chart, an LED light is capable of running 50,000 hours before it fails – 50 times longer than an incandescent and five times greater than a CFL.

There are some other interesting facts about each type of light:

- Of the three lights, LEDs are the most durable (hence the longer life).
- Because an incandescent bulb uses a filament it cannot take a great deal of shaking.
- CFLs are somewhat sturdier, but also susceptible to failure when jostled or when the application requires high on/off cycling.

- Incandescent and LED bulbs are not impacted by on/off cycling.
- Incandescent and CFL bulbs offer better lighting for flood light applications. Light emitted by LEDs tends to be focused rather than disbursed.
- LED lights don't have that hazy glow that can limit your view of the stars.

The chart below compares costs for three types of lighting, all suitable to use in an outdoor fixture. It is estimated that an LED light used outdoors will last up to 50,000 hours (about 14 years), so the chart compares the total cost for all three choices for that period of time – including replacement bulbs and electricity.

One Outdoor Light Fixture	Incandescent	CFL	LED
Typical cost per bulb	\$1.75	\$7.00	\$35.00
# of bulbs (over 14 years)	50	5	1
Total cost of bulbs purchased	\$87.50	\$35.00	\$35.00
Average life of bulb (hours)	1,000	10,000	50,000
Wattage	75	18	9
Electricity used (kilowatt hours)	3,750	900	450
Cost of electricity used	\$247.50	\$59.40	\$29.70
Total cost (bulbs & electricity)	\$335.00	\$94.40	\$64.70

It's not unusual for an outside light to be on for 14 hours this time of the year. That makes it a good time to consider using the most efficient light possible, to help lower your lighting costs.

Inside This Issue:

- November Board Report
- Rate Comparison
- Power Outage Information on the Web



Thanks to our veterans and active military service members

When you enter Cowlitz PUD's main office on 12th Avenue in Longview you'll be greeted by two displays honoring past and present military: 1) A photo display in the entry way featuring PUD employees and relatives of employees who are serving or have served in the military; and 2) This flag display in the reception area which honors each branch of the military, a POW-MIA flag, and a flag representing families who have two active members of their family in the service

Electric Rates – Frequently Asked Questions

As noted last month, Cowlitz PUD's rates have increased. Log on to http://www.cowlitzpud.org/hot_topics.php to view the rate hearing video, a rates FAQ and PowerPoint presentation.

When did the new rates take effect?

The new rates were applied as electric bills were processed by the PUD on-and-after November 1, for all usage since the prior meter reading. Based on your meter reading date, some electrical usage from October was subject to the new rate on bills produced from November 1 and on.

This is a practice Cowlitz PUD has used since 2006, when we changed over to monthly billing. Until 2005 the PUD sent out bills every two months and rate changes were prorated.

The BPA wholesale rates that Cowlitz PUD pays were increased on October 1.

How does Cowlitz PUD compare?

Residential cost	Basic charge	1,500 kWh
Douglas (E. Wenatchee)	\$9.00	\$40.20
Chelan (Wenatchee)	\$7.85	\$48.29
Clatskanie PUD	\$0.00	\$59.25
Grant (Moses Lake)	\$12.00	\$72.42
Lewis (Chehalis – May 2012)	\$13.00	\$91.40
Columbia River PUD	\$8.00	\$99.05
Cowlitz PUD	\$7.00	\$106.00
Mason 3 (Shelton)	\$15.00	\$107.10
Tacoma (April 2012)	\$5.50	\$112.08
Benton (Kennewick)	\$11.05	\$113.65
Klickitat (Goldendale)	\$14.25	\$114.00
Avista – Spokane, Pullman	\$6.00	\$121.51
Seattle City Light	\$3.60	\$123.40
Grays Harbor (Aberdeen)	\$34.78	\$123.79
All WA utilities	\$10.00	\$124.05
Snohomish (Everett)	\$0.00	\$127.22
Clark (Vancouver)	\$12.00	\$134.40
Puget Sound Energy	\$7.25	\$146.43
Average – All of U.S.		\$180.45

What's Happening

Crime Victim Advocacy Program - Protecting Against Identity Theft

Crime Victim Advocacy Program is a local non-profit agency that provides free and confidential services to victims of crime.



CVAP

You may receive services whether or not you reported the crime to law enforcement. Call the toll free number at 1-888-425-1176 and speak to an advocate today.

CVAP provides advocacy for many types of crimes, including identity theft. Remember, you are the best person to safeguard your information. Keep a close eye on what is going on with your accounts and look for any strange or uncommon activities. Identity theft can sometimes go unnoticed for months before victims are aware of it.

For more information on Identity Theft call 1-888-425-1176.

As space is available each month in Connected, Cowlitz PUD may offer a brief listing promoting programs and activities (on a first-come, first-served basis) for public, non-profit groups or events with wide interest in Cowlitz County. Send your request to: whatshappening@cowlitzpud.org.

Power Outage Updates on our Website

Cowlitz PUD is posting power outage information on its [Twitter](#) page, and those updates are then automatically posted on the bottom left of the front page of our website.



You can also click on our [YouTube](#) homepage to view short videos on power outage preparation and electrical safety.



www.cowlitzpud.org
<http://twitter.com/CowlitzPUD>
<http://www.youtube.com/user/CowlitzPUD1>

Commission Activities



November 2011 highlights:

- **Held two workshops with PUD staff to plan the 2012 budgets** for Operations & Maintenance and Capital Requirements.
- **Hosted a workshop with District 18 and 19 state legislators** to discuss energy issues and the 2012 state legislative session. Discussion centered on potential legislation to amend I-937.
- **Held two public hearings addressing:** 1) the re-districting of the PUD commission boundaries and, 2) the PUD's 10-year Conservation Potential Assessment, as required by the State of WA's Energy Independence Act (I-937).

Future meeting dates:

Tuesday, January 10
Tuesday, January 24

Where and when:

John Searing Auditorium at 2:00 p.m.
Cowlitz PUD - 961 12th in Longview

Check our website:

Agendas and updated meeting times are posted in advance.

Go Green!

You can support the development of environmentally friendly "Green Power" sources like wind, solar, low-impact hydro, geothermal and biomass. The cost is as low as \$40 a year and may be tax deductible.

1. Log on to www.cowlitzpud.org
2. Go to the **Conservation and Renewables** menu
3. Click on **Purchase Green Tags**

From the General Manager's Point-of-View...

You may have read two recent headlines – one announcing Federal cuts in low-income assistance on heating bills and the other reporting that Judge James Redden was stepping down as a U.S. District Judge. These are both extremely important stories in the public power world.



LIHEAP Funding Cut In Half

We received the disappointing news from CAP that the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding it receives from the Federal government has been cut again this year. It's a big cut, over \$400,000.

Cowlitz PUD has made it known to Federal legislators like Senator Murray how important these funds are to our customers. We have asked that additional LIHEAP funding be made available if there is any way possible.

Our Credit Services staff works closely with CAP, so we know firsthand how important the LIHEAP funds are to our citizens. Due to the economy and higher unemployment we've seen more need for heating bill assistance. This includes customers who had regularly paid their bill on time, but recent hardships have caused them to fall behind.

We are sensitive to those who legitimately have a hard time paying their PUD bill. That's why a few years ago the PUD Board established discounted electric rates for low-income seniors and disabled citizens.

The PUD also accepts voluntary donations for the Warm Neighbor Fund. The PUD sends all funds donated over to CAP, which then assists people in-need in Cowlitz County by helping them pay a portion of their power bill.

Thank you if you have contributed to Warm Neighbor in the past or you plan to in the future. If you are not already supporting the Warm Neighbor Fund, please consider joining me in making a voluntary donation this holiday season. You can contribute directly to CAP or include an extra amount with your next PUD payment.

Contact Information

Cowlitz PUD - 961 12th Avenue
PO Box 3007 Longview, WA 98632
(360) 423-2210 - Toll free WA (800) 631-1131
website: www.cowlitzpud.org
Email: mailbox@cowlitzpud.org

PUD employees continue to work together to raise funds to support Warm Neighbor. In 2011 we raised \$10,000 through a variety of efforts, including the bingo tent we run at the Cowlitz County Fair. With the wholehearted support of the Board and me, this effort will continue in 2012.

Judge Redden Retires

In late November Judge James Redden announced his decision to hand over his jurisdiction on Columbia River fish issues. Judge Redden had already somewhat retired when he took on this assignment years ago.

Three times in recent years he has ruled against the Federal Government's Biological Opinion ("Bi-Op") which lays out the rules governing salmon recovery efforts in the Columbia River basin, and thereby kept control over the Columbia in his own hands. Based on his decisions, each successive plan became more costly and restrictive than the last.

BPA spent \$802 million in 2010 in direct costs and forgone revenues (water spilled over dams rather than used to produce hydroelectricity) to support salmon recovery. It is the most expensive endangered species recovery effort in the world.

These costs are built into BPA's rates. At least 25 percent of your PUD bill goes to fund court mandated salmon recovery.

I never doubted the sincerity of the Judge's desire to improve salmon runs, a goal many share. But I have wondered how we got to the point where one semi-retired federal judge could single-handedly take control of the Columbia River, imposing his judgment over hosts of experts.

Hopefully the new judge will finally approve the pending Bi-Op and we can move on to a reasonable balance of power generation, flood control, navigation and commerce, while still ensuring healthy salmon runs in the Columbia River.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Skeahan". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Brian Skeahan
General Manager

CONNECTED is published by Cowlitz County PUD.
COMMISSIONERS: Buz Ketcham, Ned Piper, and Mark McCrady
GENERAL MANAGER: Brian Skeahan
EDITOR: Dave Andrew
WRITER: Brent Arnold