

POWER & WATER NEWS

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Commissioner Corner

By Karl Denison:

Our electricity grid was hit very hard from the December storms. The fallen trees knocked down many of our power lines, and at one time our entire system was down. It was described as the worst storm to hit the region since the Inauguration Day storm of 1993 and it kept our crews working long hours with little sleep.

During the power outages coupled with surges and occasional lightning strikes, some of you may have experienced damage to some of your electrical appliances. I lost my stereo and I know several of my neighbors suffered losses.

Since my damages were less than the deductible on my homeowners insurance policy, I must pay out of pocket this time. If it happens again, I'll be prepared. I'm going to purchase a TESCO Residential Surge Suppression System from Mason PUD #1. The system includes a meter-based unit installed between the meter and the meter base. It provides excellent surge protection to the downstream appliances and electronics and comes with a 10 year connected equipment warranty. The manufacturer's warranty is considered the best in the industry, since it covers all downstream "electronics and appliances," up to \$5000 per item, but not to exceed an aggregate of \$50,000 per failure.

Best of all, since your PUD is a not for profit, we are offering the whole house system at our cost; \$200 installed. We also offer several models of Power Max Power Cable & Telephone Outlet Surge Strips at cost and are very inexpensive. For additional information, stop by our office in Potlatch or call 360-877-5249.

Our mission is to provide our utility ratepayers, excellent customer service at competitive rates. Let us know how we are doing.

Canal Comfort Fund Helps 55 Families

Thank you to everyone that made donations to the Mason County PUD #1 Canal Comfort Fund this last year. Your donations will be appreciated by those in need. The Canal Comfort Fund donations for 2006 totaled \$5,504.77.

This amount will help 55 families in need on the PUD #1 electric and water systems. If you want any information on how you can donate to this fund or are in need of the assistance contact our Customer Service Department at 360-877-5249 or 1-800-544-4223.

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Clean Audit for 2006

The PUD completed its annual audit in the fall of 2006 from the State Auditor's office.

The State Auditor had no findings and the PUD was issued a clean audit report.

Mason County PUD #1 was one of the first PUDs formed in the State of Washington and is the first operating utility in the state. PUD No. 1 has no audit findings during its 72 years of service.

2007 Water and Electric Budgets

The PUD approved the 2007 budget for electrical and water at the December 19, 2006 board meeting.

The projected electrical revenues will be \$5,250,735 and the projected cost of electrical operations will be \$5,070,777.

The PUD anticipates no rate increase for the budget year 2007 for electrical service.

The water budget projected revenues will be \$1,056,500 and the projected cost of water service will be \$890,801.

Tri-Party Public Information Meeting Held at Hoodspport Fire District # 1 Hall

The third public meeting concerning sewer planning in three planning areas between Hoodspport and the southern end of development on the Skokomish Reservation was held at the Hoodspport Fire Hall on January 31st at 6:30 pm.

The meeting was advertised in radio reports, a newspaper ad in the Mason County Journal, posters in various public locations, reader-board advertisement, and postcards sent to 667 customers in the area.

Approximately 30 citizens were in attendance along with all three Mason County PUD # 1 Commissioners, the General Manager, representatives from the tribe and the county. In addition, a representative from Congressman Dicks' office was in attendance along with a representative from the Environmental Protection Agency.

The aim of this round of wastewater planning is to prepare wastewater management project definitions for each of three Planning areas: The Hoodspport Rural Activity Center, the Potlatch Area including Minerva Beach and the State Park, but all within the boundary of the Skokomish Reservation, and the "Core Reservation" Area from the general vicinity of the casino south to the Tribal Center.

The effort is funded by a grant from the Puget Sound Action Team and the Hood Canal Coordinating Council. This planning does not consume any of the money already "ear marked" for wastewater improvements in the Hoodspport-Skokomish region.

The consulting team made a presentation about the planning and its current status. The Memorandum of Understanding among PUD 1, Mason County and the Skokomish Tribe was reviewed. The August, 2006 Agreement commits the three governments to collaborative action to fund and complete wastewater projects in all three Planning Areas. The Skokomish Tribe is acting as "lead agency" for the Core Reservation and Potlatch Areas and Mason County is "lead agency" for Hoodspport. The PUD is actively involved because of the Hoodspport wastewater planning it has already sponsored and the possibility that the PUD could operate facilities in all three areas.

After the status review, the audience was divided into four groups to solicit suggestions and answer questions regarding the three areas proposed to be served. The full session reconvened and each group reporter offered a summary of group remarks.

The Tri-Party group is now involved with requests for grants for implementation of the facilities plan and design work for all three systems. They anticipate that this process will take approximately one year to complete.

There will be further public information meetings scheduled as the process moves forward.

Manager's Letter

The PUD Commission, staff and management would like to thank all of our customers for their patience during the storms that knocked power out to approximately three fourths of our system.

Crews and staff worked around the clock to restore power and answer calls from concerned customers during the December wind and snow storms .

Thanks to all of you who sent cards and letters recognizing our employees for their hard work during these storms.