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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NWPPA honors Van Ashton with 2016 Jim Brands Award

Vancouver, Wash. – The Northwest Public Power Association’s (NWPPA) 2016 Northwest Communications & Energy Innovations Planning Committee has selected Idaho Falls Power’s Van Ashton as this year’s recipient of the Jim Brands Award for his lifetime commitment to the public power industry and remarkable work in the areas of energy efficiency. The award was presented to Ashton on Tuesday, September 13, at NWPPA’s Northwest Communications & Energy Innovations Conference (NIC) awards banquet at the DoubleTree Hotel in Missoula, Mont.

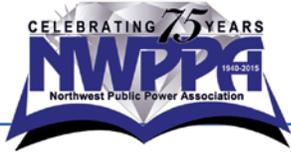
“It is truly an honor to be recognized by this award. It is especially meaningful to me because Jim was such a good friend,” said Ashton. “Working in the energy efficiency arena has been an enjoyable highlight in my career in the utility industry.”

Ashton joined Idaho Falls Power (IFP) in 1981 as the first customer service representative, and over the last 35 years his name has been synonymous in the region with energy efficiency. Not only did he singlehandedly create the energy services program at IFP, but he also was the driving force behind the immensely successful collaboration of energy efficiency efforts for a group of public power utilities (cooperatives and municipals). In addition, he has served in a variety of capacities related to promoting energy efficiency regionally. For example, he served on the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance Board of Directors; the BPA Utility Sounding Board and Small Utility Taskforce; the RTF Small/Rural Subcommittee; the Northwest Energy Efficiency Task Force; and many other committees and boards. In 2007, he chaired the NIC in Sun Valley, Idaho. He has also written a monthly energy efficiency article for the local newspaper over much of his career.

IFP’s Jackie Flowers, his general manager, said, “While he nears the end of his career at Idaho Falls Power, he has not slipped into a ‘coasting’ mode. Instead, he welcomed the opportunity to embrace new technology and new approaches in an effort to once again lead Idaho Falls Power in evolving its energy efficiency program. That’s his legacy, and that’s why I believe he is worthy of the 2016 NWPPA Jim Brands Award.”



(L-R) NIC Chair Julee Cunningham presented the 2016 Jim Brands Award to Van Ashton.



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This annual award honors Jim Brands and his 35-year career in the electric utility and energy efficiency industries. Brands, a previous employee of NWPPA and longtime friend to the public power industry, passed away in 2014 from cancer at the age of 61. Current or former employees of NWPPA member utilities are eligible to receive this award. The NIC Planning Committee selects recipients based on accomplishments through at least 10 years of energy efficiency experience, at least 20 years of service to the industry, and promotion of public power through efforts such as community service.

Columbia River PUD's Tim Lammers was the inaugural recipient of the award last year.

About NWPPA: NWPPA is an international not-for-profit trade association representing and serving nearly 150 customer-owned, locally controlled utilities in the Western U.S. and Canada. The Association also serves approximately 300 associate members across the U.S. and Canada who are allied with the electric utility industry. Visit www.nwppa.org, follow us on [Twitter](#), and like us on [Facebook](#) for more information.