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April 19, 2017
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NWPPA Honors Dave Peterson with Milton Hunt McGuire Award

VANCOUVER, WA. – On April 11, Northwest Public Power Association (NWPPA) presented Fall River Electric Cooperative’s Dave Peterson with the NWPPA Award for Excellence in Engineering or Operations at the association’s 2017 Engineering & Operations Conference in Reno, Nev. The award is given to an engineer and/or operations person who has made contributions to the utility industry in the engineering or operations area. Also known as the



(L-R) Fall River’s Dave Peterson receives the 2017 Milton Hunt McGuire Award from 2017 E&O Conference Chair Catherine Simonsen.

Milton Hunt McGuire Award, named after the longtime manager of the Electrical Department of the City of McMinnville, it was first presented in 1947 and is considered NWPPA’s most prestigious award for a utility employee working in the areas of engineering or operations. Because of the high caliber of requirements to receive the award, it is not presented every year; the last presentation of the Milton Hunt McGuire award was in 2014.

After completing his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical and electronic engineering technology from Montana State University in Bozeman in 1985, Peterson began his long and storied career with Fall River Electric in Ashton, Idaho. Having started as a staff engineer, he worked his way up through the ranks to his current engineering manager position. Peterson also completed a lineman apprenticeship in 1993 and NRECA’s Manager’s Internship Program in 1999.

During his more than three decades at Fall River, Peterson has been an integral member of key projects and improvements; for example, he led the building of the Chester Hydroelectric Project; assumed the management and responsibility for all of Fall River’s hydro operations in

2014; led the installation and conversion of Fall River to AMI meters; oversaw the installation of the utility's fiber optics backbone system that connected all of Fall River's offices and 15 of Fall River's substations; led significant improvements in Fall River's GIS mapping systems, outage management systems, and work order estimates; and managed the team responsible for the automation of the work order and mapping processes.

“Dave Peterson's accomplishments have had a significantly positive impact on public power in the Northwest because he recognized a need to share best engineering practices, develop education, and help develop future engineers,” said Fall River Electric General Manager Bryan Case. “Dave also volunteers his time and talents to benefit the industry and to help others. Fall River Electric Cooperative and the entire northwest utility industry are lucky to have a person of his caliber working with all of us to share his knowledge to improve our engineering, effectiveness, and safety.”

In addition to his work at Fall River, Peterson has worked closely with NWPPA over the years. He helped design NWPPA's Staking Technician Certification Series as well as NWPPA's Distribution Engineering Series, and founded the Engineering Roundtable at the E&O Conference many years ago. Peterson was also a member of NWPPA's Training and Workforce Development Committee (2007-2010) and chair of NWPPA's Montana Engineers Meeting, an annual meeting that he resurrected in 2009 after a short hiatus. A well-known figure at the annual E&O Conference, he served on the E&O Conference Planning Committee from 1990 to 2006, and is the only person to serve as chair twice (2003 and 2004). Upon receiving this award, he commented that he had been on the policy committee for many years and had presented the award to a lot of well-deserving colleagues; he then joked: “I would have never given it to someone like me!”

Recent NWPPA award winners for Excellence in Engineering or Operations include John Martinsen of Snohomish County PUD (2014), Bob Coates of Kodiak Electric Association (2013), and Gary Nieborsky of Central Lincoln PUD (2012).

About NWPPA: NWPPA is an international association representing and serving 153 customer-owned, locally controlled utilities in the Western U.S. and Canada. The Association also serves over 300 associate members across the U.S. and Canada who are allied with the electric utility industry. For more information, visit www.nwppa.org, www.facebook.com/NWPPAssoc, or www.Twitter.com/NWPPAssoc.