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Contact: Brenda Dunn (brenda@nwppa.org)

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(360) 816-1453

Clark's Jeff Wittler Receives NWPPA's 2019 Safety Heroism Award

VANCOUVER, WA. – Last week, Clark Public Utilities Environmental Resources Manager Jeff Wittler received the NWPPA Safety Heroism Award at the association's 2019 Engineering & Operations Conference on April 9 in Spokane.

Wittler received the award for his life-saving actions on May 16, 2018. En route to a baseball field, he noticed a commotion near the train tracks. He pulled over and learned that a teenager had been hit by a train and was bleeding profusely on the other side of the train tracks. Wittler grabbed a belt from a man standing nearby, jumped up and over the slow-moving train, applied the belt as a tourniquet on the teen, and held it tight on the femoral artery until medics arrived. The medics who arrived on the scene said the quick action and timing of getting the tourniquet on, and the perfect placement saved the teen's life.

"It's a reminder to all of us that having first aid training—and presence of mind for what to do in an emergency—can help save a life," said Clark Public Utilities CEO/General Manager Wayne Nelson. "Jeff received training at work and after this incident we opened up free first aid training to family members of Clark Public Utilities employees as an employee benefit."

Nelson noted that Wittler was also the person who calmed the teenager's frantic mother when she arrived on the scene and thought her child was dead.

The Safety Heroism Award recognizes an NWPPA member utility employee or team that displayed an act of unselfish and voluntary assistance in a situation where life, significant injury, or significant property loss would have been incurred were it not for the efforts of the individual or team. The NWPPA E&O Safety Subcommittee selects the winner of the annual Safety Heroism Award with concurrence from the NWPPA E&O Policy Committee.



(L-R) Clark Public Utilities Environmental Resources Manager Jeff Wittler and 2019 E&O 1st Vice Chair Ryan Amundson from Snohomish PUD.

About NWPPA: NWPPA is an international association representing and serving more than 150 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.