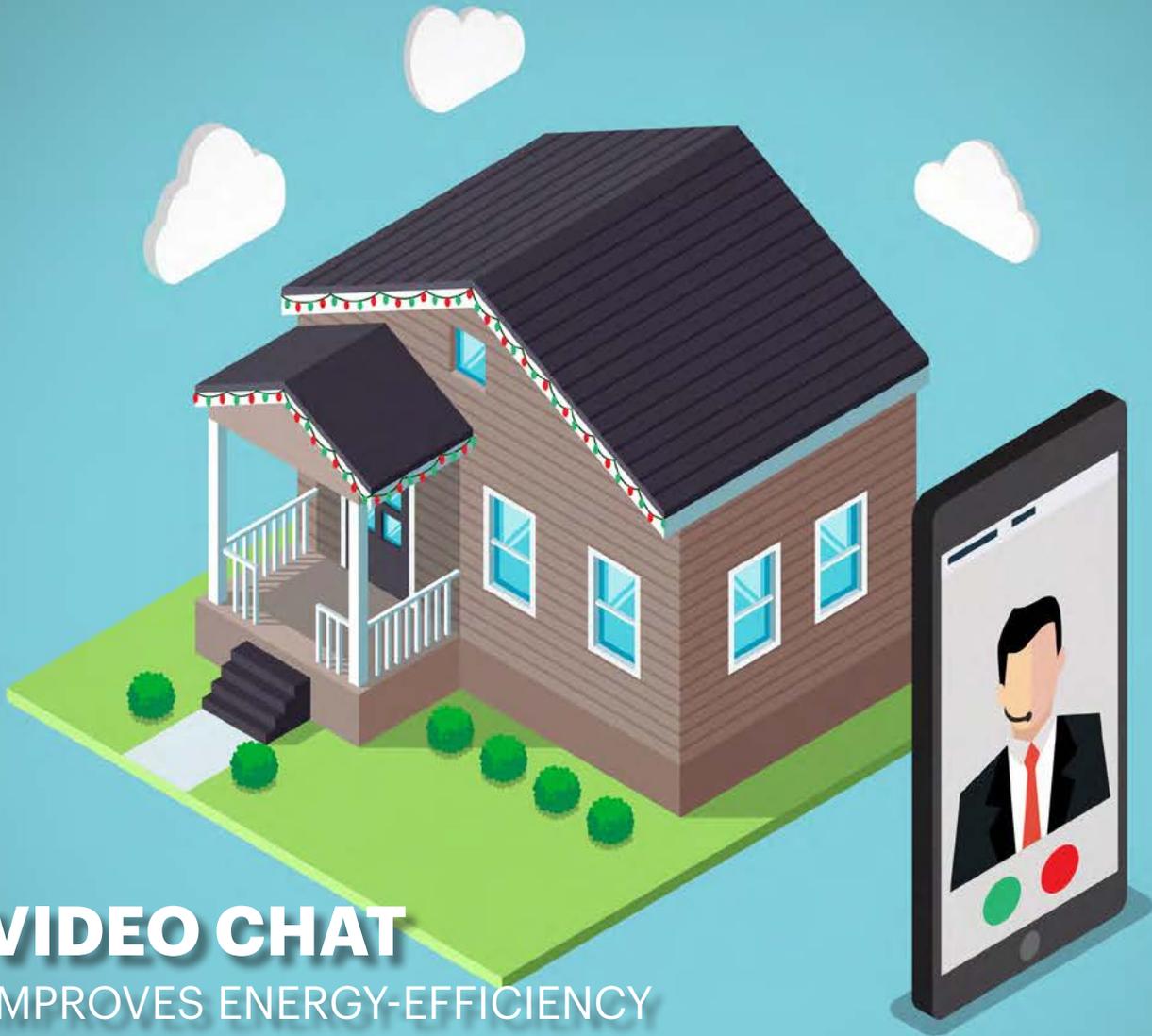
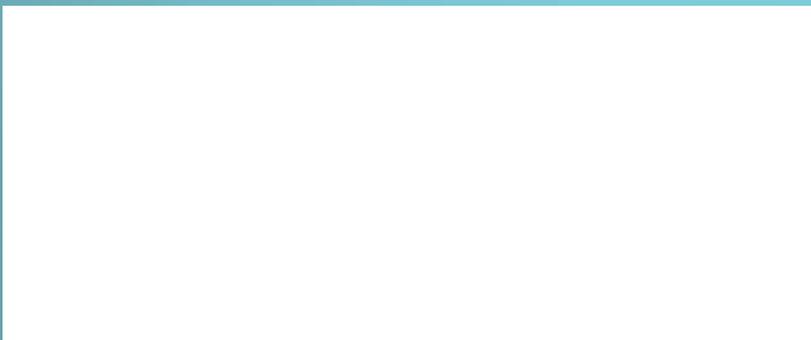


BULLETIN



VIDEO CHAT

IMPROVES ENERGY-EFFICIENCY
INSPECTIONS AT TACOMA POWER





On the cover: A video chat inspection pilot at Tacoma Power shows how web-based video technology can replace visual, on-site inspections, which in turn reduces the need for re-inspections, and saves time and costs.

Opinions expressed in single articles are not necessarily policies of the Association. For permission to reprint articles, write or call the associate editor.

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Another Wyoming Utility Joins NWPPA!

We are excited to announce that Bridger Valley Electric Association in Lyman, Wyo., has joined as our 154th member utility. Welcome!



Incorporated in 1938, BVEA is a locally owned and operated electric cooperative that also provides wireless internet services in the Bridger Valley and Granger area, and satellite internet service throughout the service territory.

Bridger Valley is a landform of Uinta County, Wyo., where Fort Bridger was established in 1843 to service emigrant traffic. Today, the valley is a historic byway, incorporating the small towns of Fort Bridger, Urie, Mountain View, and Lyman.

BVEA's 28 employees manage 6,665 meters and are led by Jud Redden, general manager. A seven-person board of directors represents the five districts served by the cooperative.

For more information, visit www.bvea.coop. NWPPA

ANNUAL CALL FOR NOMINATIONS & RESOLUTIONS ARE DUE NEXT MONTH

If you have not yet submitted your interest in the 2018–2019 NWPPA Board of Trustees, nominations for the 2018 annual awards, and/or new or edited resolutions, you still have about a month to do so; the due date for all is January 31. As a reminder, here is what the Association needs:

Board seats

Nominations for seven vacant utility member seats on the NWPPA Board of Trustees. The vacant utility seats are for the following: a general manager from an Alaska cooperative; a board director or commissioner from a California PUD, irrigation district, or cooperative; a general manager from an Oregon cooperative for a one-year unexpired term; a board director from an Oregon PUD; a general manager from a Washington municipal for a two-year unexpired term; and two general managers from a Montana cooperative.

Awards

Nominations for the Life Awards, Paul J. Raver Community Service Award, John M. George Public Service Award, William "Bill" McCrorie Distinguished Service Award, and Homer T. Bone Award honoring state or federal legislators for lifetime work on behalf of public power.

Resolutions

Submissions for any new proposed 2018 resolutions or updates to the existing 2017 resolutions (available at www.nwppa.org).

If you have questions about any of the above categories, please contact NWPPA at (360) 254-0109 or nwppa@nwppa.org.

NWPPA

3 Cs CONFERENCE

Focused on Emerging Technologies and the Utility of the Future

Who is the first point of contact for the customers of a utility? Who makes that first impression of the utility? It is the customer service, credit, or collections representative. That person acts as the liaison with the utility and provides service information, answers questions, and resolves emerging problems that customers might have encountered. The representative works in an environment which also requires continuous learning about programs, issues, and new technologies that either impact customers now or will in the future.

This year's 3 Cs Conference was designed to fill that continuous learning need. Attendees gathered in Spokane on October 25–27 to hear subject matter experts and panels of their peers talk about new technologies that are in place at some utilities as well as technological changes coming down the road.

The energy and enthusiasm were high this year! Most of the attendees had been at a utility for more than three years and many had attended a 3 Cs Conference before; yet 49 percent had never attended the conference.

"This conference has been an awesome experience and was a great way to learn what other utilities are doing," said first-time attendee Al Sayago from the City of Forest Grove (Ore.). "There was great networking. I would definitely come back!"

Keynote speaker Brian Case, general manager of Fall River Electric Cooperative (Ashton, Idaho), opened the conference with a glimpse into the future. He talked about how distributed generation was one of the many game changers for how utilities provide services and that to survive, utilities would need to find new ways to provide value to their customers.

New technology topics included net metering, demand response, conservation, and artificial intelligence. Topics more in line with current utility services included social media, assistance programs, confidentiality, and communication with those living in poverty.

According to Kelsey Lepinski of Wasco Electric Cooperative (The Dalles, Ore.), "The speakers are great!"

However, Andrea Harris of Grays Harbor PUD (Aberdeen, Wash.) was especially enthusiastic about one of the speakers: "Jennifer Bouman-Steagall rocks!"

Harris was referring to Bouman-Steagall's engaging, entertaining, and informative insights on how attendees could take charge of their own professional development. She then closed the conference with a motivational presentation on how they could unleash their inner superheroes; attendees left the conference in a positive, upbeat mood.

Shanna Case of Grays Harbor PUD summed up the conference well: "I think it was a great opportunity to network with other utilities. It gives a chance to learn new ideas and procedures to take back."

Be sure to mark your calendars for next year's 3 Cs Conference in Vancouver, Wash., October 24–26, 2018. NWPPA

THE ALASKA CONFERENCE DELIVERED!

The biennial Alaska Electric Utility Conference, held the week of November 13 in Anchorage, Alaska, delivered outstanding value to both our utility members and exhibitors this year! Chairman Jim Cross, engineering supervisor at Homer Electric Association, led a week of training and networking, complete with outstanding speakers, hot topics, and a trade show packed with exhibitors from across the U.S.

“Industry speakers, vendors, and trainers were brought in and this reduced the costs for the hundreds of Alaskans who didn’t have to travel to the Lower 48 for a top program during a time when finances are tight here in the state,” said Cross.

The week kicked off with five NWPPA classes ranging from Skip

Collier’s very popular *Electric Utility System Operations* class, which was at capacity, to Bob Coates’ and Scott Girard’s classes on substation systems.

“We had participants at all levels of experience in our two classes and they jumped in and were engaged,” said Coates. “There was outstanding interest and effort made by all the participants, from learning how to read substation schematics to understanding the fine positions of station transformer maintenance.”

On Wednesday the conference opened with presentations from several dignitaries who each provided a view of our businesses and industry in Alaska. Starting with Cross, he challenged attendees to take back to their companies at least one thing. That “one thing”

is something each person should take back and implement to save time and money, improve safety, or increase their utility customers’ satisfaction.

NWPPA Executive Director Anita Decker then challenged the attendees to consider who had made it possible for their attendance at the conference—their customers! She reminded attendees that our customers must be the focus of our business.

Crystal Enkvist, executive director of the Alaska Power Association, followed with a wrap up of the value that APA provides its Alaskan utilities—in a very tight state economy—through its legislative, regulatory, safety, education, and training support.

We wrapped up Wednesday morning with a keynote talk from Alaska Governor Bill Walker. Among other items, Gov. Walker mentioned his recent trip to China with President Trump and his delegation, where investment in Alaska was discussed. The trip proved important because Alaska has raw materials, such as oil and gas, that China needs for its and the world’s growing economy.

On Thursday we heard from our CEO panel on topics such as the tight economy and what keeps them up at



(L-R) Alaska Governor Bill Walker talks with Alaska Electric Light & Power’s Eric Eriksen. Photo provided by the Office of the Governor.



Attendees were eager to attend Skip Collier’s Pre-conference Electric Utility Systems Operations class.

“We had a fantastic team of committee members and NWPPA/ APA staff that developed an outstanding program for the week and it delivered an amazing value to our utilities and vendors.” —Jim Cross

night. CEOs on the panel included Cory Borgeson of Golden Valley Electric Association, John Foutz of the City of Seward Electric Department, Tony Izzo of Matanuska Electric Association, Meera Kohler of Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, and Martin Shroyer of Kotzebue Electric Association.

The 2017 AEUC also offered 19 sessions on topics ranging from energy storage, an update on engineering standard IEEE 1547 regarding interconnections, Ox block rigging for line crews, and an update on the Allison Creek hydro project at Copper Valley Electric Association. All in all, the week was a success.

“We had a fantastic team of committee members and NWPPA/APA staff that developed an outstanding program for the week and it delivered an amazing value to our utilities and vendors,” said Cross.

NWPPA and APA will be partnering again in 2019 to deliver another AEUC conference. Until then, visit www.nwppa.org to find other events coming up in Alaska, such as the *Nuts and Bolts of Work Orders* and *Fraud Fundamentals for Utility Personnel*. **NWPPA**

Cybersecurity Challenges to Be Hot Topics at 2018 IT Conference

Utility IT departments face the almost overwhelming task of safeguarding the utility’s systems from cyberattacks. To do this, they must stay abreast of the latest cybersecurity threats and prevention measures.

One way that NWPPA’s IT members accomplish this is through attendance at the annual IT Conference each spring. There they hear subject matter experts present on the latest issues and exchange experiences with their peers. They return home with new insights to help them keep their utilities’ systems secure.

At the next conference on March 8-10, 2018, IT personnel will gather in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. They will hear subject matter experts and panels of their peers address key issues such as the SANS top 20 critical security controls for effective cyber defense; business continuity and disaster recovery planning; cyber insurance; mobile device managers; and cybersecurity metrics.

Two special guests from NRECA and APPA will join them: Cynthia Hsu, Ph.D., cybersecurity program manager, Business and Technology Strategies, NRECA; and Nathan Mitchell P.E., senior director, Electric Reliability Standards & Compliance, APPA. They will both talk about how utilities can take advantage of the new DOE funding for small to medium utilities.

Returning this year are two favorite speakers: Alec Taylor, a consultant with IVOXY, will present this year on virtual desktop infrastructure; and Paul Weatherhead, vice president and chief technology officer of Digital Boundary Group, will present on mitigating penetration test findings.

A new feature at the conference will be a discussion on IT benchmarking practices. Prior to the conference, IT staff will be invited to complete a survey about their practices on IT-related issues. The survey findings will be reported and discussed during the conference.

IT Planning Team Chair Cliff Hammons, who is the IT manager at Cowlitz County PUD, strongly encourages his peers from other utilities to attend.

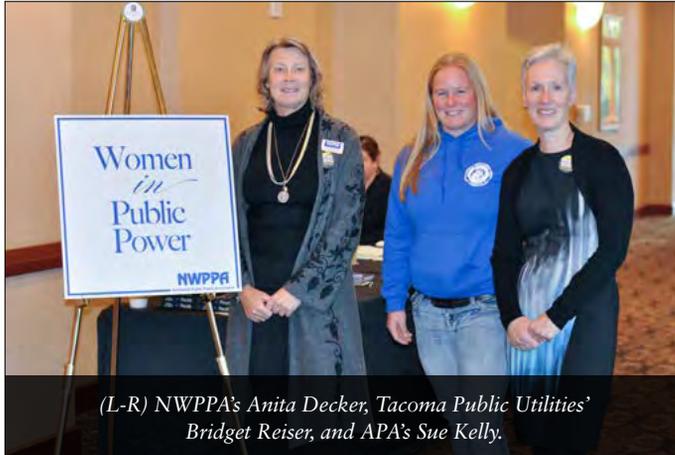
“Joining us at our annual IT conference event is a great way to stay in tune with the constant evolution of technology solutions and security demands within our industry. These events are packed with many benefits including the ability to help you achieve a future project goal, engage in valuable technology and security experiences, and develop your professional network,” he said. “I always return from these conferences with new ideas and approaches that help with effectiveness and efficiency.”

To register, visit www.nwppa.org. **NWPPA**



(L-R) Pat Estenson of Polywater visits with Sterling Larson of Chugach Electric Association at the trade show.

Third Annual Women in Public Power Serves Another Ace



(L-R) NWPPA's Anita Decker, Tacoma Public Utilities' Bridget Reiser, and APA's Sue Kelly.



APPA CEO Sue Kelly opened the conference with wisdom she has gained over 30 years, including "Assemble a cabinet of advisors."



Executive panelists also shared their lessons learned. (L-R) Mason County PUD No. 3's Annette Creekpau, Pend Oreille PUD's Amber Orr, Salem Electric's Britni Davidson, AVEC's Meara Kohler, and BPA's Janet Herrin.

"The Women in Public Power Conference is the most inspiring, educational, and valuable conference I've ever attended," said Danielle Roberts of Sacramento Municipal Utility District (Calif.).

This was a common theme heard both during and after the event.

"We believe we have the right combination of learning, development, and networking in this program," said NWPPA Director of Education and Workforce Development Elaine Dixon. "It's an opportunity for women to come together and learn from each other in an environment that may be different than the one in which they work every day."

Sue Kelly, president and CEO of the American Public Power Association, started the conference with an update on the current challenges and opportunities facing public power utilities today. She

then walked through some wisdom she has gained over the last 30 years of her career:

- Do not let the perfect be the enemy of good
- No one goes away
- Because no one goes away, don't be a jerk
- Do what makes sense for you, not what you are supposed to do
- Assemble a cabinet of advisors
- If you make a wrong choice, make another choice

The participants then spent some time reflecting on this advice, and sharing their own stories and lessons learned in smaller groups. Experiences in confidence and resilience came from Beth Looney, president and CEO of PNGC Power. Her journey through various

entities, from the South to Midwest, and now the Northwest, helped create a strong reputation for her expertise in power supply. She also shared some no-nonsense advice for navigating through the energy industry and what has worked for her.

At this conference, we always utilize an assessment tool to enhance self-understanding for individual strengths and areas of development. The more you know yourself, who you are, your tendencies, how you work, and what motivates you, the better choices you can make for yourself, your work, and your career. This year, participants took the Thomas-Kilmann Type Indicator. The focus is on four types of conflict; where and how to use them; and how to get the best possible outcomes.

"I have a new understanding, perspective, and appreciation for conflict,"



(Clockwise from top left) Maggie Kolkena walked attendees through the Thomas-Kilmann Type Indicator and taught them how to get the best possible outcomes in times of conflict; Idaho Power SVP and COO Lisa Grow wrapped up the conference and talked about making differences in small moments; and a sell-out crowd at this year's event!

said Joelyn Hansen from Idaho Falls Power. “The assessment tool session really added to my tool kit!”

This year’s panelists (Janet Herrin, COO of BPA; Meara Kohler, CEO of AVEC; Britni Davidson, Customer Service manager at Salem Electric; Amber Orr, director of Engineering at Pend Oreille PUD; and Annette Creekpau, general manager at Mason County PUD No. 3) shared examples of how lessons along the way and experience are valuable all through your career and at any level of the organization.

Fawn Germer, international best-selling author and journalist, astounded the group with her stories from famous and accomplished women from all over the world. She spent years meeting and interviewing women in order to write *Pearls*, a book of wisdom. Some of the quotes highlighted by Germer

included: “Don’t let security be your dangerous anchor.” “When you go through the hard, that’s where you find your growth.” “Grit is required.” “It’s not about balance... it’s about choices, and choices have consequences.” She definitely inspired breakthrough thinking for the participants.

“Fawn had such inspiring wisdom to share,” said Elena Meloni of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council. “I will remember it forever.”

Throughout the two very full days, participants networked; worked on their “cabinet of advisors;” spent reflection and discussion time on their short- and long-term goals; and learned more about themselves in relation to the changing world of electric utilities.

“The life experiences from others in the room is invaluable,” said Creekpau. “It’s an environment of support

and sharing to help anyone on their journey through their career in utilities.”

Lisa Grow, SVP and COO for Idaho Power, wrapped up the conference. She brought powerful words of mentorship, will, privilege, empathy, conscientiousness, kindness, and making differences in small moments. There is no way to recreate the passion from which Grow speaks (you had to be there!) but make no mistake, you know what she values and where she stands.

“This conference is about development and bringing forth a multitude of ways to grow,” said Julie Urban of Flathead Electric Cooperative. “My cup is full!” **NWPPA**

LERG Members Gathered at Annual Meeting



“Just let HR handle it.” Organizations count on HR to take care of employee issues; however, the job of navigating through the complicated landscape of employee rights, laws, and benefits can be rigorous.

Those in charge of HR and labor regulations keep abreast in a variety of ways; one of those is by attending the Labor and Employee Relations Group Annual Meeting. On October 11–13, the members of LERG gathered in Spokane, Wash., to hear experts in the legal and benefits fields give briefings on ADA, FMLA, and workers compensation; harassment and workplace investigations; and the latest changes to HR and healthcare law regulations.

“It was great to have labor attorneys there to discuss upcoming changes with health care and family leave laws. It’s hard to keep track of all of the changes and they impact different utilities in different ways,” said Mason PUD No. 1 Director of Business Services Kristin Masteller. “It’s valuable to have that Q & A with a subject matter expert.”

Attendees also listened to the insights of keynote speaker Jim York of Continuum, who is the instructor for NWPPA’s Foreman Leadership classes. During his presentation, *Old School, New School: Operations, Management, and HR*, York talked about the changes that have occurred over the years between the linecrew’s approaches to life and work, and the disconnects they now have with management and HR.

Roundtable discussions—always a favorite part of the conference—provided opportunities for attendees to share their current issues and get input from others on how they have worked with those issues at their utilities. Best practices always emerge from these discussions and managers take new ideas back to their work.

Next year’s LERG Annual Meeting will be in Seattle, Wash., on October 10–12, 2018. [NWPPA](http://NWPPA.org)

A Look Back at Public Power

50 YEARS AGO – 1967

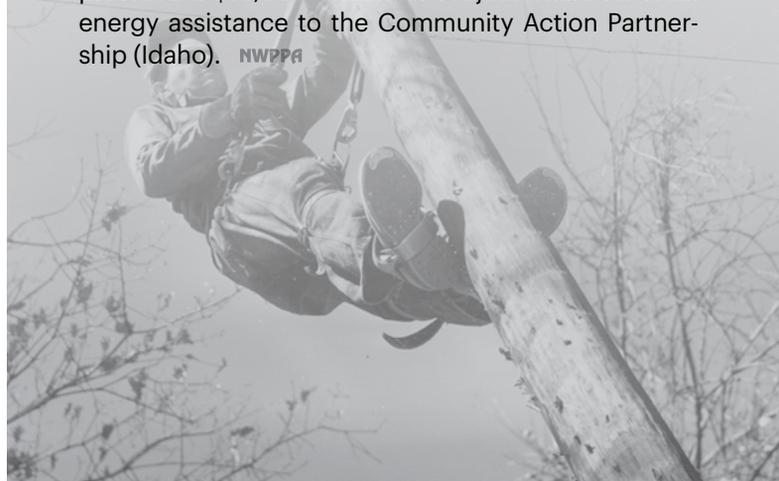
NWPPA selected Henry Curtis to succeed Gus Norwood as the Association’s executive secretary ... Seattle City Light’s Area Development Program bought ad space in *The Wall Street Journal* to sell the Seattle area to executives of “growth-minded companies” (Wash.) ... The California Public Utilities Commission adopted a policy to promote conversion of overhead wiring to underground; the policy was believed to be the first of its kind in the nation ... Tacoma City Light claimed the tallest Christmas tree cut in the nation this year (Wash.) ... Bonneville Power Administration appointed Henry Richmond as its new administrator.

25 YEARS AGO – 1992

Jim Duros, a former director at Kodiak Electric Association, received the prestigious Mason Lazelle Award from the Alaska Rural Electric Cooperative Association ... Yakima County PUD was disbanded after more than a half century of existence (Wash.) ... Northern Wasco County announced it would move ahead with a third generating project, a hydro plant at White River Falls (Ore.) ... Grays Harbor PUD was one of a handful of Northwest utilities (among 681 national participants) taking part in Green Lights, a voluntary Environmental Protection Agency program aimed at encouraging the use of efficient lighting technologies (Wash.).

5 YEARS AGO – 2012

Energy Northwest’s Christopher Laws received the CEO Lifesaving Award for helping the victims of a car accident (Wash.) ... SMUD Director Bill Slaton was elected president of the SMUD Board of Directors (Calif.) ... Centralia City Light announced that Rick Evans was selected as the new line superintendent (Wash.) ... Homer Electric Association spent approximately \$52,000 to repair a fiber optic line that was knocked out of service by a bullet (Alaska) ... Kootenai Electric Cooperative Member Services Department provided a \$10,000 check for Project Share for local energy assistance to the Community Action Partnership (Idaho). [NWPPA](http://NWPPA.org)



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NWPPA

January, February, and March 2018

Please visit www.nwppa.org to view the full course descriptions for these and other courses.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRAINING FOR UTILITY PERSONNEL

Who Should Attend: Any employee who offers a DOT-regulated hazardous material for transportation; classifies, labels, or marks packages of hazardous materials to be transported; prepares or signs shipping papers or manifests for DOT-regulated hazardous materials; transports DOT-regulated hazardous materials; receives DOT-regulated hazardous material; or supervises employees conducting one of these tasks.
January 8, 2018—Seattle, Wash.

ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE MEETING

Who Should Attend: Utility environmental professionals (new and experienced), government agency staff, vendors, and anyone who is tasked with or interested in environmental issues, regulatory compliance, or mitigation in the environmental arena of electric utilities.
January 9, 2018—Seattle, Wash.

PCB MANAGEMENT: FOUNDATIONAL & ADVANCED TRAINING

Who Should Attend: All utility operations and technical personnel, as well as employees who are involved in managing, handling, and maintaining records and EPA reports for PCB items and PCB waste.
January 10–11, 2018—Seattle, Wash.

SITUATIONAL SELF LEADERSHIP

Who Should Attend: Individual contributors and team members seeking to be more productive and satisfied at work, and potential leaders who do not currently have direct reports. Anyone who reports to managers trained in Situational Leadership II.
January 17–18, 2018—Vancouver, Wash.

FOREMAN LEADERSHIP SKILLS #1: PREPARING FOREMEN FOR LEADERSHIP; LEARNING TO LEAD OTHERS

Who Should Attend: Foremen and crew leaders.
January 24–25, 2018—Portland, Ore.

STAKING TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: NESC & UTILITY SPECIFICATIONS

Who Should Attend: Staking technicians.
February 5–7, 2018—Seattle, Wash.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS #2: LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

Who Should Attend: Supervisors, managers, and employees who will be transitioning to a supervisory or managerial role in the future.
February 7–8, 2018—Santa Rosa, Calif.

LABOR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS GROUP MEMBER MEETING

Who Should Attend: Members of the NWPPA Labor and Employee Relations Group: general managers, labor relations managers, operations managers, and human resource professionals.
February 8–9, 2018—Portland, Ore.

STAKING TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: OBTAINING PERMITS

Who Should Attend: Staking technicians.
February 8–9, 2018—Seattle, Wash.

STAKING TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: PHASE 2 WITH TRANSFORMER AND CONDUCTOR SIZING

Who Should Attend: Staking technicians and engineers.
February 12–16, 2018—Kalispell, Mont.

ONLINE — COMMUNICATION TUNE UP WEBINAR SERIES: ALL THREE SESSIONS

Who Should Attend: Anyone who wants to increase his or her communication skills to be more effective working with both internal and external customers.
February 13—April 17, 2018—Online

ONLINE — COMMUNICATION STYLES: WHY CAN'T YOU HEAR ME?

Who Should Attend: Anyone who wants to increase his or her communication skills to be more effective working with both internal and external customers.
February 13, 2018—Online

NEW! WAREHOUSING: OVERVIEW, SHIPPING, RECEIVING, AND SAFETY

Who Should Attend: Warehouse and materials management professionals.
February 13–14, 2018—Vancouver, Wash.

HARDENING WINDOWS NETWORKS

Who Should Attend: Network, server, desktop, and security administrators and management-level individuals interested in this topic.
February 13–16, 2018—Vancouver, Wash.

NEW! POWER DIVERSION WORKSHOP

Who Should Attend: Engineering, operations, customer service, metering, and safety personnel, as well as anyone seeking the latest information and best practices on power diversion.
February 27, 2018—Richland, Wash.

FOREMAN LEADERSHIP SKILLS #2: EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING; TRANSITIONING FROM EMPLOYEE TO FOREMAN

Who Should Attend: Foremen and crew leaders.
February 27–28, 2018—Vancouver, Wash.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP SKILLS SERIES: ALL FIVE SESSIONS

Who Should Attend: General managers, directors, and experienced leaders of teams.

February 27–December 5, 2018—Multiple Locations

SENIOR LEADERSHIP SKILLS SERIES SESSION 1: LEAD YOURSELF

Who Should Attend: General managers, directors, and experienced leaders of teams.

February 27–March 1, 2018—Vancouver, Wash.

METERING FOR LINEMEN

Who Should Attend: Journeyman linemen, safety, and other electrical workers, including customer service personnel, who want a better understanding of revenue metering and the hazards associated while working with revenue meters for both single-phase and three-phase meters.

February 28, 2018—Richland, Wash.

NUTS AND BOLTS OF WORK ORDERS

Who Should Attend: Employees involved in any aspect of preparing and/or processing work orders for their electric utility, or employees outside the accounting area who want a better understanding of the work order process.

February 28–March 1, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

FRAUD FUNDAMENTALS FOR UTILITY PERSONNEL

Who Should Attend: Mid- and senior-level management, as well as those involved in the accounting, treasury, purchasing, inventory, cashier, billing, and collection functions at the utility.

March 2, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

IT CONFERENCE PRE-SESSION CLASS: OVERVIEW OF THE C2M2—CYBERSECURITY MATURITY MODEL

Who Should Attend: IT professionals and others who are responsible for information technology programs.

March 6, 2018—Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

IT CONFERENCE

Who Should Attend: IT professionals and others who are responsible for information technology programs, as well as operations and engineering employees who would like to build a stronger relationship with IT.

March 7–9, 2018—Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT: CUSTOMIZE YOUR ERM PROGRAM

Who Should Attend: Utility professionals who are responsible for developing, implementing, managing, and/or sponsoring enterprise risk management within their organizations. It will be important for participants to have a good foundation and working knowledge of ERM terminology and concepts; they may have attended prior NWPPA ERM classes or have some prior ERM training or work experience.

March 7–8, 2018—Seattle, Wash.

ONLINE — LISTENING FOR EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Who Should Attend: Anyone who wants to increase his or her communication skills to be more effective working with both internal and external customers.

March 13, 2018—Online

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL 1: ALL FOUR DAYS

Who Should Attend: Administrative assistants, executive assistants, or employees in administrative or service-oriented roles.

March 13–16, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL 1: DAY 1—BUSINESS COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Who Should Attend: Administrative assistants, executive assistants, or employees in administrative or service-oriented roles.

March 13, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL 1: DAY 2—RESOLVING CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE

Who Should Attend: Administrative assistants, executive assistants, or employees in administrative or service-oriented roles.

March 14, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL 1: DAY 3—UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF ELECTRICITY

Who Should Attend: Administrative assistants, executive assistants, or employees in administrative or service-oriented roles.

March 15, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL 1: DAY 4—PERSONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Who Should Attend: Administrative assistants, executive assistants, or employees in administrative or service-oriented roles.

March 16, 2018—Anchorage, Alaska

SUBSTATION SERIES: PRINT READING AND ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT TROUBLESHOOTING TECHNIQUES

Who Should Attend: Substation personnel, engineers, and all who have responsibility for the operation and maintenance of distribution and transmission substations.

March 14–15, 2018—Sacramento, Calif.

FOREMAN LEADERSHIP ACCELERATED PROGRAM PART 1

Who Should Attend: Foremen and crew leaders.

March 20–22, 2018—Great Falls, Mont.

NEGOTIATING YOUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

Who Should Attend: Those involved in any aspect of administering or supporting the collective bargaining agreement and/or supporting the labor relations function within their organization including human resources, labor/employee relations, all levels of management (line, senior, assistant GM, GM/CEO, and elected officials), and any others who would like to sharpen their negotiation skills and become more familiar with the details of the process.

March 20–22, 2018—Vancouver, Wash.

SUBSTATION SERIES: SUBSTATION TRANSFORMERS & LTC DIAGNOSTICS

Who Should Attend: Line and substation personnel, as well as engineers who have responsibility for distribution and transmission substations.

March 21, 2018—Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Continued

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

WAREHOUSING: INVENTORY, MATERIALS MANAGEMENT, AND SUPERVISION

Who Should Attend: Warehouse and materials management professionals.

March 21-22, 2018—Tacoma, Wash.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS #1: SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Who Should Attend: Supervisors, managers, and employees who will be transitioning to a supervisory or managerial role in the future.

March 21-22, 2018—Sacramento, Calif.

LINEMAN SKILLS SERIES: LINEMAN RIGGING

Who Should Attend: Linemen and line crew foremen.

March 22, 2018—Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

SUBSTATION SERIES: SUBSTATION BATTERY MAINTENANCE AND TESTING

Who Should Attend: Line and substation personnel, as well as engineers who are responsible for distribution and transmission substations.

March 22, 2018—Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Who Should Attend: Any manager, supervisor, foreman, lead employee, HR employee, or anyone who may be involved in or is responsible for investigating an employee incident or near hit.

March 22, 2018—Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

NRECA CCD 2610: UNDERSTANDING THE ELECTRIC BUSINESS

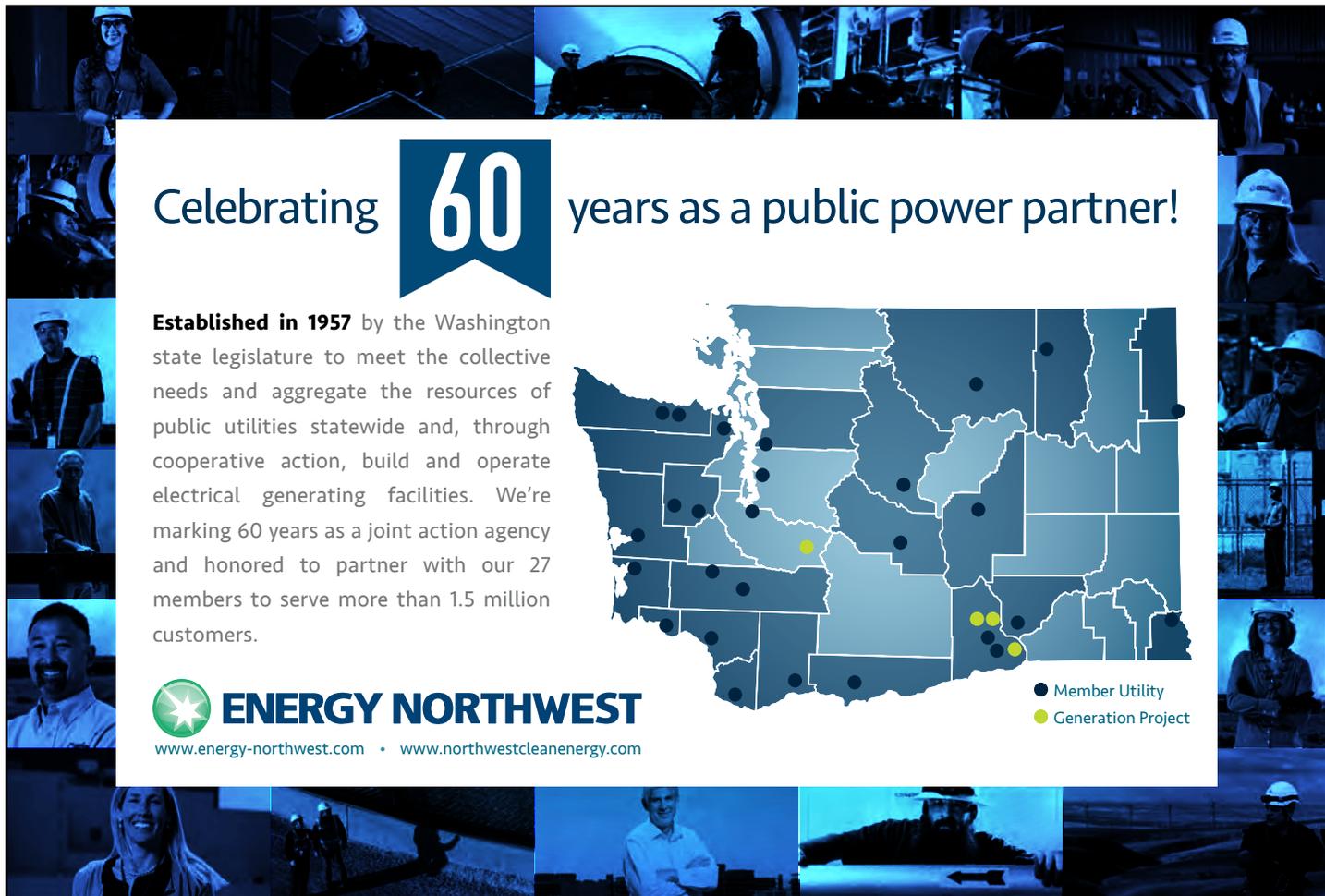
Who Should Attend: Directors, policy makers, and general managers.

March 28, 2018—Eugene, Ore.

NRECA CCD 2630: STRATEGIC PLANNING

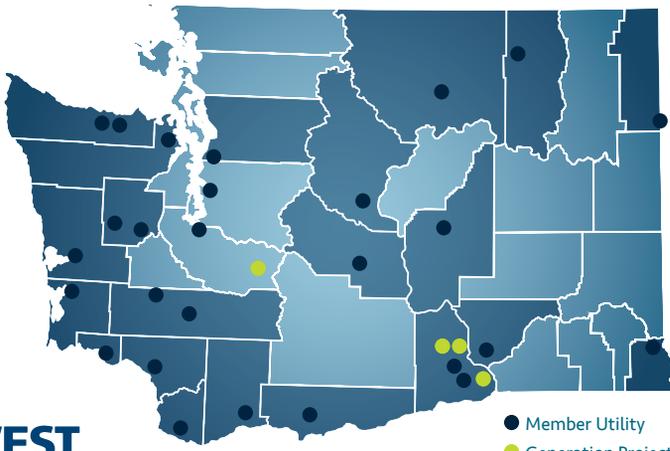
Who Should Attend: Directors, policy makers, and general managers.

March 29, 2018—Eugene, Ore. *NWPPA*



Celebrating **60** years as a public power partner!

Established in 1957 by the Washington state legislature to meet the collective needs and aggregate the resources of public utilities statewide and, through cooperative action, build and operate electrical generating facilities. We're marking 60 years as a joint action agency and honored to partner with our 27 members to serve more than 1.5 million customers.



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● Member Utility
● Generation Project

RISK INDICATORS TO TRACK RISK EXPOSURES

By Julie Ryan

Risk indicators help organizations proactively manage enterprise risks—the financial, operational, regulatory, legal, environmental, and strategic risks that significantly impact an organization. Risk indicators can serve as early warning signs of increasing risk exposure and are used to monitor conditions that can create a risk event; this type of risk indicator helps an organization monitor the root cause of a risk event. Or risk indicators can be used to measure the impact of a risk when it occurs to assess the consequence of a risk event.

Addressing a risk event’s root cause is akin to preventing an illness from occurring. A root cause key risk indicator measures what would cause a risk to happen. In contrast, addressing the consequence of the risk is like treating the patient after he becomes sick. A root cause indicator provides managers with critical information to develop mitigation measures to prevent a risk from occurring. A consequence risk indicator measures what would happen if a risk occurred, so that the organization could focus on minimizing the damage of a risk event. With this information, the organization would focus on minimizing the damage that could occur after the risk event.

Below are some examples of root cause and consequence key risk indicators:

Illustrative Root Cause and Consequence Risk Indicators

Root Cause	Consequence
Rising unemployment rate	Increased customer bad debt
Rising winter temperatures	Lower revenues and less snowpack
Declining plant availability factor	Lost generation and cost of replacement energy
Increasing commodity prices	Customer bill increases and regulatory risk

Proactive risk management focuses on root cause in order to identify the elements that can contribute to a potential risk occurring. However, even with proactive risk management, it is possible that risks will still occur. This is because not all risks can be predicted and not all risks can be fully mitigated. Therefore, consequence risk indicators are as important to develop as root cause indicators.

Risk indicators are not dissimilar to key performance indicators which are widely used within the utility industry. Key performance indicators are measures to track improved performance and positive trends. The subtle difference is that risk indicators are metrics that are monitored over time to identify negative trends and to help a utility avoid unacceptable outcomes. Risk indicators help organizations prevent negative outcomes such as brand erosion, weakening operations, compliance failure, capacity losses, project delays, cost overruns/budget exceedances, negative workforce trends, increasing customer rates, and regulatory risk.

In some cases, the same measure could serve as both a key performance indicator and a risk indicator. For example, “cost per customer” could be monitored for both purposes. Management could use this metric to monitor the success of newly implemented strategy to reduce cost per customer. A declining cost per customer could be the result of new strategies; but an increasing cost per

customer could portend increasing risk exposure, such as rising operational and maintenance costs.

Risk indicators can be applied for different purposes; sometimes they are used to monitor risk associated with a “loss event” (a single large risk event). An example of a loss event would be a major dam failure causing flood damage which would pose flood danger, high repair costs, and material opportunity cost of lost hydro energy. Given the severe consequences of a dam failure, a risk indicator could be developed to monitor the state of the dam to avert the risk of such a large loss event.

A second application of key risk indicators is “threat event frequency,” where the risk indicator is used to measure deviation from normal occurrences, as a warning sign of a major problem. An example would be a higher than normal occurrence of electric system outages. The threat event frequency does not explain what has caused the deviation from normal, only that the deviation occurred. The utility would need to determine the cause of the deviation. In the example of increased electric system outages, the utility would want to explore potential drivers, which could include overgrown vegetation, increased storm intensity or frequency, aging equipment, or other reasons.

A third application is to measure the potential for the risk to increase in severity, or “threat capability.” Here the risk indicator is used to monitor the consequence if the risk were to increase in intensity and impact. A value-at-risk metric to estimate price risk exposure within a power supply portfolio is an example of a threat capability risk indicator. The metric measures the potential opportunity cost or increase in power costs as a result of a material change in fuel or power costs.

A fourth application is to use a risk indicator to monitor internal controls. Often, internal controls are used to ensure compliance with rules and regulations. Financial internal controls protect against potential fraud or financial misconduct. The risk indicator helps the organization identify circumstances which could lead to a breakdown in controls. For example, a utility may have financial controls related to wholesale energy trading limits. In the latter example, the risk indicator could monitor wholesale energy transactions, ensuring that no authority level is exceeded or transaction limit is triggered. In this case, the risk indicator monitors compliance with the organization’s transaction limits and separation of duties internal controls.

Risk owners should identify and monitor key risk indicators, given they are the most knowledgeable about root causes and consequences of risk exposures. Further, risk owners can recommend how risk indicators can be used for decision making. Risk indicators should also be reported centrally to a risk manager, so that the information across areas can be aggregated, tracked, archived, and analyzed. In this manner, the risk indicators can be reported in a dashboard or other type of reporting vehicle to efficiently deliver valuable information to decision makers and policy makers. **NWPPA**

Julie Ryan is the managing partner at Aether Advisors LLC, advising clients on strategy and risk management. She is also director of the Utility Management Certificate program at Willamette University in Portland, Ore., and is an instructor for NWPPA. She can be contacted at jryan@aetheradvisors.com or (206) 329-0424.



Janet Peterson, a project manager for BPA's Technology Innovation office, recently installed one of the water heaters at her own home.

ENERGY RESEARCHERS TAP INTO A BETTER WATER HEATER

By Kristel Turner

Your home's water heater might be flushing energy—and your money—down the drain.

The traditional electric water heater that's in most Northwest homes accounts for up to 30 percent of a home's energy bill, second only to heating and air-conditioning. But the days of this energy-hungry appliance may be numbered, thanks to advanced heat-pump technology that's giving consumers a highly efficient water-heater alternative.

"I love it, it's awesome," said Marie Angel, a Tacoma Power customer and one of the first homeowners in the U.S. to use the technology. "It's so quiet, you wouldn't know it's working."

But it is. It's providing almost instant hot water for her family of four, at a fraction of what it cost to run their old water heater.

Angel was one of four homeowners to participate in a project to test the latest in water heater technology. Washington State University led the research, with support and funding from the Bonneville Power Administration and in partnership with the Energy Trust of Oregon, the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Avista, Tacoma Power, and Ravalli Electric Cooperative.

Years of testing and encouraging results have led to the commercial availability of this technology in the U.S., giving consumers more choice when it comes to upgrading their water-heating systems.

You may have heard of heat pump water heaters, which work by transferring heat from the air to a water tank. The

Northwest Power and Conservation Council has identified them as a major source of potential energy savings. And NEEA says increasing the availability of high-efficiency heat pump water heaters could save the region nearly 280 average megawatts—enough to power almost 211,000 homes each year—by 2035. BPA-funded testing has shown they can cut up to half of a home’s water-heating energy use compared to an electric resistance heater.

While heat pump water heaters have been available in the market for a number of years, researchers have been working to continually improve them.

To further tap into the appliance’s energy efficiency potential, Ken Eklund of the WSU Energy Program approached BPA in 2012. He received funding through BPA’s Technology Innovation program, which seeks to improve power system operations, increase efficiencies, and avoid costs.

The research targeted two notable advancements: the use of carbon dioxide as a refrigerant; and the development of a split-system unit, with both indoor and outdoor components, in place of single-unit systems that are installed entirely indoors.

“We not only signed up for that project,” said Janice Peterson, a project manager for BPA’s Technology Innovation office, “we went on to fund three others because we saw such encouraging results.”

The pursuit of a split-system unit led the researchers to Japan, where manufacturers were already developing them. One half of the unit, the part that pulls in air and heats the water, sits outdoors. The heated water then travels through pipes to an indoor water tank.

“That means it’s not stealing heat from the conditioned space,” explained Eklund. “But we didn’t know how well they would operate in the Northwest, where temperatures can drop well below zero in some areas during the winter.”

These heat pumps also use CO₂ in place of synthetic refrigerants, which have a potential to trap more heat in the atmosphere—something that can become an issue when the unit is retired. The widespread use of CO₂ as a refrigerant ended long ago with the discovery of synthetics, which operate at lower pressures, but today the industry is giving it a second look.

While Japanese manufacturers hadn’t seen much of a market in the U.S. for their products, Eklund was able to convince one to adapt its technology for the Northwest. After making adjustments for pipe fittings and other American standards, the research team began by testing the first prototype in a lab.

“The first one was huge and really complicated—like what they sell in Japan where they use hot water very differently than we do,” Eklund said. So the researchers started over with a different model, and immediately saw encouraging results, both in the lab and in the field.

They found participants in four distinct Northwest climates, from the coast to Montana, who were willing to use the water heaters for several years and allow researchers to monitor their energy use.

“We found they aren’t just more efficient than conventional water heaters, operating at about a third of the cost, they also use about two-thirds to a half of the energy of other heat pump water heaters,” Eklund says.

Even in the coldest test zones, the CO₂ heat pump water heaters outperformed other heat pump models, despite the fact



The SANDEN SANCO2 heat pump water heater uses 70% less energy than traditional water heating systems. Photos courtesy of Sanden International.



that they extract all of their heat from outdoor air. That has a lot to do with the thermal properties of CO₂, which has a much higher heat capacity than other refrigerants.

“It’s a safe, efficient system. In fact, we’ve found they are so efficient, they’re only operating about 25 percent of the time, even during the coldest months,” Eklund said. “So we’ve started trying to use the excess capacity for space heating.”

Initial tests of these combined space and water heaters have been promising, and Eklund says he hopes to be able to continue to advance that emerging technology as well.

“We’re also looking at the multi-family market,” Peterson said. “Right now, the CO₂ water heaters have a higher price point than other models, but just one of these water-heating systems can serve multiple units.”

Homeowners can offset the price through rebates and incentives offered by many local utilities, as well as some state tax credits. You can find information on incentives available in your area through the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency. [NWPPA](http://www.dsire.org)

Kristel Turner is in the Media Relations and Policy Department at Bonneville Power Administration. She can be reached at either (503) 230-4307 klturner@bpa.gov.



Salem Electric Adopts Local Non-Profit

By Britni Davidson

As public power utilities we all do it—we support the communities that we serve. It can be one of the more time-consuming parts of the job, but often one of the most rewarding.

Salem Electric is a cooperative serving parts of Salem and Keizer, Ore. We aren't the typical co-op that serves hundreds of square miles in a rural area; we serve 17.5 square miles of urban Oregon. Our 47 employees are committed to providing good customer service to our nearly 19,000 members. We are also committed to supporting those communities—after all, the 7th co-op principle is “Concern for Community.”

As responsible, supportive members of our communities, our employees are actively involved in dozens of business, civic, and community organizations. Annually we contribute nearly \$50,000 to over 75 organizations and community events through sponsorships and

donations. Whether it's supporting youth activities and local schools, or volunteering at or sponsoring family-oriented community events, we are there.

“While we've increased our financial contributions and expanded staff involvement over the years, our donation template has remained the same for decades,” said Salem Electric General Manager Terry Kelly. “Adopting one non-profit each year allows Salem Electric to have a bigger impact on at least one organization and it encourages our staff to play a larger role in the communities we serve.”

This year, we decided to try something a little different and more personal. In addition to our corporate donations, we adopted one non-profit to receive our internal fundraising dollars. This year's adopted non-profit is Family Building Blocks. Founded in 1997, FFB is a certified relief nursery facility committed

to keeping children safe and families together in Polk and Marion Counties.

So far in 2017, our employee efforts have included a makeover day at FBB where several staff members painted offices and classrooms and made landscaping improvements. We also donated the materials needed to make this project happen. We've had several opportunities for employees to contribute by paying \$15 to dress casually for a week; holding competitive events like corn hole, ping pong, and ladder golf which added another \$550 to the donation bank; and our most unusual fundraiser was a first for us—a silent auction of items built, cooked, or created by employees. It was a wonderful way to learn more about fellow employees and their talents, as well as being a successful fundraising event raising \$900 for FBB. Some of the unique items created by staff included delicious Lumpias, a six-foot ruler, a

clock with Salem Electric's logo, and a scale model of our line crew responding to an outage.

The partnership with FBB has been positive. "Family Building Blocks could not operate the high-quality, wrap-around support services we offer to children and families without the generous support of our community partners. We are very grateful for Salem Electric's team for their resourcefulness, creativity, and thoughtfulness throughout 2017, as well as prior years," said Family Building Blocks Executive Director Patrice Altenhofen. "Thank you for your enthusiastic support of our mission: 'Keeping Children Safe and Families Together.'"

There were still a few fundraisers planned for the remainder of 2017, including one centered on November's Oregon vs. Oregon State Civil War football game. For that fundraiser, employees paid to wear jeans and collegiate sports attire the week of the Civil War football game, with Oregon Duck or Oregon State Beaver attire recommended for the last working day of the week.

"We're a competitive bunch, so it's a fun way to get employees involved in fundraising," said Kelly.

This year has proved so successful that plans are already underway for projects and fundraisers in 2018 when Salem Electric will adopt the Union Gospel Mission. The Union Gospel Mission provides meals, lodging, and services for homeless persons and families in the Salem-Keizer area. **NWPPA**

Britni Davidson is the Member Services manager at Salem Electric in Oregon. She can be reached at davidson@salemelectric.com.



Items donated by employees for a silent auction event.



Salem Electric's indoor extreme make-over team at Family Building Blocks.



CRPUD Breaks Ground on New Substation

Sen. Betsy Johnson broke ground on the site of a new substation to be named in her honor. Johnson and 20 others gathered along West Lane Road in Scappoose, Ore., on October 20 for a groundbreaking ceremony. Columbia River PUD's ninth substation will neighbor the airport, and be called Betsy Johnson Substation.

"I am absolutely delighted, humbled, and honored," Johnson told the crowd. "It didn't hit me until I drove by yesterday and saw my name on the sign. I thought, 'This is so cool!'"

Johnson spoke to those in attendance—business leaders in the community along with PUD staff and board members—about the area's future.

The new substation will ensure reliable service to Scappoose customers. It is needed to accommodate load growth at the south end of the county.

That growth is driven by industrial customers like OMIC and Cascades Tissue. The area is also seeing residential growth; four new subdivisions bring 170 more homes to Scappoose.

Johnson is a catalyst for the industrial growth. Her efforts have secured more than \$21 million from the state legislature to support OMIC. In addition, Johnson has been a long-time advocate of community-owned utilities like Columbia River PUD.

PUD Board President Jake Carter thanked Johnson for her tireless work.

"We are very proud and honored to be naming our ninth substation the Betsy Johnson Substation," Carter said. "We can't think of a more appropriate and deserving person to name this substation here at the airport after than you, Senator Johnson. Thank you."

The PUD is building the substation without taking on any long-term debt. By using cash, electric rates will remain stable and affordable. The new substation is expected to be completed and energized by October 2018. **NWPPA**



(L-R) PUD Board Member Debbie Reed, PUD Board Member Harry Price, State Sen. Betsy Johnson, PUD Board President Jake Carter, Columbia County Commissioner Margaret Magruder, PUD Board Member Craig Melton, PUD General Manager John Nguyen, and PUD Board Member Rob Mathers break ground on the new Betsy Johnson Substation.

Arlen Orchard Joins National Commission

Sacramento Municipal Utility District (Calif.) CEO and General Manager Arlen Orchard will serve on a national commission, launched on October 26 by the Alliance to Save Energy, that will develop recommendations to reduce energy use in the U.S. transportation sector by 50 percent by 2050 while meeting future mobility needs.



"Electric vehicles will play a huge role in this national effort to reduce energy use in the transportation sector," said Orchard. "SMUD has been a leader in electric vehicle research for nearly 30 years, partnering with vehicle manufacturers and numerous technology companies to test and optimize EVs and equipment. We're proud to lend our expertise to this commission and help support our goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality across the country."

The Alliance Commission on U.S. Transportation Sector Efficiency is comprised of leaders representing vehicle manufacturers, utilities, federal agencies, cities, environmental and consumer groups, infrastructure providers, and public transit. The Commission is convened by the Alliance to Save Energy, the leading national coalition advocating for enhancing energy productivity—doing more with less energy. **NWPPA**

MEA Restructures E&O Departments

In an effort to better align the core functions of their business, Matanuska Electric Association (Palmer, Alaska) has restructured the Engineering and Operations Divisions. As a result, Ed Jenkin will now oversee the operations, engineering, and planning functions as MEA's director of power delivery.



The new structure is consistent with MEA's move to a vertically integrated utility that produces, transmits, and distributes its own power. The move targets improvements to the efficiency of its transmission and distribution functions.

"MEA is focused on finding ways to increase our operational efficiency and enhance member satisfaction," said MEA General Manager/CEO Tony Izzo. "Bringing the Engineering and Operations functions under Ed's leadership will help MEA improve reliability, control costs, and more effectively serve our members."

Jenkin spent 25 years at Chugach Electric Association and last served as their vice president of power delivery before joining MEA in 2014. He previously served as MEA's director of system operations and planning. In this new capacity, he will continue to serve in leadership roles of several system-wide initiatives including the Railbelt Power Pool and the Transco Working Group. **NWPPA**

Colyar Fills Okanogan Board Position

Carlton's **William Colyar** was selected to fill out the term of District 2 commissioner for the Okanogan County Public Utility District (Wash.) at the commission's board meeting on October 23.

Colyar was one of four applicants for the post, which was vacated when **Steve Houston** resigned on October 4. Houston retired after a 27-year career with the U.S. Navy and as former manager of a communications network for U.S. Electrodynamics, a satellite facility north of Brewster. **NWPPA**

Grant PUD Begins AMI Installation

After about three years of preparation, it took Grant PUD (Ephrata, Wash.) just 30 seconds to install the first of approximately 49,000 new advanced metering program electrical meters.

John Bowkett, Grant PUD electric-shop foreman, did the honors as he pulled off the old mechanical meter, which was manufactured in 1949 and installed in 1959 at a Moses Lake home.

The new meters have a remote-read feature that operates on a Neighborhood Area Network. The meters take a read every 15 minutes of how many kilowatt-hours are consumed at the property. That data is stored at the meter and then once a day the packet of data is transmitted through access points and relays back to Grant PUD. The meters can also be turned on and off remotely.

Grant PUD's installation contractor, Anixter, began installing meters last month in the neighborhood around Moses Lake High School. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

The cost of the project is budgeted at \$14.9 million and, according to a cost-benefit analysis, the utility is expected to save an estimated \$35.6 million in operations and maintenance expenses over a 10-year period.

Grant PUD is providing a manual meter-reading service to customers who wish to pay for it. The cost of this program reflects the time and expense involved in sending employees to manually read the older devices. The cost to have the radio-read portion of the meter disabled is a one-time fee of \$250.99 and then an on-going fee of \$64.34 a month for a meter reader to continue reading the meter. These costs will be reviewed annually. **NWPPA**



Grant PUD's **John Bowkett** installs a new Grant PUD advanced metering program meter at the home of **Billy Flowers** in Moses Lake on October 23.

NCPA to Purchase Hometown Connections

The Northern California Power Agency announced on November 13 that it has reached an agreement in principle to jointly purchase the assets of Hometown Connections, Inc.

HCI was established in 1998 as a utility services subsidiary of the American Public Power Association to provide a competitive purchasing advantage to publicly owned electric utilities nationally for products and services. The products and services offered through HCI include the full range of advanced grid solutions, as well as financial and organizational management tools and consulting.

The agreement would allow APPA and minority owner Alabama Municipal Electric Authority to sell the assets of HCI to a group of joint action agencies, including NCPA. The new HCI would keep its current business elements intact, including its consulting services and vendor endorsement agreements, while also retaining its current staff. NCPA and its ownership partners would provide additional resources necessary to grow HCI and to expand the scope of services they offer.

"HCI provides access to discount pricing from the industry's leading vendors, as well as a myriad of support services that can really benefit our member communities in this evolving energy industry," said NCPA General Manager **Randy Howard**. "The financial cost to NCPA will be minor and we expect the services available to our member utilities through the new HCI will be more robust and cost-effective."

There will be additional steps and approvals necessary to complete the transaction in the coming months. **NWPPA**

No Rate Increase for Fall River Electric

At a recent regular monthly meeting of Fall River Electric Cooperative's (Ashton, Idaho) elected nine-member board of directors, the board discussed 1) the recent BPA rate increase and whether it would result in an increase in rates to co-op members; 2) the possible implementation of a demand charge for residential members; and 3) a review of the co-op's net metering policy for members that generate power from their own solar, wind, or hydro systems.

The board postponed for future consideration both the residential demand charge and net metering review but did vote unanimously to absorb the BPA rate hike now and not increase rates to its owner-members (customers).

This action was only possible due to the co-op's board, management, and employees past nine-year effort to improve equity in the cooperative. From a low of 26 percent to today's excellent 38 percent equity ratio, Fall River CEO/General Manager **Bryan Case** said, "This success in improving our financial fitness was a major feat and required the concerted efforts of the board and Fall River employees."

Case added, "While getting the cooperative in financial shape, the staff also focused on increasing its commitment to member services, making investments that ensure owner-members have a reliable electrical system. This includes \$3.2 million in facility upgrades in 2016 alone." **NWPPA**

Columbia REA to Close Dayton Office

Last month, Columbia Rural Electric Association (Walla Walla, Wash.) announced it would be closing its Dayton office location and consolidating its two offices into one site. The Walla Walla Service Center will serve as the main office for Columbia REA, but it will continue with a full line crew at the Patit Road location that is one-half mile east of Dayton. The cooperative already moved the warehouse function to the Walla Walla location in 2012.

With the rising cost of doing business, it was determined that there would be considerable financial savings in consolidating the two offices. Approximately 58 percent of Columbia REA's members now access their accounts through the cooperative's E-Bill system online, and that number continues to rise.

Columbia REA has a long history of supporting its communities and will continue to support the Dayton area through community outreach programs. The savings that will be generated by this move will help ensure that Columbia REA can continue to serve its members with the lowest-cost electricity possible.

It is anticipated that the Dayton office will close on or before April 1, 2018. **NWPPA**

MID Names Furgerson as GM

The Modesto Irrigation District (Calif.) Board of Directors unanimously appointed and announced **Scott Furgerson** as the Dis-



trict's new general manager, effective November 27. Furgerson joins MID following a 36-year career with Southern California Gas Company and San Diego Gas & Electric, Sempra Energy's regulated California utilities. He most recently served as the utilities' vice president, special projects.

"Scott has an impressive breadth of experience," MID President **Nick Blom** said. "His strong, sound, and proven leadership will be an asset as we continue to strategically navigate the ongoing challenges of the water and power industries."

Furgerson's tenure with Sempra includes holding 23 positions of increasing responsibility and his expertise spans power generation; gas engineering and operations; and electric transmission and distribution construction and operations. He previously served as vice president, construction and operations for Sempra U.S. Gas & Power. He held several management positions at SDG&E as well, including director of electric regional operations and director of environmental services, and began his career as a power plant generation engineer.

He received his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, and is a registered professional engineer in the state of California. He also completed Stanford University's executive finance and accounting program. **NWPPA**

OPALCO's Jim Lett to Retire

Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (Eastsound, Wash.) Board Member **Jim Lett** has announced his retirement in order to spend more time with his "crowd of grandchildren." Lett will retire on January 31, 2018.

"We will miss Jim's thoughtful and steadfast decision making," said General Manager **Foster Hildreth**. "Jim's focus on safety and fiscal responsibility will continue to serve our co-op membership well for years to come."

Lett joined the board in 2009 and served as board president in 2015-2016. He earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director Certification from the National Rural Electric Association and is an advocate for the cooperative difference.

"Anyone interested in running for the OPALCO Board must be willing to take the time to understand and appreciate how a co-op works," said Lett. "You need to balance running a safe and sound business with the co-op principles that guide us in the care of our membership and protection of our sensitive environment."

During his tenure, Lett helped to shepherd in some major changes.

"I'm most proud of our perseverance and ultimate success in delivering a broadband solution for San Juan County," said Lett. "Kudos to my fellow board members, Foster Hildreth, and the whole team at OPALCO for their hard work and ingenuity to bring real-world accessibility to everyone – while maintaining healthy financials and keeping the lights on."

As for OPALCO's future, Lett is confident that the member Election & Governance Committee is on track to cultivate the most qualified board members and gives top marks to the current board for their dedication, accomplishment, and commitment to serving the membership.

"The industry is rapidly changing," said Lett. "Board members must be sharp to keep up with the coming challenges: building local resilience with the community solar projects and strengthening our system in the islands and on the mainland."

NWPPA



Jim Lett with some of his grandchildren.

Douglas Electric Selects Keith Brooks as New GM

The Douglas Electric Cooperative (Roseburg, Ore.) Board of Directors has chosen **James “Keith” Brooks** to succeed Interim General Manager **Werner Buehler** as the new general manager for the cooperative. After a nationwide search, Brooks was selected for his diverse background, proven leadership, communications skills, and wide range of experience. He begins his duties January 2, 2018.



Brooks has 25 years of experience in the utility industry, most recently as the assistant general manager for Kootenai Electric Cooperative in Hayden, Idaho. In addition to leading the Member Services, IT, and Field Engineering departments, his responsibilities included member and information services; cybersecurity; and the development of Kootenai’s leading-edge outage management system. Prior to joining Kootenai in 1996, Brooks was operations manager for the largest and most successful contract meter reading company in the Pacific Northwest.

Brooks was born in Eden, N.C., and his wife, Vicki, is a native of Riddle, Ore; they met while both serving in the Air Force. While son Nathan, a recent graduate of Eastern Washington University, remains up north, Vickie looks forward to the homecoming as her parents still live in Douglas County.

NWPPA

Chelan’s Wright Selected for APPA Board

General Manager **Steve Wright** of the Chelan County PUD (Wenatchee, Wash.) was elected to a three-year term on the American Public Power Association Board of Directors representing Region 9 (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington). Wright replaces **William Gaines** from Tacoma Public Utilities who assumes the duties of APPA vice chair.

Wright has been general manager of Chelan PUD for four and a half years, coming to the District after his retirement in 2013 as administrator of Bonneville Power Administration. Wright spent 30 years with BPA, beginning in the Conservation group. He served for more than 12 years as administrator, under three different presidents.

“I am honored to be selected to serve on the board of APPA,” said Wright. “National electricity policy has a significant impact on communities like Chelan County. APPA is a prestigious organization that plays an important role in assuring public power’s voice is heard in all the corridors of power. Having worked with public power throughout this region for decades, I’m looking forward to representing the Pacific Northwest.”

Wright has been an advocate for hydropower, energy efficiency, and reliability, including recently testifying before both Congress and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on these matters. NWPPA

Benton REA Sponsors 301 Balloon Rides

In October, 301 visitors, both young and old, enjoyed an experience of a lifetime as they took a tethered ride on the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives hot air balloon sponsored by Benton Rural Electric Association (Prosser, Wash.) at the Great Prosser Balloon Rally.

“I was amazed at the turnout,” said Benton REA Board President **Mike Freepons**. “We only had to turn away a few people because we used all of the available fuel.”

What was scheduled to be a one-hour event turned into almost four hours of free rides.

“It couldn’t have happened without balloon pilot **Cheri White’s** determination to give everyone in line a ride. And we had extra help through a donation of fuel from another balloonist,” said **Troy Berglund**, community development and member relations manager with Benton REA.

During the tethered flights, the balloon’s basket rose up to 25 feet above ground giving its passengers a safe and magnificent view of the surrounding landscape.

Benton REA, a Touchstone Energy cooperative, sponsored the balloon rides in celebration of its 80th Anniversary. The balloon also participated in the rally’s Saturday and Sunday morning flights as well as the Night Glow at Art Fiker Stadium.

With every event the Touchstone Energy hot air balloon attends, Touchstone Energy gives a portion of the sponsorship fees back to the community. As its sponsor, Benton REA let its employees choose which local organization would receive the funds. By popular vote, the \$1,020 donation was presented to the Boys and Girls Club of Prosser.

“Boys and Girls Clubs only exist because the community chooses to support them. We appreciate that the Prosser community and Benton REA staff are willing to invest in kids,” said **Dr. Dave Grow**, Boys and Girls Club of Prosser Advisory Board president. NWPPA



(R-L) Benton REA Board President Mike Freepons presents a check for \$1,020 to Dylan “Kippy” Brown representing the Boys and Girls Club of Prosser.



Carter Named CFO of Piper Jaffray

Piper Jaffray Companies, a leading investment bank and asset management firm, recently announced the appointment of **Tim Carter** as chief financial officer, effective January 1, 2018. Carter will oversee all financial operations and report directly to Piper Jaffray Chairman and CEO **Andrew Duff**.



“Tim is an accomplished leader who brings more than 27 years of corporate finance and accounting experience. During his two decades with Piper Jaffray, he has played a key role in multiple strategic corporate development actions that have helped shape the firm’s success,” said Duff. “As our business pursues the next phase of growth, his expertise and leadership will be critical.”

Carter currently serves as senior vice president of finance and treasurer at Piper Jaffray, as well as a member of the firm’s leadership team, responsible for all treasury; accounting; market and credit risk; and financial planning and analysis functions. He has held various leadership positions in finance, including controller, chief accounting officer, and treasurer. Carter also provides support and financial expertise to the Piper Jaffray Foundation. Prior to joining Piper Jaffray, Carter worked in public accounting at Deloitte. He graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College with a bachelor’s degree in accounting and is a licensed CPA. Carter also serves on the board of College Possible Minnesota and was previously board chair.

As part of the firm’s planned succession, Carter assumes the CFO position from **Deb Schoneman**, who will remain at Piper Jaffray as global head of equities. Schoneman has served as CFO since 2008, and added oversight of the global equities organization to her role in June 2017. She will continue working closely with Carter through year-end to ensure a successful transition.

Piper Jaffray Companies is a leading investment bank and asset management firm. For more information, visit www.piperjaffray.com. **NWPPA**

Ruralite’s Pomrenke Earns CCC

Last month, Ruralite Services’ **Brandon Pomrenke** earned his title as a Certified Cooperative Communicator from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He will be promoted from associate editor to assistant editor.



The certification honors communications skills and electric cooperative industry competency. To earn his CCC, Pomrenke submitted a portfolio of work and passed an intense four-hour examination.

“I’ve learned so much about communications and the public power industry from my coworkers and utility communicators, but the CCC was a great way to practice bringing it all together,” said Pomrenke. “As part of a communications team in an industry that’s constantly changing, it’s important to take advantage of professional development opportunities like this.”

Pomrenke joined Ruralite in 2015 after working for seven years as a public affairs specialist in the U.S. Army. After joining the utility world, he started studying for the CCC as a way to learn about the industry and better serve his members.

“This nationally recognized credential is hard-earned,” said *Ruralite* Editor **Leon Espinoza**. “It is a reflection of the high standards of *Ruralite* and desire of those who work here to push themselves and to grow professionally. We are very proud of Brandon. A nice guy finishes first!”

Pomrenke joins four other Ruralite staff with the national credential: Assistant Editor **Mike Teegarden**, Assistant Editor **Pam Blair**, Assistant Editor **Jennifer Brown**, and Content Marketing and Development Manager **Megan McKoy-Noe**.

Since 1985, more than 400 electric cooperative communicators have earned the CCC status. The CCC program was created to strengthen and enrich the professional skills and abilities of electric co-op communicators.

Ruralite Services is a communications cooperative for all consumer-owned utilities. For more information, visit www.ruraliteservices.org. **NWPPA**

McMinnville Selects OSI

Open Systems International, Inc. has been awarded a contract by NWPPA member utility McMinnville Water & Light (Ore.) for a new SCADA/distribution management system. Based on OSI’s monarch™ (Multi-platform Open Network ARCHitecture) platform, this new system will replace MW&L’s aging Opto 22 system.

The new SCADA/DMS will include the following functionality: OSI’s advanced Graphical User Interface; Real-time and Historical Trending; Advanced Alarm Management System;

Communications Front-end Processor; Historical Information System and Data Archiving; ODBC Interface; Geographical Information Systems Interface; Distribution System Graphical Viewer; Distribution Topology Processing; Distribution Power Flow; and Voyager™, OSI’s Web-based and mobile user interface.

Open Systems International (www.osii.com) provides open, state-of-the-art, and high-performance automation solutions to utilities worldwide. **NWPPA**

Siemens, Ballard Sign Multi-Year Agreement

On November 14, Ballard Power Systems announced that it has signed a Development Agreement with Siemens AG for the development of a zero-emission fuel cell engine to power Siemens' Mireo light rail train. The Development Agreement has a contemplated value of approximately \$9 million to Ballard.

Under the terms of the Development Agreement, Ballard will develop a 200-kilowatt fuel cell engine for integration into Siemens' new Mireo train platform. Mireo is a modular commuter train platform designed for speeds of up to 100 miles per hour. Thanks to lightweight design, energy-efficient components, and intelligent onboard network management, the Mireo will consume up to 25 percent less energy than trains with similar passenger capacity. Initial deployments of the fuel cell-powered Mireo train are planned for 2021.

Sabrina Soussan, CEO of the Mobility Division at Siemens said, "Our cooperation with Ballard is a decisive step towards replacing diesel-powered rail vehicles with emissions-free vehicles in the long-term interests of sustainable and climate-friendly mobility. We want to be able to offer our customers flexible train solutions for various suburban routes, which vary according to regional conditions and technical possibilities."

Siemens is the largest industrial manufacturing company in Europe, headquartered in Munich, Germany, and with offices around the globe. Siemens has more than 350,000 employees worldwide and the company generated revenue in excess of \$94 billion in 2016. For more information, visit www.siemens.com.

NWPPA

EES Hires New Senior Analyst

To enhance its line of business, EES Consulting has hired Alison Levy as a senior analyst. Levy brings eight years of experience and a strong utility, economic, and engineering background to EES.

Levy leverages strong analytical experience to support financial studies and regulatory research with EES. Prior to joining EES, she held several positions within the oil and gas industry, spanning operations, engineering, and economic planning, as well as consulting experience in strategy development, data analytics, and supply chain organization with Fortune 500 companies. Her varied background provides a unique experience.

In addition to her career experience, Levy is a fellow with the Tauber Institute for Global Operations at the University of Michigan, where her studies were focused on finance and renewable energy markets and technology. She holds a B.S. in chemical and biomolecular engineering from Cornell University, and an M.B.A. from University of Michigan.

EES Consulting is a multidisciplinary management consulting firm that provides a broad array of economic, engineering, and environmental services to clients involved in electric power, natural gas, telecommunications, water, and other energy and natural resource-related businesses. For more information, visit www.eesconsulting.com.

NWPPA



Innovari Receives Innovation Award

The *Portland Business Journal* has named Innovari, Inc. a recipient of a 2017 Business Innovation award for its Interactive Energy Platform™ technology. The advanced technology platform creates a virtual power plant in aggregate while enabling utilities to surgically dispatch electric capacity when and where they need it to meet system demand. It has been successfully installed in the U.S., India, Turkey, the Middle East, and Latin America.

The award recognizes companies located in the Portland, Ore., area that are providing a compelling and innovative product or service demonstrating excellence in one or more of these areas: innovation, design, industry impact, revenue growth; or a compelling product or service offering.

Innovari participated at the *Portland Business Journal* award ceremony in early November where all award winners were honored.

"We are pleased to be recognized in our hometown of Portland for this award," said Chris Hickman, CEO and founder of Innovari. "Outside observers of the electric industry don't often acknowledge the innovation that takes place in the industry. However, for more than 100 years utilities have innovated to provide safe, affordable, and reliable electricity for society. We thank the *Portland Business Journal* for recognizing the IEP and our efforts to help utilities partner with their customers and communities to enable clean, new distributed technologies to be introduced into the grid."

The Interactive Energy Platform uses artificial intelligence, big-data analytics, proprietary optimization routines, and deep knowledge of the utility business to optimize the entire energy value chain for utilities and their customers.

Innovari has created the platform for utilities to build the grid of the future in partnership with their customers and communities. Learn more at www.innovari.com.

NWPPA

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Are you looking for a great way to reach more customers?

Advertise in the NWPPA *Bulletin* and *eBulletin*. The NWPPA *Bulletin* magazine gets distributed to over 5,000 utility and associate members every month. The NWPPA *eBulletin* is an electronic newsletter delivered directly to over 6,000 members every week. Both advertising options offer your company a fantastic opportunity to get in the hands of the people who use your products, make buying decisions, and are direct influencers.

Call or email NWPPA advertising contact Brenda Dunn for more information on how you can get more visibility for your products and services today!

Email brenda@nwppa.org or call (360) 816-1453.



A “Unified” Government Brings Action—but Few Accomplishments

By Anna Leieritz and Elizabeth Whitney

With a new government controlled by a Republican majority, hopes were high for GOP leaders this year that the change they promised in the 2016 elections was finally on the horizon. However, a fractured party and series of headline-grabbing distractions has prevented many accomplishments from being carried out.

After years of partisan gridlock, a new kind of dysfunction has taken hold, and so far, the “unified” government has had no major legislative victories. Stakes are high for Republican leaders as a tax reform bill churns through Congress with the hopes of reaching President Trump’s desk by Christmas. If it succeeds, it would restore faith in Republicans’ ability to govern; if it fails, GOP lawmakers feel they will pay handsomely next November.

Despite the overall sense of inaction, NWPPA members saw incremental progress on many long-held priorities. With work on vegetation management, hydropower relicensing, small modular reactors, a repeal of the Waters of the United States rule, and sage-grouse plans, NWPPA has seen numerous benefits as a result of weighing in on important and fast-moving policy decisions.

Caution: tax reform ahead

The Republican party is looking to pass a tax reform bill as their first real test to prove they can govern as a unified group. However, there is a new state of affairs in the world of tax reform.

Before Thanksgiving, the House of Representatives passed sweeping tax reform legislation. Over the years, NWPPA has joined efforts with others to educate members of Congress on the importance of municipal bonds, and helped avoid the loss of this critical financing tool. The bill does not remove the deduction for municipal bond interest, but does end the deduction for interest on advanced refunding bonds. The bill also reduces the value of the wind production tax credit, and terminates the permanent solar investment tax credit. However, the House version includes a fix for the production tax credit for advanced nuclear, something NWPPA specifically called for to aid small modular reactors under consideration in the West.

The Senate bill, which passed a few weeks later, also cuts corporate and individual tax rates, preserves the deduction for municipal bond interest, and ends the deduction for advanced refunding bonds. But unlike the House version, it makes no changes to the production and investment tax credits for wind and solar technologies or the nuclear PTC. The Senate bill also allows drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and eliminates the individual mandate for health care. All of these issues will need to be dealt with in the next few weeks as the chambers work to reconcile their versions.

Bright spots: support remains for key priorities

The 115th Congress made progress on many of NWPPA’s priorities. Both the House and Senate acted on vegetation management provisions this year, including the bipartisan passage of H.R. 1873, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection

Act, in June. The bill would make power companies better able to conduct vegetation management activities in rights of way on federal lands and end the bureaucratic delays that could result in blackouts or wildfires from downed power lines. Utilities would be shielded from liability when federal agencies fail to allow access to trim vegetation in accordance with a plan on file. The House also passed H.R. 3043, the Hydropower Policy Modernization Act, to make the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission the lead agency for hydropower relicensing. NWPPA has advocated for both measures for years and was active in the debates.

Although the Senate saw less action on the floor, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee leaders included bipartisan provisions on hydropower relicensing and—for the first time—included vegetation management in a reintroduced energy bill. The Committee has held a hearing, but action on the comprehensive bill is not expected until next year.

The House passed H.R. 2936, the Resilient Federal Forests Act, which prevents wildfires by thinning trees without going through an environmental review. Senate legislation S. 2068, The Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Act of 2017, expands categorical exclusions from environmental reviews; work continues with Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) to combine this bill with legislation that provides emergency funding for wildfires.

The Trump Administration has also made progress toward its goal of walking back several Obama-era regulations, many of which raised concerns among NWPPA members. On

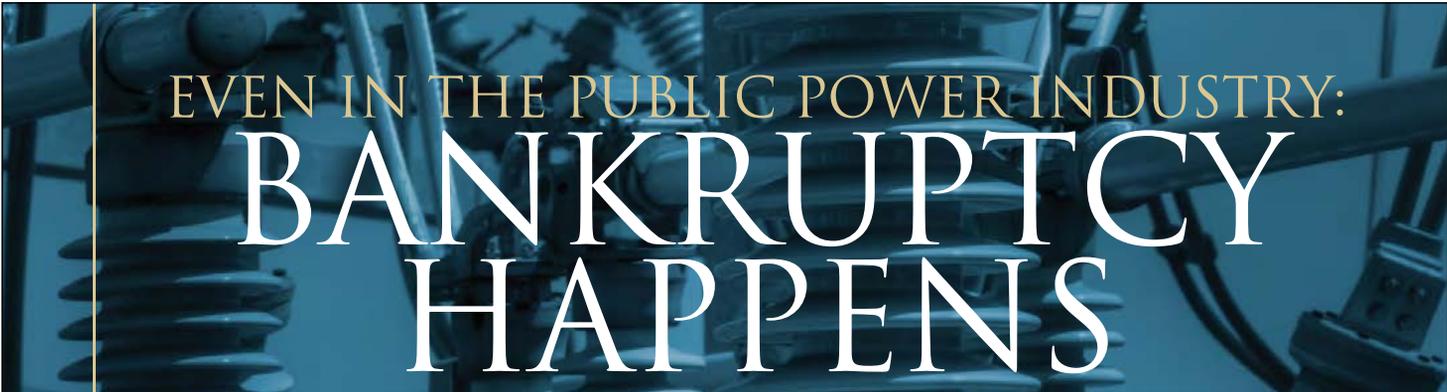
November 16, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed ending the effective date of the 2015 Clean Water Rule, also known as the Waters of the United States; on June 27, the EPA formally announced the withdrawal of WOTUS. President Trump's administration has prioritized the repeal and replacement of WOTUS, though a new proposal has not yet been unveiled. Similarly, EPA has taken steps to withdraw the Clean Power Plan rule intended to control greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke announced a controversial review of the federal greater sage-grouse conservation management plans in an attempt to determine if the Obama-era plans are a hindrance to energy production on public lands. His findings focused on giving more authority to the states.

What's next?

As we look to the second session of the 115th Congress, much of the calendar will be focused on elections. However, expect more progress on these issues and others, including a return to infrastructure as a high-profile priority as the GOP looks for measures to prove their ability to govern. **NWPPA**

Anna Leieritz is a principal and Elizabeth K. Whitney is managing principal at Meguire Whitney LLC, NWPPA's Washington, D.C., consulting firm. They can be reached at anna@meguire-whitney.com or elizabeth@meguirewhitney.com, respectively.



EVEN IN THE PUBLIC POWER INDUSTRY: BANKRUPTCY HAPPENS

Is your utility protected? From major wholesale power suppliers and purchasers, to local retail customers, these days it seems that no company is immune from the specter of delinquency, insolvency or even bankruptcy.

Your business should be able to call on legal counsel with experience in all manner of energy contracts, as well as the rights and remedies specifically available to creditors under the bankruptcy code. Cable Huston has the right combination of attorneys with experience practicing both public utility law and bankruptcy law.

To learn more about our unique capabilities, visit our website to view articles on this topic recently published in the NWPPA Bulletin.

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Sara Bowles and Jordan Whiteley, Tacoma Power conservation coordinators, begin a mock video chat inspection at the City of Tacoma's EnviroHouse to ensure the cameras on the utility's mobile devices provide enough visual clarity to complete a video chat inspection. Photos courtesy of Tacoma Power.

Video Chat Improves Energy-Efficiency Inspections at Tacoma Power

By Sonja M. Bert and Chris Gleason

Some people use video tools such as Skype and Facetime to conduct business meetings or chat with family and friends. Tacoma Power's Customer Energy Programs employees now use those tools to inspect the installation of energy-efficiency projects like ductless heat pumps, insulation, and replacement windows in customers' homes.

A video chat inspection pilot, spearheaded in 2015 by Tacoma Power Conservation Coordinators Jordan Whiteley and Sara Bowles, shows how web-based video technology can replace visual, on-site inspections, which in turn reduces the need for re-inspections, and saves time and costs. Using existing video technology makes the final inspection process more efficient for Tacoma Power, and much more convenient for customers who've already arranged time

for contractor installations and initial inspections.

Tacoma Power didn't have to look far to get the idea to do video chat inspections. Utility employees met with Pierce County's Planning and Land Use Services department, which conducts virtual inspections, to learn how it worked. They use the technology for projects like footings and foundations; water heater and furnace replacements; and final inspections for homeowners.

"We saw how they were incorporating it into their inspections, came back, and got the go-ahead from our managers to start using it for ours," Whiteley said.

While utility experts work from their office at Tacoma Power, private contractors, as well as customers, participating in the utility's rebate and incentive programs can use video chat apps on

a mobile device to record, show, and provide answers about installation work as if the utility inspector was on site.

"We try to make it seamless for the customer," Whiteley said. "Get it done quick and close out the project."

Customer Robin Paterson helped Tacoma Power complete her installation inspection in October. Before her project, she had only used video chat to talk with family. Paterson said she appreciated using video to inspect her project because it saved her time. She also didn't have to worry about her dog barking at the inspector and liked the flexibility of video chat options.

"I don't use Facetime because I have an Android; the inspector let me use Google Hangouts instead," Paterson said. "The best part was that immediate flexibility. I had a great experience, and

friendly and fast service. We were done in about five minutes.”

A typical ductless heat pump inspection takes about 15 minutes to complete on site, whereas a video chat inspection takes just six minutes on average. The greatest time savings, however, comes from eliminating travel time to and from customers’ homes, and when re-inspections become necessary. Contractors can now self-check and correct issues without returning for second visits.

When inspecting completed projects, Tacoma Power doesn’t need to see the entire project, but looks to ensure key components meet installation requirements.

“When inspecting a ductless heat pump, for example, we’re looking for certain key points. We’re checking the line hide that protects wires and tubes, and the model number; we want to know the base is properly installed and there’s insulation on the copper tubing. Those types of things,” Bowles said.

Tacoma Power’s conservation coordinators spend about one-fifth of their time traveling to and from customers’ homes for energy efficiency project inspections. The inspections take place across the 180 square miles of the utility’s service area and are an important part of a successful energy conservation program.

“We do inspections to make sure equipment is installed to our specifications and to make sure our program requirements are met,” Whiteley said. “Basically, the main reason we do inspections is to ensure the project lives up to our standards and meets our customers’ expectations.”

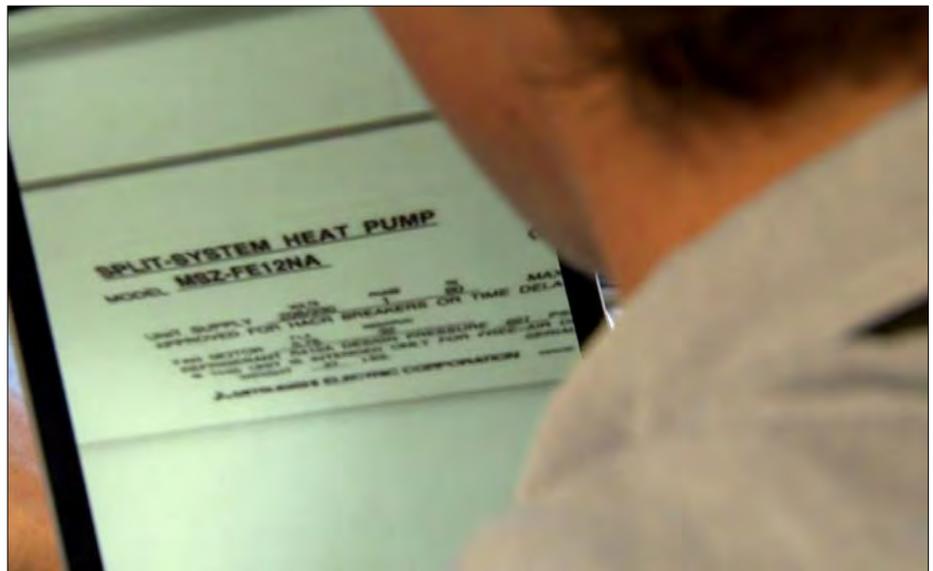
All Seasons, Inc., a Tacoma Power participating contractor, began using video chat inspections in 2017. Its customer service manager, Jerry Veitenhans, said the process works fast because their installers don’t have to wait for the utility’s inspector to arrive. He likes that mistakes get caught before leaving so no one has to reschedule to make corrections, which costs everyone more time and money.

“It’s also absolutely awesome because it’s so green. With the old way of inspecting, we were all burning lots of fuel, spending lots of time—less cars on the road saves fuel, wear and tear on vehicles,” Veitenhans said. “Video chat

Continued



Tacoma Power Conservation Coordinator, Sara Bowles, who helped launch its video chat inspections, conducts a mock ductless heat pump inspection at the City of Tacoma’s EnviroHouse. Practicing before the pilot helped ensure video chat would work well for customers, contractors, and other utility inspectors.



Conducting energy-efficiency project inspections using mobile technology allows Tacoma Power to process more work and complete payments faster.

“Telling customers who work during the day that we can cater to their schedule and inspect directly with the installers through video is also a huge benefit.” — Sara Bowles

COVER STORY

saves everyone fuel costs and wages.”

“With some of our seasoned contractors, we can get inspections done in three or four minutes because they know what we’re looking for,” Bowles said. “It can take a little longer with customers because it takes time for them to find things like the line hide on a DHP. We have to use laymen’s terms because they don’t know the technical terms.”

The benefits of video chat inspections don’t end there. During the video chat, Tacoma Power employees also have the opportunity to share information about other energy-savings rebates with customers. Not only do customers like the help, contractors like the immediacy of self-check and faster payments that come with video chat inspections.

“Telling customers who work during the day that we can cater to their schedule and inspect directly with the installers through video is also a huge benefit,” Whiteley said. “It gives us more leeway so we can schedule appointments at 7:15 a.m. before a customer goes to work, or 5:15 p.m. when they get home. That’s a big deal because we can schedule it so a customer doesn’t have to take several hours of the day off work.”

“Contractors can get rebates paid out faster and the utility can inspect more projects in less time,” he added.

During the pilot, Tacoma Power performed 37 video chat inspections. That amounts to 475 fewer miles driven, and a savings of about \$260 in fuel and maintenance costs on utility vehicles. Staff saved 28 hours in travel and inspection time.

Those numbers, along with the positive feedback from customers and contractors, prompted a move to full implementation of video chat tools this year. The move involved additional support from staff and supervisors, and recruiting more contractors to participate. During its annual meeting with



Sara Bowles and Jordan Whiteley, Tacoma Power conservation coordinators, practice a mock video chat inspection of a ductless heat pump to ensure the cameras on the utility’s mobile devices provide enough visual clarity to complete a video chat inspection.

participating contractors, Tacoma Power provided information and answered questions.

“Once the word spread about the faster payment time, more contractors began signing up,” Bowles said. “Paying contractors two to three times faster seems to be the greatest incentive for program participation.”

Since the pilot, Tacoma Power has used video inspections for 228 projects. The utility estimates it has avoided driving about 3,000 miles; saved about \$1,600 in fuel costs and vehicle wear and tear; and saved nearly \$7,000 in wages. Bowles also estimates the new inspection process is two to three weeks faster because video doesn’t require as much time away from the office.

“This is a huge internal benefit because we can now keep a steady work load flowing through our system, which shortens the wait time for project approval,” Bowles said. “That makes very happy customers, and I can say with confidence that the amount of customer and contractor calls for project status updates has decreased dramatically.”

Bowles said she’s excited that other organizations outside the Pacific Northwest have heard about Tacoma Power’s

use of video chat inspections and want to learn more.

“We’ve talked to several other utilities in our area and they seem excited about it,” Bowles said. “The benefits are enormous and the cost is low.”

Whiteley shares similar sentiments. He recently participated in an American Public Power Association webinar to discuss lessons learned, share information about how to implement a video chat inspection program, and savings stats.

“We tell people we’re just using technology we already have. We already have smart phones; a lot of customers have smart phones. It’s all right there for anyone to use,” Whiteley said. “We’re just putting it to use for a little bit more efficiency in our department.”

Tacoma Power’s program also earned the 2017 Energy Innovation Award from APPA and the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance’s 2016 Leadership Award for Innovation. Whiteley accepted the awards and said he’s happy the program is such a success, yet he’s glad the attention has died down a bit.

“Change takes time and effort. The most satisfying part is that the program is finally part of our daily routine,” Whiteley said. “Now that our team knows how to run the program, the

best part is using the tools with more customers because they get to see that we're making positive, helpful changes they feel good about."

The utility set a goal to continue to recruit more contractors to participate.

Tacoma Power will determine if other areas of the utility may also find video chat inspections useful in the future.

"We're looking at possibly inspecting other things, like insulation and windows," Bowles said. "We also need to check connectivity. Some of the areas in our service territory are more rural, so we need to do research to see how often we can get a connection to do this type of inspection that gives us that good, clear video."

"We also want to expand to make more customers aware," Whiteley said.

"Utilities aren't always known for their willingness to embrace new things," said Residential Conservation Manager Lis Saunders. "I love seeing Tacoma Power's willingness to try something new and leverage some of the latest communication technology to create a win all the way around."

Sonja Bert is a media specialist at Tacoma Public Utilities. She can be reached at (253) 502-8223 or sbert@cityoftacoma.org. Chris Gleason is the Community & Media Services manager. She can be reached at (253) 502-8222 or cgleason@cityoftacoma.org. For more information about Tacoma Power's energy savings programs, visit www.MyTPU.org/rebates.

Spreading the Word



Tacoma Power Conservation Coordinators Jordan Whiteley and Sara Bowles sit ready to begin their interview with Amanda Westbrook (far left) on CityLine, a City of Tacoma public broadcast program, to share information with the greater Tacoma community. Photo courtesy of TV Tacoma.

NWPPA

SAVE THE DATE

2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MAY 20-23 | BOISE, IDAHO

ILLUMINATING THE FUTURE

The graphic features a dark blue background with a grid of squares and a large, glowing yellow and orange cube on the left. The text is white and red, providing key information about the conference.



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For more detailed information, visit www.nwppa.org/job.

The Job Opportunities is a service provided to NWPPA member systems and associate members. Member price is \$115 per listing for a 30-day period.

- Job Opportunities ads are also accepted from non-members. Ads are \$350 per listing for a 30-day period.
- *Copy must be received before the 25th of the month prior to the month of publication* (for example, February 25 for March issue).
- The *Bulletin* is mailed by the 15th of each month.
- Complete the online Job Opportunities ad placement form at www.nwppa.org.
- NWPPA reserves the right to edit all listings in order to fit size requirements in the publication.

POSITION: [Warehouse Storekeeper](#)

COMPANY: Cowlitz PUD (Longview, Wash.)

SALARY: \$36.89 per hour

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 18, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit www.governmentjobs.com/careers/cowlitzpud.

POSITION: [Journeyman Lineman](#)

COMPANY: Peninsula Light Company (Gig Harbor, Wash.)

SALARY: \$42.90 per hour

DEADLINE TO APPLY: January 29, 2018

TO APPLY: Visit www.penlight.org/jobs.

POSITION: [Assistant V, Transmission Reliability Services](#)

COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)

SALARY: DOE

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 18, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-499.

POSITION: [Journeyman Lineman](#)

COMPANY: Canby Utility (Canby, Ore.)

SALARY: \$42.75 per hour

DEADLINE TO APPLY: Open until filled

TO APPLY: Visit www.canbyutility.org.

POSITION: [Spec II, Service and Design Project Manager](#)

COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)

SALARY: DOE

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 28, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-588.

POSITION: [Engineer III](#)

COMPANY: PUD #1 of Clallam County (Carlsborg, Wash.)

SALARY: \$6,346 - \$9,000 per month

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 28, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit www.clallampud.net.

POSITION: [Hydro Plant Mechanic](#)

COMPANY: The City of Tacoma (Tacoma, Wash.)

SALARY: \$44.73 - \$44.73 per hour

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 22, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit <http://www.cityoftacoma.org>.

POSITION: [Spec II, Designer \(R17-426\)](#)

COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)

SALARY: DOE

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 29, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-426.

POSITION: [Engineering & Operations Manager](#)

COMPANY: McMinnville Water and Light (McMinnville, Ore.)

SALARY: \$97,000 - \$150,000 per year

DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 30, 2017

TO APPLY: Visit www.mc-power.com.

POSITION: [Spec IV, Automation Test and Energization](#)

COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)

SALARY: DOE

DEADLINE TO APPLY: January 1, 2018

TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-526.

POSITION: Senior Electric System Transmission Engineer #66111
COMPANY: Puget Sound Energy (Bellevue, Wash.)
SALARY: DOE
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 31, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit <http://www.pse.com/careers>.

POSITION: Engineer III—SCADA System Automation R17-215
COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)
SALARY: DOE
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 22, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-215.

POSITION: Mechanic
COMPANY: Kootenai Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Hayden, Idaho)
SALARY: \$30.11 - \$40.14 per hour
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 21, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit www.kec.com.

POSITION: Business Analyst III (R17-259)
COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)
SALARY: DOE
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 21, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-529.

POSITION: Accountant III—IF Power
COMPANY: City of Idaho Falls (Idaho Falls, Idaho)
SALARY: DOE
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 31, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit www.idahofallsidaho.gov.

POSITION: Safety Manager, Tacoma Public Utilities
COMPANY: City of Tacoma (Tacoma, Wash.)
SALARY: \$80,350.40 - \$125,008.00 per year
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 22, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit www.cityoftacoma.org.

POSITION: Project Maintenance & Operations Foreman
COMPANY: Southeast Alaska Power Agency (Ketchikan, Alaska)
SALARY: \$46.53 per hour
DEADLINE TO APPLY: January 23, 2018
TO APPLY: Visit <https://seapahydro.applicantpro.com/jobs/>.

POSITION: Analyst III/IV, System Control Center Support
COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Oregon)
SALARY: DOE
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 31, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R16-601.

POSITION: Principal Electric System Transmission Engineer #77329
COMPANY: Puget Sound Energy (Bellevue, Wash.)
SALARY: DOE
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 31, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit <http://www.pse.com/careers>.

POSITION: Journeyman Diesel Generator Mechanic
COMPANY: Alaska Village Electric Cooperative (Anchorage, Alaska)
SALARY: \$24 per hour
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 27, 2017
TO APPLY: Submit a completed application to applications@avec.org.

POSITION: Electrical Engineer
COMPANY: City of Redding (Redding, Calif.)
SALARY: \$7,154 per month
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 17, 2017
TO APPLY: Submit a City of Redding online employment application.

POSITION: Electrician/Operator
COMPANY: Petersburg Borough (Petersburg, Alaska)
SALARY: \$41.10 - \$42.81 per hour
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 20, 2017
TO APPLY: Send completed applications to mshihart@petersburgak.gov.

POSITION: Environmental Coordinator
COMPANY: PUD No. 1 of Okanogan County (Okanogan, Wash.)
SALARY: Grade 11 (DOE)
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 31, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit www.okanoganpud.org.

POSITION: Engineer I, Electrical (R17-550)
COMPANY: Portland General Electric (Portland, Ore.)
SALARY: DOE per hour
DEADLINE TO APPLY: December 31, 2017
TO APPLY: Visit https://PGN.igreentree.com/CSS_External/CSSPage_Referred.ASP?Req=R17-550.

POSITION: Journeyman Lineman
COMPANY: Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (Eastsound, Wash.)
SALARY: \$43.98 per hour
DEADLINE TO APPLY: January 2, 2018
TO APPLY: Submit an OPALCO employment application to bmadan@opalco.com.

To advertise in future issues of the *Bulletin*, contact Brenda Dunn at (360) 816-1453 or brenda@nwppa.org.

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