



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 2, 2025

For more information contact

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Cowlitz PUD Proposes a 4% Rate Increase Effective October 1st, 2025

COWLITZ COUNTY, WA — The Cowlitz PUD Board of Commissioners will consider a 4% rate increase to residential customers. This proposed adjustment is driven by several factors, many of which are outside our control. However, our commitment to transparency remains unchanged.

We want our community to understand what may be changing, why it's happening, and how we can work together to keep energy costs manageable. Most importantly, we remain dedicated to providing safe, reliable, cost-effective, and clean energy to every customer we serve.

Why a Change for Residential Customers?

The proposed increase is 4% or approximately \$5 for the average customer per month.

Cowlitz PUD last raised rates in October 2024, with the previous increase in October 2017. The 2024 increase only covered part of the expected budget shortfall, mainly addressing infrastructure needs and inflation. The PUD used its financial reserves to cover the rest, while waiting for more clarity on power costs.

Although some issues have been resolved, uncertainties remain. So, Cowlitz PUD is proposing a rate increase to cover increased power costs, while continuing to rely on reserves for the rest. The PUD will monitor costs and adjust rates as necessary.

As a customer-owned utility, Cowlitz PUD doesn't make a profit—rates are set to cover costs. Any extra or shortfall in revenue compared to costs is factored into future rate decisions.

Some Specific Areas Affecting Costs Include:

Rising wholesale costs: Cowlitz PUD sources approximately 90% of its power from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), which is raising its rates for the average BPA customer by 8.9% for power and 19.9% for transmission. Under the PUD's contract with BPA, the actual effect is about 4.2% on power and 12.4% on transmission. These increases will take effect on October 1, 2025. To maintain financial stability, we must adjust our rates accordingly.

Infrastructure investments: We're maintaining our grid to ensure clean, renewable energy flows reliably from the Columbia River to homes and businesses. These efforts enhance safety and reduce the risk of outages and costly repairs.



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Operational stability: Inflation has increased the cost of maintaining essential services — from power poles and lines to labor and transformers. This rate adjustment helps us continue delivering the high-quality service our customers expect.

What We're Doing to Keep Costs Stable

- Resource planning: We regularly review our energy plans to meet both current and future community needs.
- Efficiency tools: We continue to refine and update how we use our business systems to optimize resource use.
- Strategic asset management: We're investing in systems that ensure electric reliability, safety, and cybersecurity.

The Cowlitz PUD Board of Commissioners will host two public rate hearings on September 16th at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at 961 12th Avenue, Longview. The Board will vote on the proposed 4% residential rate increase at the regularly scheduled Board meeting on September 23rd at 2 pm.

Support for Customers

We offer a variety of programs to help customers manage their energy use and bills:

- Home energy survey – Discover ways to reduce energy use at home.
- Rebates – Save when upgrading appliances, insulation, windows, and more.
- Free Home Energy audits – Get personalized recommendations from our efficiency specialists.
- Energy-saving tips – visit <https://www.cowlitzpud.org/efficiency/residential-programs/energy-saving-tips/>
- Assistance programs – Reach out to Customer Service to see if you qualify. Mon-Thurs 7 am-5:30 pm 360.423.2210 or customerservice@cowlitzpud.org

To learn more about our programs and commitment to transparency, visit cowlitzpud.org.

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About Cowlitz PUD

Cowlitz PUD, founded in 1936, is a Public Utility District in Longview, WA. It serves approximately 53,000 electric customers in Cowlitz County, WA. Cowlitz owns the 70-megawatt Swift No. 2 Hydroelectric Project on the North Fork of the Lewis River (WA)