



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 9, 2025

For more information contact

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Cowlitz PUD Board of Commissioners Approves 2026 Budget and Plans for Rate Action

COWLITZ COUNTY, WA — The Cowlitz PUD Board of Commissioners has approved the 2026 budget, reinforcing the utility's commitment to safe, reliable, and cost-effective energy for all customers.

The budget shows a projected shortfall of nearly \$7 million. This is mainly due to rising power costs, especially from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), which supplies about 90% of Cowlitz PUD's electricity.

Starting October 1, 2025, BPA will raise its rates. For Cowlitz PUD, this means a 4.2% increase in power costs and a 12.4% increase in transmission costs. To keep the utility financially stable, Cowlitz PUD is proposing a rate increase accordingly.

Similar to last year, there are still many unknowns about future costs. Cowlitz PUD is proposing a rate increase to cover the BPA increase (approximately \$3.5 million), while continuing to rely on reserves for the rest. The PUD will continue to monitor costs and adjust rates in the future as necessary.

The Board will vote on a proposed rate adjustment—a 4% increase for residential customers and 1.2% for commercial and industrial customers effective October 1, 2025—at the upcoming Board of Commissioners Meeting on September 23 at 2:00 PM, held at the Cowlitz PUD Main Office (961 12th Ave).

The rate adjustments are informed by a Cost-of-Service Analysis (COSA)—a standard utility practice that helps determine how much it costs to serve each customer group. The impact on the average residential customer is approximately \$5 per month.

This budget and rate recommendation reflect Cowlitz PUD's dedication to fiscal responsibility and long-term operational stability, ensuring that our community continues to benefit from clean, renewable hydropower delivered through a resilient and well-maintained grid.

What We're Doing to Keep Costs Stable:

- Strategic investments in infrastructure to reduce outages and improve safety
- Efficient operations to manage inflation-related cost increases
- Smart planning to meet future energy needs and maintain cybersecurity



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Supporting Our Customers:

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

- Free Home Energy Audits and Surveys
- Rebates for energy-efficient upgrades
- Energy-saving tips and tools
- Assistance programs for qualifying households

Visit cowlitzpud.org to learn more or contact Customer Service at 360.423.2210 or customerservice@cowlitzpud.org (Mon–Thurs, 7 AM–5:30 PM).

Public Participation Encouraged:

We value transparency and invite the public to attend Rate Hearings on September 16th at 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM, also at the Cowlitz PUD Main Office.

Together, we're powering a stronger, more sustainable future for Cowlitz County.

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About Cowlitz PUD

Cowlitz PUD, founded in 1936, is a Public Utility District in Longview, WA. It serves approximately 50,000 electric customers in Cowlitz County, WA, and is the second-largest PUD in the state in annual retail power sales. Cowlitz owns the 70-megawatt Swift No. 2 Hydroelectric Project on the North Fork of the Lewis River (WA).