



connected

A Message from The Director of Operations



Casey Kalal

Hello Cowlitz PUD Customers,
As the Director of Operations, we are constantly assessing our essential infrastructure to ensure cost-effective, reliable, and sustainable power is delivered to your homes and businesses. Over my years with the PUD, we have learned to adapt to a constantly evolving environment to provide the highest quality service to our customers. This dedication is why we have adopted a proactive strategy to prepare for potential wildfire impacts. Although Cowlitz County is considered low-risk, we are committed to preparing and educating ourselves in Wildfire Mitigation. We collaborate with wildfire experts, local fire departments, and industry leaders to ensure our community receives the best service. The most crucial advice we can offer is to have a self-sustaining plan. Just as you ready your homes for storm-related outages, it's equally important to prepare for potential summer outages. Please use the resources listed in this newsletter to help you develop your self-sustaining plans for your home.



COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

Why Wildfire Mitigation Plans?

With the rise of wildfires nationwide and associated legislation and regulations, utilities are actively crafting wildfire mitigation plans. These thorough plans enable utilities to establish operational policies and practices to help prevent, prepare for, and respond to wildfire incidents. While Cowlitz County has been determined low risk for wildfires, it is important for our customers to have a self-sustaining plan in the event of a wildfire.

Cowlitz PUD proactively crafted a comprehensive Wildfire Mitigation Plan in 2021 to bolster community safety and enhance the resilience of the electrical grid. We continuously refine this program as we gain insights into wildfire risks in Cowlitz County and adapt to evolving conditions, including an updated version of the plan published in 2024.

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CYBER SECURITY TIP



Cybercriminals use disasters to prey on compassion and a sense of urgency for help to entice people to click and type without thinking. With wildfire season coming up, remember the following cybersecurity tips:

- No legitimate organizations or governmental agencies should ask you for money, passwords, or account info via text or email.
- Give to legitimate, well-known charities. Verify with well-known agencies if a group claiming to help is authentic. <https://give.org> is one well-known website of many available, for charity research.
- If you receive a text or email asking you to click a link or reply with information, don't respond, ignore it.
- Don't use links or numbers in unsolicited communications to validate. Go to the official website of the group or call them to verify the request.

Why Wildfire Mitigation Plans?

continued

Cowlitz PUD’s mitigation strategies encompass design and construction, inspection and maintenance, operational practices, situational and conditional awareness, and response and recovery.

Key components include

- Undergrounding lines where feasible and cost-effective
- System hardening with covered equipment and animal guards
- Avian protection
- Tree trimming and brush removal
- Equipment patrols
- Work procedures and training for employees
- Monitoring of service area weather conditions
- Pre-emptive de-energization of equipment and power lines during extreme risk days
- Coordination with local agencies
- Fire safety outage management

To help you prepare your self-sustaining plan visit: <https://www.cowlitzpud.org/outages/wildfire-mitigation/>



CUSTOMER SERVICE

Have questions about your account? Are you needing assistance with your bills? Our Customer Service Representatives are here to help you!

Contact us at 360.423.2210 or customerservice@cowlitzpud.org

ROUND UP FOR WARM NEIGHBOR

Would you like to help your fellow neighbor in need? Give a little by enrolling in Round Up for Warm Neighbor!



Ways to Donate:

- **SmartHub** – Open Bill & Pay, select Warm Neighbor, and follow prompts. You can choose a one-time round-up, monthly round-up, or a certain dollar amount each month.
- **In-person** – Donate in our office or in the Drive-Thru.
- **Bill Stub** – Mail your payment in with the bill stub marked for Warm Neighbor and a dollar amount.



State Required Clean Energy Plan:

Every four years, Cowlitz PUD is tasked with creating a roadmap for how we will provide our customers with an electric supply free from greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. In 2022, we developed our first roadmap – the Clean Energy Implementation Plan (CEIP).

This plan proposed the steps Cowlitz PUD needs to take to be greenhouse gas neutral by 2030 and have clean energy by 2045. The steps in the plan included energy efficiency, demand response, and renewable energy goals and the actions we needed to take to make sure all Cowlitz PUD customers benefit from the transition to clean energy.

Cowlitz PUD’s next four-year roadmap is due January 1, 2026, and we want to hear from you!

- Go to cowlitzpud.org to participate:
- Read more about the CEIP and the 2022 four-year roadmap
 - Learn about our Public Process
 - Participate in our Community Survey
 - Read about our Upcoming Events



We are all in this together and we want to hear from you. Your valuable input will help shape our plan to make certain no one is unintentionally harmed by the clean energy transition.

To get started, please participate in our Community Survey. Your answers will be anonymous and only used to help us develop our 2026 four-year roadmap. The survey should take about five minutes to complete.

To participate, click on the QR code or visit our Main Office 961 12th Ave, Longview where you can access the survey in our lobby.



Connected is published by Cowlitz PUD

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Board of Commissioners meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 2pm.

To attend contact mpetterson@cowlitzpud.org