10 Things You Should Know About Public Utility Districts

1. PUDs are locally-controlled, not-for-profit utilities owned and held accountable by the communities they serve.
2. Decisions that affect service, reliability and rates are made at the local level by a locally-elected PUD Board of Commissioners.
3. The authority of public utility districts stems from the citizens of Washington who passed Initiative No. 1 in 1930 allowing for the formation of PUDs.
4. The Washington State Grange led the movement to establish PUDs as farmers and rural communities sought access to affordable electricity.
5. It’s only through a public vote that a PUD may be formed.
6. There are 28 operating PUDs in Washington State.
7. PUDs provide electrical, water and wastewater, and wholesale telecommunications services in 27 counties across the state.
8. PUDs in Washington provide some of the lowest rates in the country.
9. PUDs operate with transparency setting rates and making policy decisions in open public meetings.
10. PUDs have a long history of promoting conservation as the least-costly and most environmentally friendly resource.

DID YOU KNOW?

Simple Winter Water-Saving Tips for 2019

Every drop counts! Save water this winter with these conservation tips:

1. Winter is the perfect time for making plans to add or modify your landscape to use less water. Consider low-water gardens that attract wildlife, such as butterflies or birds. Or work around themes such as fragrance, edible, ornamental or native plants.

2. Check indoor fixtures for leaks and fix right away. A small leak left unattended can account for hundreds of gallons of good, clean water lost. Leaks of 1/32 inches, or the size of a No. 2 pencil lead, can result in 6,000 gallons of water loss per month.

3. Consider replacing an existing toilet with a high-efficiency model, which uses 1.28 gallons per flush or less. Save water protect the environment by choosing WaterSense labeled products in your home and business.

4. Insulate your water heater and water pipes. If your water tank is new, it’s likely already insulated. If you have an older hot water tank, check to see if it has insulation with an R-value of at least 24. If not, consider insulating your water tank, which could reduce standby heat losses by 25%-45% and save you about 7%-16% in water heating costs—and should pay for itself in about a year. Doing so will also cut down on the amount of water that goes down the drain while waiting for hot water to flow. You can find pre-cut jackets or blankets available from around $20.

5. Install a low-flow showerhead. Skagit PUD sells high-efficiency showerhead and faucet aerator kits for just $11. Having a high efficiency showerhead is a very practical way to reduce water consumption during bathing. It not only reduces your water bill, it reduces your sewer and energy bills as well.
Joe Lindquist

Skagit PUD is governed by three commissioners that are elected by the residents of Skagit County and serve six-year terms on a nonpartisan basis. The PUD Commissioners establish policy, approve budgets and expenditures, establish rates for services, retain the utility management, and provide oversight of the utility. PUDs are self-regulated and as such, are not regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. Water service is provided on a non-profit basis, reflecting the actual cost of service.

As with any decision before the Board, citizens have numerous opportunities to comment on actions concerning the utility. As elected commissioners, they have a responsibility to ensure that provided services are financially feasible and in the best interests of the customer.

As a Skagit PUD customer-owner, you have the ability to voice concerns during every commission meeting. We hold open meetings the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 4:30 p.m., where members of the public can observe and participate in decisions made by the Board of Commissioners.

Skagit PUD welcomes Joe Lindquist to its Board of Commissioners. Lindquist takes the seat held by Robbie Robertson, who served on the board since 2001.

Prior to being elected as a PUD commissioner, Lindquist served as a member of the Mount Vernon City Council. During his tenure, Lindquist served two years as mayor pro-tem and chaired the Parks and Recreation, Finance, Public Safety, Traffic Safety, and Development Services Committees.

“My experience as a Mount Vernon City Council Member for 13 years gives me valuable experience in a culture of transparency, accountability, and responsibility in public service,” Lindquist said.

Lindquist says he will also bring a fresh perspective to the PUD with his knowledge of large public works projects.

“As a city council member, I have been a part of some of the largest public works projects in Mount Vernon’s history; the floodwall and Skagit Riverwalk construction, as well as a $37 million upgrade to the city’s wastewater plant.” Lindquist said.

Now at the PUD, Lindquist plans to focus his attention on the replacement of the Judy Reservoir to Mount Vernon transmission line.

“It’s a big and very visible project. A lot of people travel state Route 9 between Sedro-Woolley and Mount Vernon, and will be impacted by that project.”

Lindquist, who works as a financial advisor at the Mount Vernon office of Robert W. Baird, is also active in the community. He serves as Skagit Rotary Foundation president, Summersun Montessori board president, and is president-elect of the Skagit Rotary Club.

Lindquist is a graduate of Western Washington University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration.

In his spare time, Lindquist enjoys weightlifting, running, wake surfing, boating, and spending time with his wife Stefanie, and two daughters Annika and Emilia.

Where does all the water go?

Typically, U.S. households consume at least 30 percent of their water by lawn sprinkling. Inside, toilets use the most water. The average person flushes over five times per day (household or work). That totals nearly 2,000 flushes per person annually. The average five-minute shower takes between 12 to 25 gallons of water. On average, each American uses about 80-100 gallons of water a day.

Rate Increase Reminder

On January 1, 2019, an 8.5 percent rate increase went into effect for all Skagit PUD water customers. The increase is approximately $4.32 per month for the average residential customer.