DID YOU KNOW?

We’ve Made it Easy to Simplify Your Life

Skagit PUD’s online bill payment can make your life simpler. Easily create an online account at SkagitPUD.org. View and pay your water bills anytime on any device.

Using Skagit PUD’s customer account portal, you can link and pay multiple accounts, view your billing history, and set up automatic payments.

The online program provides a more convenient payment option and helps customers avoid late fees by offering 24/7 access to view their account information and pay their bill.

Innovation Recognized

Skagit PUD will be featured in an upcoming episode of Innovation Nation — a weekly Saturday morning show on CBS that showcases present-day change-makers from all over the world who are creating solutions to real needs. The episode, which will air in 2022, focuses on a newly installed micro-hydroelectric system that generates clean, renewable electricity by harvesting excess pressure from Skagit PUD’s water pipelines. Film crews were here in September to interview General Manager George Sidhu about the innovative project.

PAY

Drops Need Watts
Save Water & Energy by Showering Better

WATER AND ENERGY WORK TOGETHER. Have you ever picked up a gallon of water or milk from the fridge? It’s pretty heavy, right? A lot of energy is used to carry every gallon of water you use from a drinking water source to a treatment plant that makes it safe to drink. After the water leaves the treatment plant, more energy is needed to move it through water pipes to your house. Imagine the journey it has taken — and just how tired you would be after carrying that much water all day!

And the work doesn’t stop there. If you want that water to be hot, it takes energy to warm it up before it hits the tap. Here’s some food for thought — the energy it takes to treat and deliver the water that just 10 houses use in a year could power your home’s refrigerator for more than two years!

That’s why it’s so important not to waste water at home. Don’t leave the water on when you brush your teeth. Make sure to turn off the faucet after you wash your hands. If water drips from the faucet after you turn it off, it could be a leak. One of the best places to save both water and energy at home is in your shower. Besides taking shorter showers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s WaterSense program has some tips for how you and your family can “shower better.”

Showering Facts

The shower is a place where we can clean up, cool off, wake up, or relax after a long day. But it’s also a place where we waste a lot of water and energy! Consider this:

- The average shower lasts eight minutes. Since a standard showerhead has a water flow of 2.5 gallons per minute, each shower uses 20 gallons of water!
- Across the United States, we use more than one trillion gallons of water each year just for showering.

Never fear! You can still save water and energy. WaterSense has a special label for showerheads that use less water but still provide a great spray of water when you shower. If your family uses a WaterSense labeled showerhead:

- Every shower, you’ll save enough electricity to power a 60-watt light bulb for eight hours.
- Every year, you’ll save the amount of water it takes to wash more than 70 loads of laundry.

To make it easy to try a water and energy-saving showerhead, Skagit PUD offers water efficiency kits that contain a WaterSense multi-mode massage showerhead and ultra-efficient faucet aerators for just $11. The kits can be purchased at our Mount Vernon office.

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COVID-19 Customer Support Available

Skagit PUD is committed to helping our customers stay connected to essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you experienced financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, you may be eligible for support, including long-term payment arrangements or bill assistance.

Our customer service team is available to help. Please call (360) 424-7104, Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Winter Plumbing Tips

Avoid plumbing problems with these cold-weather tips:

- Know the location of your water shut-off valve and test it annually.
- Turn off outdoor faucets and disconnect the hoses. You will thank yourself in the spring.
- Insulate water pipes that may be vulnerable to the cold or have previously caused problems — wrap pipes close to exterior walls or in unheated basements with pieces of insulation.

But if a pipe freezes, it’s important to be prepared. Don’t wait for nature to take its course. Thaw the pipe as soon as possible or call a plumber for help. If you thaw the pipe yourself, turn off the water or test the shut-off valve. You do not want water suddenly gushing from the pipe when it thaws.

Remember: When thawing, slower is better. Pipes warmed too fast may break. A hairdryer trained at the frozen area of the pipe is appropriate. A blow torch is not.

Big Pipes Going In the Ground

Construction Manager Brandt Barnes (left) discusses the challenges faced in building the Judy Reservoir to Mount Vernon Transmission Pipeline Project with Commissioner Germaine Kornegay, Project Manager Mike Benton, and Commissioner Andrew Miller during a site tour near Clear Lake.

The two-year, $35.6 million project includes installation of five miles of 36-inch diameter welded steel transmission pipeline; 1,900 feet of horizontal directional drilling under the Nookachamps Creek; a crossing of the East Fork Nookachamps Creek with the construction of a new 200-foot single-span bridge; roadway crossings of state Route 9 and state Route 538 (East College Way).

The Judy Reservoir water system serves 72,000 people in Burlington, Mount Vernon, and Sedro-Woolley. The new pipeline has a life expectancy of 100 years.

Budget Proposal for 2022

In 2019, Skagit PUD engaged the services of FCS Group to complete a cost-of-service analysis and water utility rate study. The study provided the PUD with a sustainable, multi-year financial plan that meets the projected total financial requirements of the utility. Financial needs include expenses to operate and manage the water system, capital project funding, funds for new and existing debt obligations, and the fiscal policy goals established by the Board of Commissioners.

The 2022 proposed budget was submitted to the board at a public hearing on October 12. The budget uses FCS Group’s rate study recommendations of a 5% increase in base water rates or approximately $3.08 per month for the typical residential customer.

The rate increases take effect for all bills on January 1, 2022, and would increase projected revenues by nearly $1.3 million. The funds will support the next 10 years of the Capital Improvement Plan and the related debt service. The PUD anticipates that capital contributions and non-operating revenue may be lower next year as the economy struggles with the pandemic and supply chain issues.

“Through our recent strategic planning efforts and the updates to our financial plan and rate study, the PUD is well-positioned to make significant improvements to our infrastructure,” General Manager George Sidhu said. “While continuing to support the growth that is happening at the local level.”

YOUR WATER RATES AT WORK