

Ruralite

KLICKITAT PUD

MAY 2025

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Bickleton Reservoir is one of many
water systems KPUD owns and
operates. PHOTO BY PHILLIP MCMILLEN



LEFT: The White Salmon FFA agricultural issues team won first place in the district competition. From left are Molly Gehrig, Riley Eichner, Raina McAllister and Josie Dickey. **RIGHT:** The White Salmon FFA greenhands team includes, from left, Liam Fitzjarrald, Jaxson Anderson, Francisco Salazar, District 8 Officer Cole, Gigi Clark and Rubi Robles Guzman. PHOTOS COURTESY OF WHITE SALMON FFA

Leaders in FFA

Local FFA programs give students a chance to grow their leadership and problem-solving skills

Klickitat County is home to three thriving FFA programs: the Goldendale High School and Goldendale Middle School chapters, as well as the Columbia High School chapter in White Salmon. FFA empowers students through agricultural education, helping them develop leadership skills, improve problem-solving abilities, foster personal growth, and acquire the knowledge and tools necessary for a successful career.

Goldendale High School FFA

Josh and Randi Krieg are the agriscience educators at Goldendale High School and Goldendale Middle School. Agricultural education provides students with an in-depth understanding of the science, technology and business aspects of

plant and animal production, as well as management of natural resources.

The Kriegs are leaders in the classroom and the community. They are regular volunteers at the soup kitchen and everyone looks forward to their annual plant sale. The Kriegs have led the FFA program for 17 years, and the countless hours they devote to students and community projects and events stands out.

In March, Goldendale FFA partnered with the Goldendale and Centerville granges to celebrate National Ag Day. This community event provided a meal and offered hands-on activities such as butter making, meat cut identification, cheese tasting and more.

Goldendale FFA students have a tradition of performing well at state, in

some years advancing to nationals. GHS has two teams competing in the State FFA Convention at the Washington State University campus in early May. The agricultural sales team includes Emma Gorrod, BryLee Mulrony, Cheyenne Baunach and Harmony Casteel. The conduct of chapter meetings team includes Anna Hauge, Brynna Baumgarten, Hayden Sheridan, Jennasea Smith, Rian Blaine and Taryn Miller.

Columbia High School FFA

Emily Gerhig is the faculty mentor of the Columbia High School FFA chapter. She is an advocate for her students in and out of the classroom and has mentored youth through FFA for about 12 years. Emily helps students develop their interests in agriculture and instructs them in various categories that encourage preparation for their future careers.

The Columbia High School FFA chapter



is ready for state competition as well. Reina McAllister will compete in employment skills, while Josie Dickey will compete in extemporaneous public speaking. A team of five freshmen—Liam Fitzjarrald, Jaxson Anderson, Francisco Salazar, Gigi Clark and Rubi Robles Guzman—will compete in the FFA Greenhands category. The team of Molly Gehrig, Riley Eichner, Raina McAllister and Josie Dickey will be tackling agricultural issues. They will be focusing on the 1855 Yakima Nation Treaty relating to Klickitat County water rights. The agricultural issues team placed first at districts in this specific category.

Like Goldendale FFA, Columbia High School FFA is also heavily involved in local efforts about agricultural issues. Students seek feedback from locals, and the community, in turn, gives back their time and resources.

Five years ago, a group of seven motivated seniors organized efforts to create a place for students to keep their animals. Their plan was approved, and those seniors proceeded with the project. Though they did not directly benefit, they left their legacy and positively impacted future FFA students.

With the help of community members and businesses, the group of students



ABOVE: The Goldendale FFA conduct of chapter meeting state qualifying team includes, from left, Hayden Sheridan, Jennasea Smith, Taryn Miller, Brynna Baumgarden, Anna Hauge and Rian Blaine. **BELOW:** The Goldendale FFA ag sales state-qualifying team includes, from left, Emma Gorrod, Harmony Casteel, BryLee Mulrony, Cheyenne Baunach and Advisor Josh Krieg. PHOTOS COURTESY OF GONDENDALE FFA



gathered supplies to build a barn, put up a pen for pigs, sheep, goats and steers, and grew a garden.

The deal was if students provided feed and other key essentials to care for the animals or participated in community service projects, they would not have to

pay a fee to keep their animals there.

Those seven seniors—Chandler Bucklin, Ty Walker, Trevor Cooper, Austin Charters, Oscar Kirkwood, William Gross and Jordan Trout—were recognized for their efforts. Their legacy continues to this day. ■

To the Top!

Training Stages for Electric Lineworkers

Known for their strength and agility, lineworkers are dedicated to ensuring our communities have reliable power. Safety is always top priority on the job, which is why lineworkers spend thousands of hours training as they advance their skills.

Here's a look at the career progression of a lineworker.

4 Crew Leader

A crew leader is an advanced position that requires supervising lineworkers on job sites, coordinating with contractors and directing daily activities for crews.



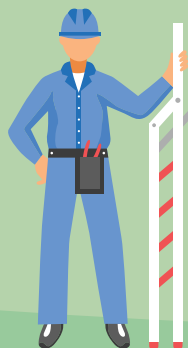
3 Journeyman Lineworker

Post-apprenticeship and with roughly 7,000+ hours of training under the belt, journeyman lineworkers are fully trained in their field. They repair, update and install overhead and underground power lines, as well as other electrical equipment.



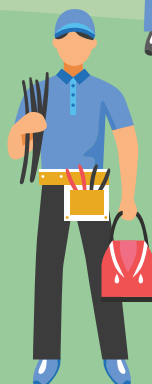
2 Apprentice Lineworker

Before reaching lineworker status, they are required to complete an apprenticeship. The apprenticeship combines hands-on training in the field with classroom learning. While in the apprenticeship, lineworkers earn competitive wages. They typically spend three years in their apprenticeship.



1 Groundperson/Pre-apprentice

Many lineworkers begin their career as a groundperson, or pre-apprentice. They assist line crews with tools, keeping job sites safe and operating smaller equipment.



Regardless of stage, all lineworkers continue education and training throughout their career. Training and testing requirements vary from utility to utility.

Simplify Life With Budget Billing

Spring is a great time to enroll in budget billing. A consistent monthly utility bill supports a stable personal budget by avoiding seasonal fluctuations.

Consumption varies season to season, and usage spikes cause billing increases. This can be frustrating for customers on fixed incomes or tight budgets. Klickitat PUD offers a budget plan to ease that frustration and provide consistent monthly bills. The monthly budget is based on your prior 12-month average use.

Enrollment is easy. Customers need to have a zero balance to enroll in the budget plan. Once enrolled in the budget plan, you need to pay the monthly budget amount consistently. Overpayments cause fluctuations in monthly budget amounts, and missing a payment may result in removal from the budget program.

The PUD recalculates your budget payment each May, with the new budget billing beginning in June. With the recalculation of the budget amount, one of the following will occur:

- If you paid for more than you use, the credit will reduce your new budget amount.
- If you used more energy than you paid for while on the budget plan, your new budget payment will increase to recover the shortage.

If you would like to know what your actual account balance is compared to your budget balance, the “Information Only- Account Balance” line on your bill reflects the amount that becomes due if you disconnect your service or choose to get off the budget plan. This line is an important indicator to help gauge whether your budget amount is in line with your use. ■



Spring is a great time to enroll in **BUDGET BILLING** to help keep expenses down during times of heating and cooling. **Give us a call** if you are interested in the budget program.



Check your May bill for your new budget amount. Now is the time to make adjustments and catch up.



New budget amounts will be billed in June, so please double check the amount prior to submitting payment.

The Stress-Free Equation:



**Fixed Monthly Budget + Preferred Due Date + Autopay
= No more stress over utilities!**

GOLDENDALE 509-773-5891 | WHITE SALMON 509-493-2255

New & Existing Customer Programs

- ▶ AMI metering provides consistent reads and avoids account balance fluctuation. Customers no longer need to submit monthly reads. **NEW**
- ▶ AMI metering provides customers flexibility to select a due date that best aligns with their budgets—highly beneficial for fixed income customers. **NEW**
- ▶ Autopay pairs well with budget billing and ensures late fees and penalties are avoided.
- ▶ Electronic billing (email) avoids timing delays associated with traditional delivery methods.
- ▶ SmartHub is a customer tool available 24/7 for customer account management. This includes enrolling in the budget plan, enrolling in autopay and viewing usage details.

Drinking Water Week

Klickitat PUD reminds the public of the importance of water conservation during Drinking Water Week, May 4-10. It is essential to avoid waste through conservation practices to protect our precious source of water.

Whether you need it to cool off after a workout or warm up in a hot bath, your tap water is there when you need it. It is used to produce your morning coffee, the clothes you wear and the fruits and veggies you like to snack on.

Your water utility works hard around the clock to ensure high-quality drinking water

is there when you need it on demand. To learn about your water's journey from source to tap, contact your local water provider.

Visit <https://www.awwa.org/communications-and-outreach/drinking-water-week/#celebrate> to learn more. This message is brought to you by the American Water Works Association. ■



KPUD's Water-Wastewater team is, from left, Superintendent Brandon Walter, Operator Mike Krause, Operator Eric Cecil, Operator Joseph Randall, Operator Dakota Whitner, Support Assistant Ocean Barrett and Coordinator Sharon Blodget. Not pictured: Crew Lead Noah Halm.

4 MYTHS ABOUT WATER

Water is an important part of our lives, and practicing good water use can benefit everyone

1 Myth: We have less water today than we did 100 years ago.

Reality: There is the same amount of water on the Earth today as there was 3 billion years ago.

However, today more demands are placed on the same amount of water. Because our demand for water continues to grow but our supply doesn't, drinking water counts on everyone lending a hand to conserve, protect and get involved with decisions that affect our water resources.

2 Myth: Once you use water it is gone.

Reality: After water is used, it's recycled.

3 Myth: We shouldn't have to think about drinking water.

Reality: We can no longer take our drinking water for granted. Public participation is vital to protecting our water resources, building adequate treatment plants and improving water delivery.

4 Myth: Lead occurs naturally in drinking water.

Reality: The most common source of lead in drinking water is plumbing. Your plumbing may have lead pipes or lead solder in the connections. Call KPUD at 509-773-7631 to report service line material. This can help with obtaining private and utility-owned service line information for our annual Lead Service Line Inventory submittal to Department of Health.





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WA-18

Klickitat PUD Awarded \$2.6M in Grants

Engineering team leads critical infrastructure effort in earning grid resilience grants

Klickitat Public Utility District has been awarded \$2.6 million in federal and state funding through the Washington State Department of Commerce's Grid Resilience Grant Program. This investment will support eight infrastructure projects designed to improve grid reliability, reduce wildfire risk and strengthen energy resilience across Klickitat County.

Klickitat PUD's engineering team, led by Engineering Supervisor Mark Garner, was instrumental in securing these grants. The team developed a comprehensive package of 10 project proposals, of which 8 were awarded, that demonstrated clear benefits to system reliability, safety and long-term operational efficiency.

The projects include undergrounding overhead power lines, replacing aging transmission poles, converting single-phase lines to more robust three-phase systems and upgrading more than 10,000 feet of electrical infrastructure. These improvements will help protect against power outages caused by extreme weather and natural hazards.

This funding opportunity was made possible through the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Resilience State and Tribal Formula Grants Program, with additional support from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. Klickitat PUD will contribute a local match of 33.34% toward the projects' costs.

The PUD extends its appreciation to the engineering department for their leadership and expertise in securing these funds, which would have otherwise been ratepayer funded. These projects reflect a proactive investment in the long-term reliability and resilience of the utility's electric system and the communities it serves.

Project planning and federal review are underway, with implementation expected to begin later this year. ■