The Power Line

Douglas PUD Quarterly Customer Newsletter

The Results Are In!

Thank you to all our customers who responded to our first ever customer satisfaction survey. We are humbled by the overall satisfaction rating of 92%! The results of the survey show that our customers really like hydropower, but less than 40% know that we own and operate Wells Dam, our carbon-free generating jewel. The top three qualities that customers ranked were reliable power, reasonable rates and we are a utility you can trust.

DOUGLAS PUD COMMISSIONER AARON VIEBROCK

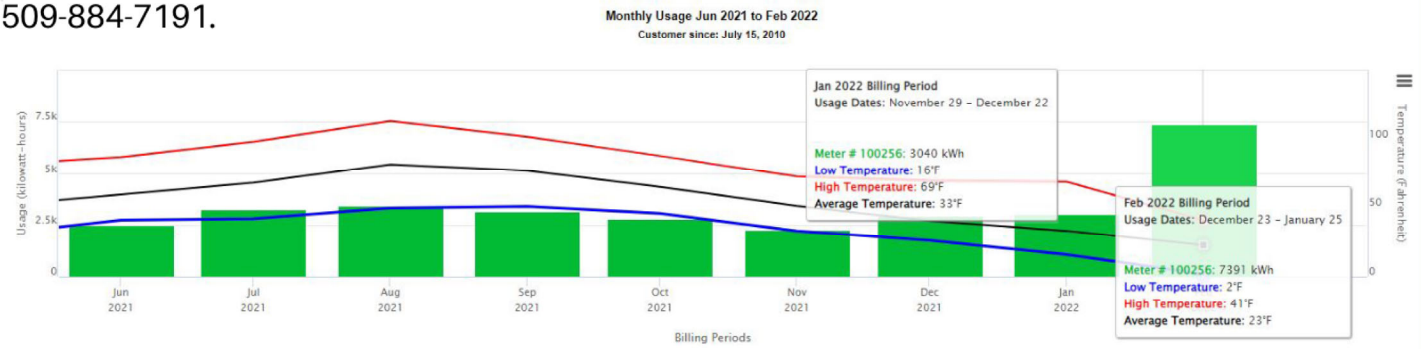
"We appreciate the trust our customers have in the PUD. We know what a valuable asset the utility is for all of us," said Commission President Aaron Viebrock. "While the results showed high levels of satisfaction, there is always room for improvement. We strive every day to exceed our customers' expectations."

The survey also found that customers prefer to receive information from the utility by email. So, here is your first email newsletter. We will send these out quarterly to keep our customers up-to-date on programs, energy saving tips and happenings at the PUD. The survey summary is posted online and linked below.

High Winter Bills

Our county uses more electricity in the winter heating our homes, than we do in the summer cooling them. In fact, one day this past December with temperatures outside at a low of 2 degrees and a high of 10 degrees, we had a new Douglas County peak load of 267 Megawatts. In comparison, that 107+ degree day in June was only a peak load of 186 Megawatts.

January, February and sometimes March bills can be a little shocking when they are higher than any other month's bill. With temperatures so low, it takes more energy to keep your house at the temperature on your thermostat than it does when there are moderate temperatures outside. You can see in the graph this customer's February 2022 usage was over 4,000kwh more than their January usage. Things to consider when you are comparing bills: Temperatures, usage dates (how many days are included in your bill) and seasons. It's best to compare year to year bills, rather than one month to the next. You can find your usage graph on your SmartHub account. We have SmartHub information and seasonal conservation tips on our website or a budget plan to help smooth out the fluctuation in your bills. Give us a call for more information at 509-884-7191.



Wells Dam

In the beginning of Douglas PUD, there was no Wells Dam. Hard to believe huh? Douglas PUD was formed by the vote of the people in 1936 in response to a statewide dissatisfaction with services and practices of the privately owned electric utilities. The PUD went to work purchasing the distribution facilities from Washington Water Power (Avista) and Puget Sound Power and Light and bought power from the Bonneville Power Administration. Momentum to build Wells Dam started in the early 1950s and it started producing power in August of 1967. At that time, the cost of Wells power was more than purchasing it from the Bonneville Power Administration, oh how times have changed! This year marks 55 years of clean, low cost, reliable, renewable generation for the Wells Hydroelectric Project.

We are halfway through refurbishing the ten generating units at the Wells Project. The refurbishment process has been slow, but after gaining experience and efficiencies, each unit takes just over a year to completely rebuild at a cost of around $23 Million per unit. This love and care we are showing our Wells Project will extend the useful life for another 40 years.