We Are Prepared for a Major Disaster - Are you?

PUD 3 Staff Participated in the Cascadia Rising and Earthquake Preparation

What happens when a 9.0 earthquake rumbles to life off the Pacific Northwest Coastline? Lots of damage throughout the region, that’s what.

If the recently completed “Cascadia Rising” exercise is any indication, it will also result in extensive cooperation between emergency responders, the military, government agencies, and utilities.

A region-wide exercise the week of June 6 tested the readiness to respond to a fictional major earthquake caused by the shifting of the Cascadia Subduction Zone off the coast. The quake and aftershocks would create a tsunami and cause extensive damage from British Columbia to northern California, including Mason County.

As a comparison, the 2001 Nisqually earthquake had a magnitude of 6.8. Thousands of participants, including personnel from Mason PUD 3, jumped in to test communications, assessment and mobilization for repairs, health care response and much more.

In its preparation for the earthquake scenario, PUD 3 estimated over two-thirds of its customers would lose service. Much of the damage would be due to landslides, the liquefaction (soil becoming liquid during an earthquake) of soils near substations or along transmission lines, and power lines damaged when bridges fail. An even greater loss would occur if high voltage transmission lines bringing power to the area were shaken to the ground.

Restoration would be hindered by buckled roads, the ability of eastern Washington utilities to provide mutual aid, and the availability of replacement equipment or power cables.

This would be one of the greatest disasters faced in western Washington State. However, public and private agencies in Mason County have long shown their ability to work as an effective team during disasters.

Mason PUD 3 prepares for disasters with regular planning and exercises; building a robust electricity distribution system, with ongoing maintenance and inspections; and, using its fiber optic network to monitor the performance of the power lines and equipment.

PUD 3 urges its customers to prepare a disaster plan of their own, and have emergency supplies on hand.
For safety’s sake, it’s against state law to dig a hole more than one foot deep without notifying utility companies (dial: 8-1-1) at least two days in advance. It protects you from being injured if you hit an underground power line, and protects your neighbors from losing power.

According to the RCW 19.122, you need to contact the Utilities Underground Locate Center at least two working days before you plan to start digging at: 1-800-424-5555 or dial 8-1-1. When you call, just tell them what you’re going to do, the location of your project, and your contact information.

Don’t Let a Hot Summer Drive Up Energy Costs

Hot weather isn’t a regular thing in the Puget Sound Region. However, when it hits, we’re all looking for ways to beat the heat. Here are some ways you can conserve electricity this summer:

Don’t crank up the air conditioning. Set it at a comfortable level, and then adjust it when you are away from home. For every degree raised on your air conditioning unit’s thermostat, you can save as much as 3 percent on cooling costs.

Use ceiling fans or portable fans to keep air circulating throughout your home. Moving air can make it feel cooler. If you are using an air conditioner, fans can allow you to use a higher cooling temperature on your thermostat.

Close curtains or blinds to retain cooler air and block out the sun.

Open your windows at night, turn on your fans and let the evening air circulate. This will freshen up the house and bring down the temperature inside.

Turn off unnecessary lights during hot weather. They add heat to the home. Energy efficient LED bulbs can provide light at a fraction of the cost and they generate much less heat than incandescent bulbs.

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Minimize the amount of time the doors are open when taking things out of cold storage.

Run appliances that use more energy or generate heat at night. These include stoves, dishwashers, clothes washers, or dryers. Using the microwave, barbecuing outside, or making salads, fruit dishes, sandwiches and other low-prep meals may also help.

Children, the elderly and those who are ill may be at most risk from hot weather. Find ways to help them keep cool and hydrated during a heat wave. Check on your neighbors who may be in this risk category to see if they need assistance.


Call Before You Dig
Dial 8-1-1 for free underground utility locates.

Sparky the Danger Bear
Shelton Electricity Adventurer, Returned to the Wild

Sparky, the orphaned bear who took refuge in a Bonneville Power Administration substation last year, returned to the wild earlier this month.

“Folks really took to the little fellow,” said Joel Myer, of Mason PUD 3, the local utility that affectionately named the bear cub Sparky after he narrowly avoided electrocution. “We’re thrilled to hear Sparky is healthy and back home in the woods.”

Last October, the frightened black bear cub entered BPA’s substation in Shelton, and climbed on energized high-voltage electrical equipment.

“That was a really close call,” recalled BPA substation operator Bob Armanino, whose quick action to de-energize the equipment saved the bear’s life. “Hopefully, Sparky’s done touring power substations.”

Eventually, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff lured him out of the substation and into a trap with doughnuts. About a week later, he was taken to Idaho Black Bear Rehab near Boise.

“He weighed just 40 pounds when we took him in and was too young to take care of himself,” said center founder Sally Maughan.

“By the time he was transferred to us, he was 178 pounds,” Maughan said.

In preparation for his return to Washington’s Olympic Peninsula, Sparky was tranquilized, marked, tagged and given a health check. He was one of eight bears released by the rehab center on May 11.

According to IBBR, more than 96 percent of the bears released successfully reintegrate back into the wild.

“He is a big, beautiful 178-pound bear now,” Maughan said.

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SHUCK ‘n SHARE 5K - Sunday, October 2, 2016

Packet pickup is the week of September 26th at Mason County PUD 3, 2621 E. Johns Prairie Road Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Or on race day beginning at 6:30 a.m. at the registration tent.

For details and updated information, please visit ‘events’ at: www.masonpud3.org

The Shuck & Share 5K will start at the Huff n Puff across from the Shelton High School. It is a nice flat loop 5K.

All profits will go to support Project Share, an assistance program helping hundreds of low-income families with their electric bills.

Pole-Top Rescue Training

Ronny McIrvin - Apprentice Lineman

It is PUD 3’s mission to provide safe, reliable, economical service, 24/7. But it’s no accident that the word “safe” comes first...

Our employees all participate in various safety trainings and programs on a regular basis to ensure they know how to perform their jobs in the safest manner. But they also need to know what to do if something goes wrong. That is why annually, our crews go through a rigorous pole-top-rescue training.

The crews utilize “Dan the Dummy” to help them refresh this critical rescue skill. They don their safety gear, climb 40 feet up the power pole, grab nearly 200 pounds of the dummy lineman, and safely rappel down to perform first aid.

Working around electricity is a dangerous job, so we want our employees prepared for the unthinkable. They take safety seriously - for our community and themselves.

visit masonpud3.org to find out more about being safe around electricity

Pole-Top Rescue Training

Public Power Week - October 2-8!

Public Power Week celebrates affordable electricity for nearly 33,000 PUD 3 customers. The week-long observation also honors the democratic tradition of community decision-making that led to the founding of the PUD in the 1934 general election.

Along with special gifts or prizes for our customers, PUD 3 staff will be hosting hundreds of Mason County fifth graders during the week. The students will learn about where their electricity comes from, the importance of hydropower for continued reliable service, other renewable energy sources, and what the PUD does to improve the lives of all its customers.

This October, PUD 3 joins with more than 2,000 other electric utilities that provide their citizens electricity services on a not-for-profit basis. Public power’s distinct characteristics help PUD 3 customers become more powerful every day while they are working, playing or enjoying the comforts of home.

Public Power Week is celebrated in conjunction with the American Public Power Association (APPA) in Washington, D.C. APPA is a national service organization for community and state-owned electric utilities.

Celebrating Public Power Week - October 2-8!

ART & PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

THEME: Your Favorite Use of Electricity

Contest Rules:
• All PUD 3 customers (all ages) may enter.
• Only one artwork submission per entrant.
• Must be an original design and be created by you.
• Any medium (2 dimensional) is accepted.
• Artwork or photography must fit into an 8” x 10” frame.
• Attach a registration form to the back of your art.
• Winning artwork will be on display and used for advertising.

registration forms available at: www.masonpud3.org

Entries DUE: Thursday, September 30, 2016

$50 prize!
Jennifer Renecker (Jen Ren) has worked for the PUD for nearly 16 years. She has held several positions throughout the utility and is now in charge of one of the utility’s most precious resources - its records. Being familiar with the laws that govern public records; responding to records requests; as well as properly classifying and destroying records when they have reached the end of their retention requirements are just some of her responsibilities. Its a tough job. But then, Jen is one tough lady.

She is tough outside of work too. So tough, that she holds a black-belt in Karate!

Jen Ren’s karate workouts began when she started in Butokukan in late 1989 as a teenager. Her brothers were involved and her dad believed that every girl should know how to defend herself, but Jen found a passion for the art. She promoted to green belt while in high school. But after graduating, life got busy and she was in and out of the dojo throughout the next 20 years.

In late 2011, after earning her associates degree, having her second daughter, and life had settled some, she was ready to return to the dojo and finish her goal of Shodan (1st degree black belt). Her return found her studying under an old friend from her teenage years, Sensei Mike Hudnell. Sensei Mike learned of her goal and began pushing her to make it happen. With a lot of hard work and focus, she was promoted to the rank of Shodan on May 2, 2015. She became part of North American Butokukan that same month.

Jen feels fortunate to be part of the beginnings of Shelton Martial Arts Academy a new school located downtown Shelton on Cota Street. She says her journey has brought her full circle as she now has the opportunity to give back what was given to her. She teaches a junior class on Wednesday evenings at the Shelton Martial Arts Academy.

She loves sharing the passion of karate with young children and adults. "It is now a family affair as my oldest daughter studies, my husband has just begun his training in the last year and my now almost 5 year old hits the floor every now and again for training. I love that our family can share a good work out and my children are gaining confidence and awareness through their training," she said.

Jen feels that Karate has given her many blessings in her life including long friendships, determination, willpower, confidence, and awareness. "The greatest," she says, "has been the journey." She says that she explains this to her oldest daughter when she gets frustrated because things might not be going the way she wants them to. "Sit back and enjoy the journey, it’s all yours and there is a lot to learn if you accept it as it comes."

The skills that Jen uses at the dojo don’t just stay there - they follow her to work. She has done a terrific job with the utility’s records and her leadership shines through on team projects and committees. Rest assured, the PUD’s records are in good (tough) hands.