Mason PUD 3 received its second consecutive designation as a diamond level utility in the Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) program from the American Public Power Association (APPA). The honor recognizes PUD 3 for providing its customers with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service.

PUD 3 is one of 235 of the nation’s more than 2,000 public power utilities to earn the RP3 recognition and one of only 76 to reach the diamond level.

David Lynch, chair of the Association’s RP3 review panel, announced the award May 8, 2017. The three levels of the designation are diamond (the highest), platinum and gold. The RP3 designation recognizes public power utilities that excel in four key areas:

- Reliability
- Safety
- Workforce Development
- System Improvement

Criteria within each category are based on sound business practices and represent a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity. “Utilities that have earned an RP3 designation demonstrate public power’s emphasis on achieving leading practices and providing a high level of service to communities,” said Lynch.

“We’re honored to receive the RP3 designation,” said Annette Creekpaum, PUD 3 manager. “Our utility staff works hard to serve this community with safe, reliable and cost-based service. RP3 represents a much-appreciated recognition of this effort. We’re pleased that along with the consistent recognition of the excellence of our financial management, we can now celebrate the independent certification of the excellence of our operational reliability.”
Preparing For New Construction and Development Impacts on PUD 3 Substations

Customers building new homes, remodeling, or upgrading their electrical panel may see a new System Capacity Fee that represents their proportionate share of a substation. “Planning for the long term is a good move,” said Commissioner Gott. “We need to prepare for the future needs of our customers and the community.”

The new program avoids the potential of a general rate increase of between 2%-3% for PUD 3’s nearly 34,000 customers. The plan also accounts for the benefit of increased reliability for all customers when a new substation is built.

PUD 3 normally loads its substations to about 60% capacity. The reserve capacity means substations can take over for other facilities should one go offline during maintenance or an outage. Meaning, the PUD can reroute electricity from other substations to quickly bring customers back on line.

What Is the Charge?
For a typical new home (with a 200-amp electrical panel) the one-time fee is $1,700. Large commercial and industrial businesses will see a fee proportionate to their energy needs. This is due to the large amount of power they need, which impacts the capacity of an existing substation, or creates the need for a new substation.

How Does It Work?
The fee is paid based on the type of service, and the intensity of the power needs. The fee represents their proportionate share of the cost of new substations, when needed. Fees go into a separate account specifically for substations. This allows for an enhanced planning and funding process for substations to meet growing loads in various areas of PUD 3’s service area.

The System Capacity Fee ensures that existing customers are protected from paying an undue amount for construction of new substations. There is a benefit to all customers when a safe, reliable and redundant system is working well.

“Planning for the long term is a good move,” said Commissioner Gott. “We need to prepare for the future needs of our customers and the community.”

Want To Make The Same Payment Every Month? Now Is the Time to Try Budget Billing

Budget Billing is a convenient way to plan for your monthly bill. You pay a pre-arranged amount each month based on the prior twelve months of electricity usage. This helps balance out those high winter bills and low summer bills.

Your monthly Budget Bill payment will be adjusted each year during the month of May to true-up with your actual usage. This involves calculating your actual usage and determining what your “real” bills should have been for the year. That amount will be compared to the amount you paid on Budget Billing. Any difference will be calculated into your new Budget Bill amount.

Contact customer service at 360-426-8255 if you would like to hear more about Budget Billing!

Budget Billing - Bill Comparison:

- **High Winter Bills**
  - $200

- **Low Summer Bills**
  - $80

www.masonpud3.org/budgetbilling

*Each customer’s budget billing amount will be unique based on their annual electrical usage.
What’s Under Your Lawn?

Be Sure to Call 811 Before Building a Deck, Fence, or Digging in Your Landscape

For safety’s sake, it’s against state law to dig a hole more than one foot deep without calling 811 for utility locates.

The Revised Code of Washington 19.122 requires that persons contact the Utilities Underground Locate Center (1-800-424-5555) two working days (48 hours) in advance of excavation on PUD 3’s property, easement, or public agency right-of-way.

The law defines excavation as: “...any operation in which earth, rock or other material on or below the ground is moved or otherwise displaced by any means, except the tilling of soil less than 12 inches in depth for agricultural purposes, or road and ditch maintenance that does not change the original road grade or ditch flow line.”

The toll-free number and locating service is free; paid for by utilities. When calling, be prepared to describe the nature of the work, the location of the work and some personal information such as name, telephone number and address.

Contact PUD 3 as soon as possible if an underground electrical cable is damaged. PUD 3 has representatives available 24 hours a day at (360) 426-8255. If anyone should dig and make contact with underground utilities, which results in damages, the law minimally provides restitution for repair. If a person should dig and damage the underground utilities without calling for locates, they may be responsible for triple damages.

For more information on Underground Locates visit the Call Before You Dig website at www.callbeforeyoudig.com.

PUD 3 Safety Wins Regional Praise

A commitment to safety paid off for Mason PUD 3 and its customers in the form of regional recognition in the Northwest Public Power Association’s (NWPPA) 2017 Safety Contest.

PUD 3 placed second in the category of public utilities whose employees worked between 270,001 and 500,000 total hours in 2016.

The safety awards were presented April 13, 2017. Awards were based on a complex formula, ranking utilities who had the lowest injury and illness (incidence) rate, and the lowest number of lost workdays compared to total hours worked.

“Mason PUD 3 is committed to safety for its customers and employees,” said Scott Peterson, PUD 3 operations manager. “Being recognized for the success of our efforts shows that we work hard at every level to protect the health of our workers as well as lives and property of those we serve.”

NWPPA is an international association representing and serving over 150 customer-owned, locally controlled utilities in the Western U.S. and Canada.
PUD 3 Employee Spotlight

Not Your Average Handy Man

Randy Howard, long-time PUD 3 employee, is not your average handyman. He is PUD’s very own master craftsman. Randy and his five siblings were raised in Shelton. As a teenager, Randy worked for his father’s backhoe business and graduated from Shelton High School in 1973. He attended Judson Baptist College in Portland where he met his lovely wife, Brenda. Randy and Brenda have been married for 42 years. They have 10 children and 22 grandchildren (and counting).

Randy started his career in the construction field as a building inspector for the City of Shelton. He worked for the City for a few years before taking a job with Himlie Realty in 1978. In 1982, Randy was hired with PUD 3 as an Energy Conservation Analyst.

Randy has been with PUD 3 for nearly 35 years. Only two other current employees have been with the PUD longer than Randy. Having held several positions throughout the utility, he is currently PUD’s Facilities Supervisor.

While in the facilities department, Randy has taken the lead on several construction projects throughout the PUD to accommodate the needs and growth of the utility. In addition to Randy’s regular duties, he supervised the construction of the Johns Prairie Operations Center. He oversaw every aspect of the construction, and knows everything there is to know about the building. He jokingly replies, “it’s on the plan… somewhere”, when questioned how he will ever be replaced upon retirement.

Randy has been with the utility for nearly 35 years. Only two other current employees have been with the PUD longer than Randy.

Randy’s quick wit and friendly spirit are just a few reasons why he is so well-liked among his coworkers. Another contributing factor to Randy’s popularity may be his molasses crinkle cookies. At least once a year, always on his birthday, Randy bakes his famous molasses cookies and brings them to share with his friends at the PUD. In addition, adorned in an apron with spatula in hand; he is also a self-proclaimed “Grill Master”, manning the grill for the annual PUD employee picnic.

Randy does not like to sit still for long. When he is not working on projects for the PUD, he finds projects outside of work to keep him busy. Looking to the future, when the time comes for him to retire, Randy hopes to volunteer some of his time to the elderly; helping them with small projects they can no longer do themselves or afford to have done. This truly goes to show what a remarkable man Randy is.

To Report a Power Outage:
Download the SmartHub app at my.PUD3.org or call: 360-426-8255 available 24/7

PUD 3 News
PUD 3 News is a publication of Public Utility District No. 3 of Mason County. It is published periodically to keep the customers of PUD 3 updated on local, regional and national developments within the power industry.

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