

Safety First When Lighting Up the Home for the Holiday

Christmas light displays have become as much of a holiday tradition as the tree and eggnog, but be sure to remember basic safety tips as you hang lights from trees, gutters and roofs.



- **Do not overload electrical outlets.** This is one of the most common causes of holiday fires. Remember, only one high wattage appliance per outlet.
- **Look up when hanging outdoor lights.** Be sure to know where overhead power lines are when setting up an outdoor ladder. Use a wooden or fiberglass ladder when possible and stay one ladder length away from overhead power lines.
- **Inspect all illuminated decorations for damage.** Exposed wires, damaged sockets and loose connections can spark deadly fires.
- **Make sure all extension cords are marked for outdoor use.** In addition, keeps those cords clear of snow and standing water.
- **Keep cords from being damaged when hanging lights.** Extension or light cords which are pinched by furniture or cut by nails or staples can cause fires or provide a nasty shock.
- **Remember that non-LED lights heat up quickly.** Be sure those lights are not touching curtains and other flammable objects.

Commission Meeting Dates

Meetings are held in the Nichols Building, 220 Myrtle Street, Hoquiam.

December 2020

Monday - December 7
Monday - December 21

January 2021

Monday - January 4
Tuesday - January 19
(rescheduled from January 18
in observance of MLK Day)

Utility workshops are held at 3:30 pm. Regular business meetings are scheduled to begin at 4:30 pm. Public comment periods are included at the open and close of every meeting.

Commission meetings may be cancelled and special meetings may be scheduled. Please visit our website (www.ghpud.org) for updated information.

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Manager's Message

By Dave Ward, General Manager

It goes without saying that 2020 has been a year that none of us will forget and not for many good reasons. Businesses have had to reinvent the way they operate, families have been kept apart from loved ones, and the events that we took for granted like high school football, the Splash Festival and Loggers Playday have been cancelled. But one of the things I will remember with pride is the way the staff of your PUD has pulled together to continue our operations and to provide the critical services the community relies on.

Early on in this crisis the utility made the decision to close our lobby doors and carry out the majority of our customer interactions online and over the phone. A large number of our staff began to work remotely or in other locations at the utility to reduce interaction and lessen the likelihood of a potential COVID contact. For the same reason, our crews and dispatchers were isolated so that they may continue to maintain the utility system and respond to outages and calls for service. So far, this plan has been a success and our services have continued, uninterrupted. In addition, the PUD initiated new programs to assist customers, including COVID assistance and debt relief to help those impacted by COVID and drive in Wi-Fi hotspots to improve access to the critical online services that have become a lifeline to family, business, school and medical connections. I am so proud of our staff and the way they have responded to these challenges. They have been true professionals and public servants that our community can be proud of. As we enter 2021, we will continue these programs and adapt to the new realities facing our world and our business.

Even as COVID changed that way the PUD operated, the everyday tasks and responsibilities continued. 2020 saw the PUD continue to be a leader in the defense of hydropower and the Columbia-Snake River hydro system which has provided clean and affordable energy to our region for nearly 90 years. The release of the environmental impact statement supporting hydropower was confirmation of the value of that system which the PUD will continue to defend locally, regionally and nationally.

As the PUD assembles its budget for the coming year, the maintenance of and improvements to the PUD system continues to be of the greatest importance. The last few years have seen the number of outages experienced by our customers' drop, which is a testament to the design and strength of the system that delivers energy and telecommunication services to our customers.

This will be the last year end message for me. After over 35 years of working in public power, I will be retiring next year. I want to thank you all for the privilege of serving as the general manager of your PUD. When I accepted this post in 2013, it was the chance to come home and work in the community that I grew up in. That has meant a lot to me and I think that the steps the utility has taken to provide our services and fulfill our mission to you have been successful. It has been a privilege to serve you and I firmly believe that I am leaving the PUD in a strong position, with a dedicated staff that will continue its service to Grays Harbor and our customers.

I wish you all a Happy Holiday, a safe and Happy New Year and the hope that 2021 will be a better year for us all. Be safe and be well.



ENERGY, an informational newsletter, is published monthly for families and businesses energized by Grays Harbor PUD.

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