

Celebrate Earth Day Every Day

Some simple steps to conserve energy

For 40 years, Earth Day has promoted environmental responsibility and a peaceful sustainable world.

Created by Sen. Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, the first events were held on college and university campuses by students interested in raising awareness of environmental issues.

Four decades later, many Americans have made environmental responsibility and sustainable practices a choice not just on Earth Day, but every day.

Here are some simple steps to help conserve energy and resources:

Flip the Switch on Home Electronics

With “instant start up” features, video game systems, DVD players, televisions, satellite dishes, cable boxes, computers and stereos often consume between 2 and 10 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity a month when they are turned off.

While the amount of power per unit may not seem like much, when multiplied by the number of items in the home, the sum can be significant.

Surge protectors that protect electronics from damage due to electricity surges also can help save energy. Simply plug electronics into the strip and turn off the power at the surge protector to prevent the power drain.

Some “smart” strips turn off extra electronics when they sense a main unit like a computer or a TV has been turned off.

Reduce the Cost of Hot Water

While remodeling its offices and facilities last year, NWCPUD installed two rooftop solar energy systems to heat water and generate electricity used at the facility.

Even if you are not planning to add solar water heating system to your home, you can still save money and energy.

Begin by turning down your water heater to 120 degrees. Next, install low-flow showerheads to cut your water use—and the cost of heating it—in half.

Look For the Star

When it is time to purchase a new home appliance, look for one with the Energy Star label. Energy Star clothes washers, dryers, refrigerators, dishwashers and other appliances use less energy than conventional models.

Reconsider Night Lights

Install outdoor lighting with motion detectors for porches, security and landscape lights to illuminate the night when and where you need it. Consider solar units or compact fluorescent bulbs to cut energy use further.

Sign Up for Pure Power

By supporting the use of renewable energy sources, our customers help reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

NWCPUD purchases 1 megawatt of wind power called Environmentally

Local Events Honor 40th Anniversary of Earth Day

This month, more than 1 billion people in 190 countries will participate in events and activities to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22. Through the years, efforts have expanded to include Global Days of Service on April 17 and 18, when volunteers participate in service projects to benefit the environment in their local communities.

On April 22, NWCPUD will give away flowering plants and herbs at our offices at 2345 River Road. Each plant will come in a colorful Earth Day sack decorated by local school children.

The Dalles-Wasco County Library offers for a special Earth Day Program April 22 with Eartha the Ecological Clown. Eartha gives light-hearted lessons about water, endangered species, birds, insects, recycling, etc.—but that the real magic is around us every day on this awesome planet. This show for all ages begins at 9:30 a.m. Call 296-2815 for more information.

On Saturday, April 17, thousands of volunteers will converge on approximately 125 sites throughout Oregon as part of the SOLV IT annual event to help clean up litter and illegal dumpsites, remove non-native invasive plants, plant native vegetation, and assist with watershed maintenance and monitoring activities.

From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Celilo Park and Deschutes Ponds, cleanup and habitat work includes light litter pick up and the installation of four Wood Duck boxes in ponds along the Columbia River. Take exit 97 on Interstate 84 and drive north toward river and Celilo Park. Bring drinking water, work boots, gloves and layered clothing.

E-mail Greg Volkman for details at greg.m.volkman@usace.army.mil or call 541-506-4899.

Preferred Power (EPP) from the Bonneville Power Administration.

EPP is generated from 100 percent renewable wind power that does not pollute or affect fish or wildlife.

One 200 kWh block of Pure Power can be purchased by PUD customers for \$5 in addition to regular electric charges.

Customers may purchase as many blocks of Pure Power as they wish. The average household uses about 1,100 kWh of electricity (five blocks) a month.

Energy Audits, Weatherization and Commercial Lighting Programs

Sign up for a PUD energy audit and take the first step in making your home or business more energy efficient.

Fill out an application and the PUD will complete a free energy audit and provide you with a written report recommending and prioritizing items that are cost effective and will save you money.

Residential customers may qualify for rebates on the purchase of insulation, energy-efficient windows and other changes recommended in the report. Businesses can save money and energy with our commercial lighting rebate program.

For more information about NWCPUD programs and conservation tips, go to www.nwasco.com or call our office at 296-2226. ■

Budget Pay Customers Catch Up in April

If you are a current Budget Pay customer, April is "catch up month," as it compares your electricity use during the past year to calculate your budget payment for the new year.

Customers using more power than their budget payment allowed in 2009 will be required to pay the balance to qualify for the program this year.

If your actual payments were less than your budget payments, you will have a credit going into the new budget

payment cycle.

The Budget Pay plan makes budgeting for and paying electric bills easier. The program helps customers avoid large power bills in the winter and summer by spreading the cost of electric service evenly throughout the year.

When you sign up for Budget Pay, your monthly payment is calculated by dividing the last 12 months' cost of energy (May to April) by 11.

To qualify, you must have been a NWCPUD customer for at least 12 months at the same address and have an account with a zero balance. Billing for the new cycle begins in May.

To sign up for Budget Pay, contact our office at 296-2226. ■

Economic Grant Applications Available for 2010 Projects

Northern Wasco County PUD is offering \$30,000 in grants to fund local economic development projects in 2010.

Grant requests must be for the development or improvement of infrastructure within the PUD service territory and have an expected life of at least five years.

A maximum of \$12,000 will be awarded per project.

Applications for the 2010 grants are available at the NWCPUD office. They must be submitted before 5 p.m. May 7.

Grants will be awarded at the NWCPUD board meeting on June 1.

Private, for-profit ventures or projects that have received PUD economic development grant funding twice in a five-year period are not eligible.

Last year, grants were awarded to five applicants: Riverside Gymnastics Academy Booster Club, Wasco County-City of The Dalles Museum Commission, Mid-Columbia Health Foundation, Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce's Downtown committee and Mid-Columbia Center for Living.

For more information, please call Linda Wilson at 298-3302. ■

NORTHERN WASCO COUNTY PUD

Visit our Web site at:
www.nwasco.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 7

Acoustic Concert Series.

Claudia Schmidt performs at 7 p.m. at the Civic Auditorium. Tickets \$15 at Klindt's Booksellers and Columbia River Music. Fundraiser for the Civic Auditorium.

April 18

6th Annual Cherry of a Ride.

Recreational cycling event through cherry orchards and wheat fields to benefit St. Mary's Academy. 30-, 48-, 60-80- and 100-mile scenic loop options.

Registration information at www.cherryofaride.com

April 22

Acoustic Concert Series.

Jonathan Kingham performs at 7 p.m. at the Civic Auditorium. Tickets \$15 at Klindt's Booksellers and Columbia River Music. Fundraiser for the Civic Auditorium.

April 21-24

Northwest Cherry Festival.

21st: Cherry Sweetheart Coronation
23rd: Lip Sync Contest
24th: Open Air Market, Parade, Live Music.

For a complete list of events, call 296-2231 or go to www.tdacc@gorge.net.

April 27

Northern Wasco County PUD Board Meeting.

6 p.m., 2345 River Road, The Dalles.