

A Plan for the Future

Despite a struggling economy, the U.S. needs to move forward with a national energy policy

In recent months, the topic of America's energy future has taken a back seat to concerns about the national and global economy. Yet, these two topics are inter-related. An adequate supply of energy at affordable prices is essential to support a flourishing economy. Northern Wasco County PUD has stood by these tenants throughout its history.

The Time is Now

The PUD believes that now is the time for a national energy policy that supports and encourages the identification, development and delivery of adequate affordable supplies of energy to all Americans.

Producers, suppliers and citizens must work together with policymakers to enact energy policies that utilize domestic energy resources for a clearer, more secure energy future for the nation.

In part because of the stubbornness of the economic recovery, Congress has begun to pay attention to the price of goods and services—including the essential energy sector—and how high energy prices impact the nation's businesses and households.

When discussing America's energy future, it is important to consider both how the country will obtain affordable power in the short term and how it is planning to deal with increasing demand and limited resources in the more distant future.

Efficiency Pays Off

According to the National Research Council, energy-efficiency investments and shifts from energy-intensive industry and toward service and information-based jobs have helped decrease United States' Energy Intensity—a measurement of a nation's energy efficiency represented

through the amount of energy used per unit of gross domestic product (GDP).

Energy-efficiency improvements can be seen in nearly every sector of the U.S. economy thanks to independent technological breakthroughs, directed research, consumer education and government mandates and incentives.

Energy efficiency is also paying off in households across the nation.

Improvements in appliance technology such as refrigerators, have resulted in units that require two-thirds less energy than they did three decades ago. Programmable thermostats and heat pumps allow citizens to regulate the heating and cooling of their homes more efficiently.

Legislation like the federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards has resulted in improved vehicle fuel efficiency. The law requires that new cars, SUVs and light trucks together average 35 m.p.g. by 2020.

Fossil Fuels Still Powerful

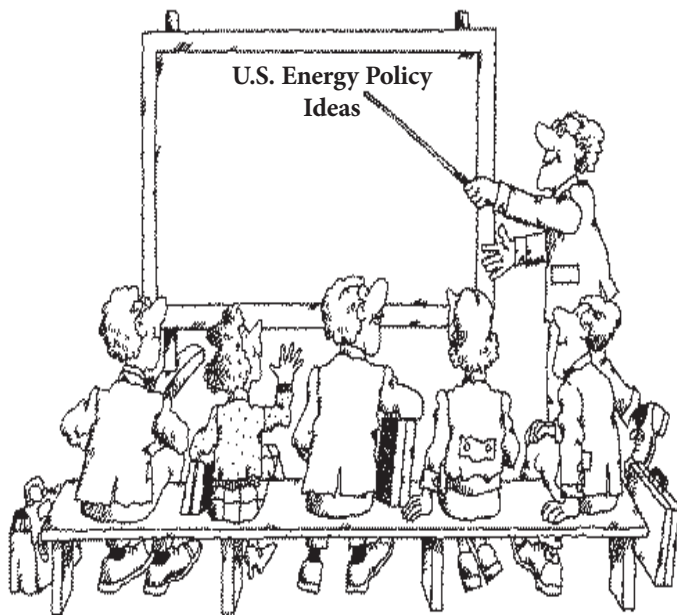
Even as we increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable and alternative energy sources, the U.S. will remain dependent upon oil and natural gas to meet growing energy demand at least for the next several decades.

With so many businesses affected by the cost and supply of these fossil fuels, a national energy policy needs to encourage energy exploration and production while also protecting the environment. Such directives should include additional incentives for improvements in energy efficiencies and the development of domestic energy resources and new technologies.

Federal funds and policies that support research and development are

What Will It Take? Powering America's Future

"A Plan For the Future" is the fourth and final in a series of articles from Northern Wasco County PUD about the current state of the energy industry in America and what is needed to move the nation forward to a powerful future.



essential to encourage innovation for both the development of new energy resources and to maintain production of conventional sources.

About 31 percent of the nation's energy is used by industry. The chemical, forest products, petroleum refining, aluminum, glass, metal casting, mining and steel industries use about 75 percent of the energy in this category.

A national energy policy needs to support public/private-sector partnerships and research programs that focus on how to make these sectors more energy efficient.

National and Global Cost

When establishing legislation regarding energy policy, lawmakers must also consider the cost of compliance to any new policies and how it may impact America's ability to compete in the international marketplace.

The U.S. is not alone in its need to develop a sound energy policy.

In December, delegates from 194 nations gathered in Durban, South Africa to discuss the future of the Kyoto protocol that requires major industrialized nations to trim their greenhouse

gas emissions.

The United States has not ratified the protocol because it does not require emerging economic powers like China, India, Brazil and South Africa to decrease their own emissions.

President Obama has pledged to reduce America's greenhouse emissions—gases that trap heat in the atmosphere—17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. Yet, "cap-and-trade," his preferred method to cut these emissions, failed to pass Congress in 2010.

The Environmental Protection Agency had dictated some new regulations on the energy industry that would have been very expensive to implement. The Obama administration has since instructed the EPA to delay implementing those for another year or so.

In Conclusion

We hope you have enjoyed this four-part series, "Powering America's Energy Future." Northern Wasco County PUD will continue to advocate on the national, state and local levels for adequate and affordable supplies of energy for U.S. businesses and consumers now and in the future.

NORTHERN WASCO COUNTY PUD

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 20

Mother Son Jammin' Fun.

Awesome door prizes and wacky competitions for boys and their moms. Try out the photo booth, construct a paper airplane or rock out to DJ music.

Sponsored by Safe Kids Columbia Gorge and NWC Parks and Recreation District, \$20 per couple. Scholarships available. The fun begins at 6:00 p.m., at The Dalles Civic Auditorium.

For details, call the Mid-Columbia Parks and Recreation office, 541-296-9533 or send an email to info@nwprd.org.

January 24

Northern Wasco County PUD Board Meeting.

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

January 26

Basics of Canning Homemade Soups.

A basic overview of pressure canning with an emphasis on making homemade soup and stock.

Each class will provide participants with samples, recipes and comprehensive resource lists. No experience necessary. Supply cost \$10, Class begins at 1:00 p.m., at Zion Lutheran Church, 101 W. 10th St., The Dalles.

Contact the Wasco County Extension Office at 541-296-5494 to register.

January 27

St. Mary's Academy Family Auction.

Annual fundraiser with games, food, live music and silent auction from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Admission is free. St. Mary's Academy, 1112 Cherry Heights Rd.

For more information, call 296-6004.

Nonprofit community organizations are encouraged to list events and activities that support, nurture and enhance the quality of life in communities served by NWCPUD.

To list an item in the community calendar, please call 541-298-3302.