Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

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Box Canyon Hydro Project - P.O. Box 547 ◆ Ione, WA 99139 ◆ (509) 446-3137 ◆ FAX (509) 447-6790

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Pend Oreille PUD Taking Proactive Measures to
Protect Customers & Employees from COVID-19

Newport, WA – Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (PUD) is monitoring information from the Center for Disease Control regarding recent Coronavirus (COVID-19) concerns and is taking proactive measures to protect its customers and employees. Given the fact that the World Health Organization has declared COVID-19 a pandemic, it is critical that the PUD follow the guidance of the federals, state, and local agency recommendations.

Due to the highly contagious nature of this virus, all PUD facilities will be closed to the public effective today until further notice. That includes the PUD's administrative office in Newport as well as the Box Canyon Visitor's Center in Ione. The PUD is following its Emergency Response Plan to ensure that essential utility services are provided to customers.

At this time, customer service representatives will still be available to answer and return phone calls, provide account information, and accept payments via the Newport drive-through window. The PUD encourages customers to make payments from home using one of its several easy and convenient payment options including SmartHub, online through the website, or by utilizing the automated pay-by-phone system. Alternatively, you may also drop payments at either the Newport Administration building or Box Canyon facility drop boxes. In addition, payments can be made using the self-service kiosk at the Box Canyon Visitor's Center.

The PUD will waive late payment fees for the months of March and April. Any household experiencing a financial hardship related to COVID-19 should call customer service to set up a payment arrangement for their utility account. Customers who communicate their situations with the PUD and keep their arrangements will not be subject to disconnection. The PUD is also working to increase funding to its "Neighbors in Need" program in order to provide additional assistance to those affected by this crisis.

"This is a difficult and uncertain time and we are doing the best we can to look out for the safety and well-being of our customers and employees while ensuring we deliver the services customers depend on. By taking these precautionary steps to limit interaction and practice social distancing, we are doing our part to stop the spread of this virus," said Colin Willenbrock, the PUD's General Manager. "We are aware of the hardship this pandemic is causing for many of you and hope this gives you piece of mind that we will continue to deliver your vital electric, water and broadband services."

As the situation unfolds, you can check the PUD's website for the latest updates and information at www.popud.org.

With respect to future meetings open to the public:
- The Town Hall and Board Meeting that were planned for Tuesday, March 31st, 2020, in Ione have been postponed.
- At this time, Commission Board Meetings (except that on March 31) will continue as scheduled and the PUD encourages the public to join via conference line at 509-447-9019 rather than attend in-person.

With respect to your services:
- The PUD's field personnel stand ready to respond to outages and encourage customers to continue to report outages by calling 509-447-3137.
- The PUD will continue to accept line extension applications, but there may be a delay in scheduling.

About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District
Pend Oreille PUD was established in 1936 and began operations in 1948. The PUD is governed by three locally elected Commissioners. A General Manager and staff operate the utility within policies set by the Board of Commissioners. The PUD has four operating systems: The electric system distributes electricity to the county, the production system produces power from the Box Canyon Hydroelectric Project, the water system consists of nine individual water distribution subdivisions, and the community network system provides wholesale broadband communication services. For more information visit: http://popud.org.

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