



# the Lakeview Light

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www.lakeviewlight.com

Lakeview Light and Power Newsletter

Winter 2007

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## **Dangerous and Costly – Metal Theft a Growing Problem for Northwest Utilities**

With the rising cost of steel, copper, aluminum and other metals worldwide, metal theft has become a significant problem. Theft of wire and other metal materials from construction sites, power stations, utility poles and even cemeteries is commonplace.

Here in the Northwest, homes have been burglarized, utility poles cut down and substations vandalized. Virtually every utility in the region has been hit by metal thieves – with damage estimated in the millions. BPA facilities alone have been broken into more than 50 times this year. (BPA is offering a \$25,000 reward for information on these thefts. See sidebar). In Thurston County, thieves cut down two utility poles to get the wires, causing a brush fire when the transformer exploded. LLP's pole yard has been broken into, and we've had transformers vandalized several times – one of which resulted in an expense of \$15,000 just to clean up oil that was spilled.

Nationwide, these thefts have resulted in many deaths – including one in LaCenter, Washington in October when a 47-year-old man was electrocuted in an attempted theft of copper wire from a substation.

Metals theft not only endangers the public and electrical utility workers; the economic impact may soon result in rate increases as repair costs escalate.

Legislation has been introduced in Olympia to apply similar standards to scrap metal dealers as now apply to pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers. Among other stipulations, the legislation will require

### **Holiday Closures...**

Our office will be closed the following dates:

- MLK Jr. Day – Monday, January 15
- Presidents' Day – Monday, February 19

a person selling or consigning scrap metal to provide complete identification, including picture ID (which must be photocopied by the dealer) and vehicle license plate number. It will also prohibit cash transactions, and will require a 30-day delay in payment for scrap metal. The legislation does not apply to motor vehicle dealers, hulk haulers or auto service businesses, and will not apply to transactions involving metal food and beverage containers.

We encourage our Power Pals to contact their legislators in support of this legislation.

## **You Can Help – Be Alert to Metal Theft!**

If you see suspicious activity, call 911. Please call our office, as well, at 584-6060.

–Your electric service and your family's safety depend on it! Watch for the following:

- Missing sections of power lines or ground wires
- Power lines hanging in the air or lying on the ground - *Never go near downed or damaged power lines!*
- Missing or out-of-position covers to underground vaults
- Cut fences or locks near electric substations, or holes beneath fences
- Any suspicious or unauthorized person or activity near power company facilities
- Individuals carrying large bundles of wire.

BPA offers up to \$25,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals burglarizing its facilities. Call the BPA 24-hour hot line at 800-437-2744. Caller information is confidential.



## LLP's 85th Anniversary – Annual Meeting Scheduled

The 85th Annual Meeting of Lakeview Light and Power is scheduled for Tuesday, March 20, 2007 at 7pm. As usual, the meeting will be held at Tye Elementary School, 11920 Seminole Road SW. This year, three of our board members – Robert Estrada, Tom McDonald and Gary Jones – are up for re-election. If you're interested in being a candidate for the LLP Board of Directors, you must notify the Secretary in writing, at our office, by 5pm Friday, February 2, 2007.

## Attention High School Seniors – Scholarship Deadline January 26

January 26 is the deadline for college scholarship applications. Any student who is the child of an LLP customer is eligible to apply. Application forms, with complete guidelines and requirements, are available at our office during regular business hours.

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## December Windstorm – LLP Customers Fared Better Than Most

We're pleased to report that most LLP customers were unaffected by last month's devastating windstorm. Partly because of geography, partly because 61% of our system is underground and because our tree-trimming program removes the dangerous trees from near our lines, our customers weathered the storm much better than those in other power districts. The two major outages we did experience were caused by very tall trees – quite a distance from our lines – that were uprooted and fell onto our lines. Power was restored in a timely manner.

Since LLP experienced so little disruption, our crews were available to help neighboring utilities repair damage to their systems. Our entire staff is to be commended for responding 'above and beyond the call of duty' to this challenging weather crisis.

## Reminder – New Disconnect Policy

If your power is scheduled for disconnect, LLP must receive payment before 11am on the day of the disconnect. After 11am you must pay the entire balance due on your account, plus a reconnection fee, to have your power reconnected.

## Project Help

Even before winter officially began, November's snow and record-setting cold brought increased power usage – and higher heating bills. December's storms added to the challenges. And with several months of winter yet to come, many LLP customers need help paying their bills.

You can help by contributing to Project Help. Just fill in the box on your enclosed statement. LLP doubles every donation, so your gift actually goes three times as far. As always, *we thank you!*



## Wind Power Project White Creek Update

In November, Washington voters passed Initiative 937 mandating that, by 2020, our state's large utility companies increase their renewable energy sources to 15% of their supply. Even though we don't qualify as 'large' by I-937 standards, LLP is well ahead in the renewable energy movement. We have offered our customers and members a 'Green Power' option since 2002. And that same year, LLP joined with several other northwest electric co-ops and Public Utilities Districts to form the Last Mile Electrical Cooperative to develop and produce clean, renewable power. Our White Creek wind project is the result.

The pace has slowed with the onset of winter weather at White Creek, but progress remains steady.

As of early December, much of the site grading and preparation work has been finished, roadwork is well underway, prep work for the turbine pads has begun, the foundation for the Operations & Maintenance building has been poured and steel framing has started. The Wind Farm has had round-the-clock security since early September; during hunting season we added an additional security guard to patrol the roads. And to the relief of the project staff, the project house is complete and the staff – including our new support person – is on-site nearly full time.

We'll continue to keep you informed on progress. To learn more about the White Creek project, visit the website at [www.last-mile-electric-coop.org/whitewater](http://www.last-mile-electric-coop.org/whitewater)

## Find Your Account Number, Win \$20

In each issue of The Light, we hide five randomly chosen account numbers (like 12345-678). If you find yours, call us at 584-6060 before the next newsletter is published and you'll receive a \$20 credit on your next bill. Good luck!

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Please send comments or  
story ideas to:



**Lakeview Light & Power**

**PO Box 98979**

**Lakewood, WA 98496-0979**

or email:

**LLP@lakeviewlight.com**

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