



MAY-JUNE 2011

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### Look up, look out

When working outdoors, remember to keep tall ladders, roofing materials and pruning equipment clear of overhead power lines to avoid a hazardous situation. Also, if your kite or balloon drifts near a power line, let it go. Never try to retrieve anything caught in a power line or from a tree located near a power line. If you have any questions, call PSE at 1-888-225-5773 or visit [PSE.com/Safety](http://PSE.com/Safety).

Puget Sound Energy  
 1-888-225-5773  
 TTY: 1-800-962-9498

PSE.com • Manage your account and pay online.

## Update: Lower Snake River Wind Project



*When all 149 turbines are operating in spring 2012, PSE's newest wind facility will also be our largest.*

Among the wheat fields of southeast Washington, the first wind turbines for Phase I of Puget Sound Energy's 343-megawatt Lower Snake River

Wind Project are being installed and stand ready to turn out energy.

The first 430-foot-tall turbines began to rise on the

Palouse skyline in April. When in operation, the 149 turbines will generate enough electricity to serve up to 100,000 homes. On average, about 150 construction workers are on the site, though the number can exceed 250 on a given day.

*(Continued on inside)*

## It's here! New and improved PSE.com

PSE.com is better than ever. We've upgraded our website with a new engine, updated look, reorganized content and improved navigation to make it easier to find what you need. Every page now has an "I Want To..." navigation tool that allows you to quickly access the most common topics from anywhere on the site. We appreciate all the customer input we received throughout the development effort — your feedback led to many of the improvements. We encourage you to continue to offer suggestions by emailing [webmaster@PSE.com](mailto:webmaster@PSE.com).



## Cool spring leads to higher bills

Near-record cold temperatures well into spring may be causing higher-than-usual heating bills. We encourage qualified low-income customers to contact their local energy-assistance agency to apply for bill-payment assistance provided by the federal government and PSE. To locate an agency in your area, call 1-866-223-5425. For customers who are not eligible for bill-payment assistance but still need help paying their PSE bill, please call us at 1-888-225-5773. We can make payment arrangements and tell you about energy-saving tips and rebates.



## Even out your utility bill

The start of summer is a good time to enroll in our Budget Payment Plan. The plan spreads your estimated winter heating costs over a 12-month period, helping you plan your energy costs into your household budget.

When you sign up for the program, PSE estimates your usage for the next 12 months based on current energy costs and your actual usage from the previous 12 months. We then average the estimate to determine your Budget Payment Plan amount.

To sign up, visit [PSE.com](http://PSE.com) or call 1-888-225-5773.

## Pipeline monitoring, replacement program enhances safety

PSE's 24,000 miles of natural gas mains and service lines to residential, commercial and industrial customer meters consist of a mixture of steel and plastic pipe in various ages and conditions. Throughout the year, 150 natural gas technicians



*Natural gas main upgrade work in Bellevue*

and field employees monitor our system for anything from corrosion to construction activity near our natural gas pipelines. Each year, our crews respond to more than 80,000 on-site calls ranging from an accidental dig-up of a natural gas pipeline to customers with malfunctioning natural-gas heating equipment.

Annually, we invest more than \$60 million to inspect the natural gas system and replace aging infrastructure. We currently are in the sixth year of a 10-year program to replace our remaining bare steel pipes, all of which have been in service for more than 50 years. We also are identifying older wrapped steel and plastic mains and service pipes for replacement to ensure the continued safe and reliable delivery of natural gas.

## First wind turbines completed at Lower Snake River Wind Project

*(Continued from page 1)*

With the completion of our Hopkins Ridge Wind Facility in 2005 and Wild Horse Wind and Solar Facility in 2006, PSE became the United States' second largest utility producer of wind power. Phase I of the Lower Snake River Wind Project will boost our wind-power capacity by another 80 percent. All together, the three PSE wind facilities, which help meet Washington state's renewable resource requirement, will produce enough electricity to serve about 230,000 households.

PSE is pursuing federal stimulus-package funding and state incentives for using apprentice labor for at least 15 percent of the construction work. These incentives lower the cost of the project for our customers.

For a video and photos of the project, visit [PSE.com/LowerSnakeRiver](http://PSE.com/LowerSnakeRiver).



## Surge protection for home electronics

To help protect expensive home electronic equipment, like computers, televisions, printers and other devices, consider a surge suppressor or surge arrester. Surges can originate either inside or outside your home or building. A surge suppressor, commonly a power strip, helps protect equipment from potentially damaging voltages. A surge arrester, which is installed in or near a home's main electric service panel, close to the electric meter, helps protect all the circuits in a house or office from spikes in voltage of up to 20,000 volts. Surge suppressors are available at hardware and home improvement stores. Surge arresters should be installed by a licensed electrician.

## Go paperless

Go completely paper-free by establishing an online account. Schedule automatic payments, view and pay your bill and monitor your daily energy use anytime — online. If every PSE customer switched to paperless billing, they would save 450 tons of paper or the equivalent of helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 2.64 million pounds per year.



## ? DID YOU KNOW

### Call before you dig

If your summertime outdoor projects include building a new fence or deck, planting trees and shrubs, or even pulling out a tree stump, please remember to contact the 811 “call before you dig” hotline two business days prior to your project. It’s free, and it’s the law. To avoid potential hazards with striking or digging up underground utility lines, all utilities must be marked before the start of digging. If you think you may have damaged a natural gas pipe or if you smell the odor of natural gas, follow these important steps:



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

- Quickly move a safe distance from the damaged line.
- Call 911 after you're at a safe distance.
- Report the damage to PSE at 1-888-225-5773.

### Pipelines are underground... but where?

PSE and other utilities and pipeline companies place markers to indicate the approximate location of buried, high-pressure natural gas pipelines. Even so, the underground locations of natural gas pipelines are not always obvious. Everyone must call 811 prior to digging.



### Elementary students help keep local families warm

In April, 30 second graders from Seattle Country Day School presented donations they collected for The Salvation Army Warm Home Fund. The students' \$500 donation will help four low-income families heat their homes for a month. Over the course of a year, customers, employees and PSE contribute more than \$600,000 to the fund, which helps more than 4,000 families in need. You can contribute to the fund by checking the donation box on your PSE bill payment stub or on the online payment page.

## Green natural gas program helps customers make energy use greener

Would you invest \$4 to help shrink your carbon footprint? PSE's new Carbon Balance Program allows customers to essentially neutralize the greenhouse-gas emissions from their natural gas use by purchasing carbon offsets from independently verified projects in the Pacific Northwest.

While natural gas is the cleanest-burning fossil fuel, there are greenhouse-gas emissions, primarily carbon dioxide, associated with burning the gas. PSE's new, voluntary program — modeled after PSE's award-winning Green Power Program for electric customers — gives natural gas customers the opportunity to purchase blocks of carbon offsets.

The first carbon offsets that PSE customers can purchase will be from the biogas anaerobic digester at the George DeRuyter and Sons Dairy in Outlook, Wash. The dairy's carbon offsets will be administered through the Bonneville Environmental Foundation on behalf of the PSE Carbon Balance Program participants.

The DeRuyter digester will capture more than 17,000 metric tons of methane annually, equivalent to taking more than 3,000 cars off the road for one year.

Customers can purchase carbon-offset blocks at \$4 each. The charge is added to their monthly PSE bill. Commercial and industrial customers are also eligible to join the program.

For information or to join PSE's Carbon Balance Program, call a PSE Energy Advisor at 1-800-562-1482, or visit [PSE.com/CarbonBalance](http://PSE.com/CarbonBalance).



*TeamPSE representatives and family members plant trees in Snoqualmie, a Tree City USA community.*

### **PSE celebrates Arbor Day, Earth Day**

PSE employees showed their support for Arbor Day and Earth Day by taking part in several tree planting and beautification projects. PSE donated trees to the cities of Snoqualmie and Yarrow Point in honor of being newly recognized as Tree City USA communities for their tree-care practices. PSE was also named for the 11th consecutive year as a Tree Line USA utility for demonstrating best practices that protect and enhance urban forests and promote reliable electric service. The Tree City USA and Tree Line USA programs are sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation.

### **Visit our local customer service offices**

**Most offices are open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.**

**Bellingham**  
1329 N. State St.

**Burlington**  
1660 Park Lane

**Ellensburg**  
207 N. Pearl St.

**Freeland**  
1794 Main St.

**Oak Harbor**  
231 SE Barrington Dr. #101

**Olympia**  
2711 Pacific Ave. SE

**Port Townsend**  
181 Quincy St. #101

**Vashon Island**  
18125 Vashon Hwy. SW

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TTY: 1-800-962-9498

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