

Power lines proposal dropped

A survey conducted by Chelan County PUD in July showed only three customers would be interested in contributing toward moving overhead lines underground, while 26 others said they were opposed to such a project.

The PUD has dropped discussions on the proposal.

Survey cards were sent to 99 Stehekin homes; 29 cards were returned. The survey asked whether customers would make a financial commitment totaling \$200,000 toward a project to move lines underground from the Stehekin Landing to the bakery. The survey was prompted by a citizen committee that studied potential opportunities for moving lines underground. The committee had asked the PUD to communicate any potential conversion opportunities to customers, and to ask residents to pay for construction themselves, with help from the PUD to find outside funding.

In keeping with those recommendations, PUD officials informed Stehekin customers that it could be possible to move lines underground by sharing a trench proposed by the private telephone company WeavTel.

Estimated cost of that conversion was \$500,000. A commitment of at least \$200,000 from Stehekin residents would have told PUD officials to proceed with further, detailed cost projections.

Comments on the cards indicated general opposition to the WeavTel project extended to any project the PUD might undertake that involved that firm. "We're opposed to the WeavTel project so (we) cannot support this proposal," one customer said. Another called conversion to underground lines "a great idea" but added, "(we) would not

contribute if WeavTel is involved."

One who favored the project suggested a surcharge be added to electric bills to pay for it.

The National Park Service announced in August that it had reversed an earlier decision and would allow WeavTel to provide service to Stehekin.

Jack Winter, PUD Distribution Services assistant general manager, said the lack of support for moving lines underground at this time does not rule out future discussions on conversion to underground cable. "We remain open to ideas and guidance from the community," Winter said.

*Winter can be reached at
(509) 661-4183 or via e-mail:
jack.winter@chelanpud.org.*

Survey results

Converting overhead power lines to underground in the Stehekin Valley

Surveys sent: **99**

Surveys returned: **29**

Number indicating financial support for the project: **3**

Number saying they could not provide financial support for the project: **26**



Storm safety

As storm season approaches, please be aware of safety around power lines. If a power line falls to the ground or into a tree, stay away. Trees can conduct electricity. Power-line problems should be reported immediately to chief plant operator Robert Nielsen or assistant operators Dick Bingham or John Wilsey.

How to reach us

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To have a question answered in the newsletter:

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Mail can be addressed to any of the above individuals at P.O. Box 1231, Wenatchee, WA 98807

Tankless water heaters could reduce some electric bills

Tankless water heaters heat water only when it is needed instead of maintaining a whole tank of hot water. You need to know how much electricity you're using to determine whether a switch to tankless heaters would save you money.

Consider these factors:

What is the cost of electricity compared to propane?

Rates for Stehekin customers per month are:

- 3.88 cents per kWh for the first 400 kilowatt hours
- 5.38 cents per kWh for the next 350 kilowatt hours
- 10.75 cents per kWh for 751 kilowatt hours and over.

The rates are designed to encourage customers to keep their energy use low, reducing the need to run the Stehekin power plant's diesel generators. At \$1.65 per gallon, propane is equivalent to electricity costing 6.15 cents per kWh if used in a direct combustion appliance such as a clothes dryer or cook stove. If the gas appliance uses propane indirectly for heat, such as in a water heater or furnace, propane is equivalent to electricity costing about 7.5 cents per kWh. These costs do not include

the propane used if there is a pilot light on the device. A propane pilot light that runs all of the time would cause the equivalent cost of propane to be even higher.

How much hot water do you use? About 20 percent of the energy used in a typical home in the U.S. is used for heating hot water. A small family uses about 36 gallons of hot water per day; a large family may use 70 gallons or more. The table below shows the annual cost of running various types of water heaters.

Expenses of installing a new gas appliance.

At a minimum you would need to provide a wall or roof penetration for the exhaust vent. Gas appliances in the home also require outside air vents for bringing in combustion air. If the home is large enough, it may be as simple as installing a vented door to the utility room. It could, however, require cutting another hole in the wall for the fresh air vent.

Convenience. A tankless heater can provide a continuous stream of hot water, whereas the hot water tank can only provide a limited amount of hot water before running out. Also, replacing a hot water tank with a relatively small, wall-mounted tankless heater could free up much-needed room in a small bathroom or utility room.

If you'd like help determining whether a tankless water heater is right for you, contact our Energy Services staff at 661-8008, or e-mail jamesa@chelanpud.org.

Small Family (36 Gallons of Hot Water per Day)	Electric Tank	Propane Tankless	Annual \$ Savings per year
Annual Energy Costs (\$0.0388/kWh)	\$92	\$155	-\$63
Annual Energy Costs (\$0.0538/kWh)	\$127	\$155	-\$28
Annual Energy Costs (\$0.1075/kWh)	\$254	\$155	\$99
Large Family (70 Gallons of Hot Water per Day)	Electric Tank	Propane Tankless	Annual \$ Savings per year
Annual Energy Costs (\$0.0388/kWh)	\$177	\$155	\$22
Annual Energy Costs (\$0.0538/kWh)	\$245	\$155	\$90
Annual Energy Costs (\$0.1075/kWh)	\$489	\$155	\$334