

# Owner's Manual

## A guide to your customer-owned utility



**As an electric services customer in Clark County, you're one of about 189,000 customer-owners of Clark Public Utilities, and this Owner's Manual will tell you all about your public utility.**



# COMMISSIONERS



Commissioner Nancy Barnes



Commissioner Jim Malinowski



Commissioner Jane Van Dyke

## Our goals

- Keep rates as low as possible
- Supply reliable services
- Provide outstanding customer service

We welcome your comments about how well we're meeting our goals!



# Services and programs

### 24-hour customer service

You'll talk to a real person whenever you call us, day or night, at 360-992-3000. Customer service representatives are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

### Automated outage reporting line: The PowerLine

Our automated phone line, 360-992-8000, allows you to report outages to us immediately, and to get updated information about the cause of the outage and when power may be restored. Information is also available online through our outage map.

### Community room

A community room is available at our 1200 Fort Vancouver Way location for use by non-profit, community service groups in the evenings and on weekends. The room has a well-equipped kitchen, tables and chairs.

### Energy conservation resources

We offer many rebates, weatherization incentives and loans to help you outsmart energy waste. We also partner with Clark County to make low-income housing more energy-efficient. Our energy counselors can help you learn how to get the most for your energy dollars.

### Green Lights

If you want to support the development of clean, renewable energy resources such as wind and solar power in the Northwest, sign up for Green Lights. Participation is voluntary and flexible. Start with as little or as much as you want. Green Lights contributions appear monthly on your regular electric bill as a separate charge based on your individual participation level.

### Help for customers on limited incomes

We offer several income-based programs to assist customers in paying their electricity bills. Services include the Guarantee of Service Plan, which allows qualified customers to make smaller monthly payments tied to net household income, and Operation Warm Heart, a grant program funded primarily by utility customer donations. Our Community Care, or ComCare, team of specially trained customer representatives can help you sort out your payment options, as well as give you access to other forms of community assistance.

We also offer credits on winter heating bills to qualified senior citizens. Seniors aged 62 and over with a combined household income of \$24,000 a year or less may receive a 50 percent credit on January through April billings.

### MyAccount

Sign up for MyAccount and easily pay online, go paperless, monitor your usage and get tips to lower your bill. Use our online home energy calculator to find ways to cut energy waste – it's fast and free!

### Online service requests

Start or stop your utility service at [clarkpublicutilities.com](http://clarkpublicutilities.com).

### Payment arrangements

If you can't pay your utility bill in full, let us know. We'll work with you to make payment arrangements to fit your situation.

### SafeWatch

Our employee vehicles carry the red "SafeWatch" logo and employees are willing to lend a hand in an emergency. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

### Speakers bureau

Employees are available to talk with your neighborhood, service or business group about utility programs.

### Student tours and presentations

During the school year we host fourth and fifth grade students from schools across Clark County on field trips where they can learn about electricity and water. We also visit classrooms to talk about electric safety and related topics.

### TreeSmart

When planting trees near power lines, look for the TreeSmart logo or ask for help at your local nursery to make sure the tree won't grow more than 25 feet tall.

### Tree trimming

Trees are a common cause of power outages in Clark County, so we trim trees year-round to improve reliability and safety. If you see trees growing into power lines, please call us.

### Environmental efforts

Most of our well water comes from the Salmon Creek basin, so our water utility supports one of the strongest watershed restoration programs in the state. Our StreamTeam coordinates volunteer projects to improve and protect water quality, restore streams, teach habitat and watershed stewardship, and help bring salmon back to Salmon Creek. We also support fish rearing and educational programs like Salmon in the Classroom. You can help plant trees, remove invasive plants, monitor water quality, or help out in our office. To volunteer, call 360-992-8585 or visit [StreamTeam.net](http://StreamTeam.net).



General information and customer service  
360-992-3000

From La Center and Amboy:  
1-800-562-1736

PowerLine outage reporting  
360-992-8000

Quick Pay automated payment line  
360-992-3400

Community room scheduling  
360-992-3469

Energy conservation  
360-992-3355

StreamTeam volunteer coordinator  
360-992-8585

Utility speaker requests  
360-992-3268

Student tour scheduling  
360-992-8728

Email:  
[mailbox@clarkpud.com](mailto:mailbox@clarkpud.com)

## Fast facts about Clark Public Utilities

**History:** Formed in 1938 by public vote; water utility added in 1950; generating system added in 1997. Each is financially independent.

**Corporate structure:** Not-for-profit municipal corporation.

**Leadership:** Three-person elected commission sets utility policy and oversees operations. Commissioners serve six-year terms; one commission seat is up for election every two years. Commission holds regular public meetings.

**Electric power sources:** A portion of the utility's power is self-produced at the River Road Generating Plant; the rest is purchased from the Bonneville Power Administration. Our most recent published fuel mix was 56.9 percent hydropower, 35.0 percent natural gas, 6.5 percent nuclear, 1.5 percent coal, and 0.1 percent a combination of biomass, waste, and petroleum and other fuel. Beginning in 2012, this utility became subject to renewable energy requirements outlined in the voter-enacted Energy Independence Act, or Initiative 937. The utility is currently in compliance and has secured resources to ensure compliance into the future.

**Rates:** Residential electricity rates are based on the cost of service and set by the utility commissioners. As a non-profit utility our goal is to provide the lowest rates possible. Contact us for complete information about our rates, charges and service policies.

**Customers:** The electric utility serves nearly all homes and businesses in Clark County. The water utility serves portions of central and north Clark County.

## Outage Response

We work hard year-round to keep the power flowing to you, and more than 99 percent of the time we're successful. But even excellent electric system maintenance and aggressive tree trimming can't prevent all power outages, particularly during bad weather.

### When outages do occur, here's how we prioritize our repairs:

1. Hazardous situations that threaten public safety (such as fallen power lines)
2. Transmission lines, which deliver power to substations
3. Substations, which deliver power to thousands of customers
4. Feeder lines from substations
5. Primary lines, which serve between five and 300 customers
6. Outages affecting individual customers

### If your power goes out:

- Call PowerLine at 360-992-8000 to report the outage.
- Turn off and unplug all sensitive electrical equipment, turn down your thermostat and turn off your water heater circuit breaker.
- Turn off any appliance or device that creates heat, including irons, ovens and toasters.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed.
- Turn on one inside and outside light so you and our repair crews will know when service has been restored.
- Please try to be patient — we're working as fast as we can to restore your service.

### Stay safe around electricity

- NEVER touch any power line with your hand or any other object — especially a line that's fallen to the ground. Report downed lines to us immediately. Call us at 360-992-3000.
- Call 811 or 1-800-424-5555 at least two working days before you dig on your property so all utilities can locate underground lines for you. It's a free service and it's the law.
- Please don't attach items to utility poles — these attachments are hazardous, as well as illegal.
- Plant safely around overhead and underground lines and electrical equipment in your yard. Call us for a brochure full of tips or visit our website for details.
- Stay out of substations — call us to retrieve anything you accidentally throw over a substation fence.

## Be safe with a generator!



If you use a back-up generator, please do not hook it up or plug it in to your home electric system without first disconnecting from our system. If you don't take precautions, the power from your generator may flow backwards into our power lines and seriously injure or kill our line repair workers.

# Your bill and convenient ways to pay

We read electric meters monthly using an automated system, and manually read water meters every other month. You receive a monthly electric bill, and we offer several convenient ways to pay:

- Mail your payment in the self-addressed envelope included with your bill.
- Pay online easily and securely with MyAccount.
- Use our automated system, Quick Pay at 360-992-3400.
- Pay in person or use the drive-through at one of our offices located at 1200 Fort Vancouver Way and 8600 NE 117th Avenue. Drop boxes are also available for after-hours payments.
- Visit one of the pay stations listed on the back of your bill.

We also offer Auto Pay, where you can arrange to have your utility payment automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the date the payment is due. Call us at 360-992-3000 for a sign-up form.

Equal Pay is a convenient option to help balance your budget. We can estimate your yearly utility bill and divide it into equal monthly payments. Every year we'll review your account and make necessary adjustments to your monthly payment to reflect your actual use of electricity (and water, if you're one of our water customers). You never pay for more than you use.



## Want more information?

Call or email us for copies of helpful brochures on topics including how to outsmart energy waste, electric equipment safety, tree planting near power lines and more. Or go to our website to download them.

## OUR OFFICES ARE LOCATED AT:

**1200 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver**

**8600 NE 117th Avenue, Orchards**

**Office Hours:  
7 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Monday - Friday**

**9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Saturday**

**Mailing address:  
Clark Public Utilities  
PO Box 8900  
Vancouver, WA 98668**

**Phone: 360-992-3000**

**Email:  
mailbox@clarkpud.com**

**Website:  
clarkpublicutilities.com**

**Find us on  
Facebook!**



## What your bill looks like and how to read it

Please note that the rates listed in the example below are subject to change.

### Your Electric Service

This listing shows your present and past meter readings and your electricity use for this billing period. It also shows how your bill is calculated.

### Your Water Service

If you receive Clark Public Utilities water, consumption and charges are shown in the same manner as electric service.

### Total Cost

This section combines all current charges and adds tax collected for the city indicated, if any.

CHRIS Q. CUSTOMER  
123 NW MAIN ST  
ACCOUNT NUMBER 123-4567-891-0

**Your Electricity Use**  
Residential electric service meter 12345  
In 30 days you used 1690 kwh:  
Present reading - 02/27/14 89420  
Previous reading - 01/28/14 -87730  
**Total electric usage 1690**

Your charge for 1690 kwh is:

Basic service	\$12.00
1690 kwh @ 8.16 cents each	137.90
REP Credit @ 0.119 cents/kwh*	-2.01
<b>Total electric service</b>	<b>\$140.30</b>

Your average daily cost was \$4.68

**Total Cost This Billing**

Total electric service	\$147.89
<b>Total charges this billing</b>	<b>\$147.89</b>

\* Residential Exchange Program Credit via BPA

**Our customer service representatives are available 24 hours a day by phone — just call 360-992-3000.**

**Account Summary**

PREVIOUS BALANCE	\$157.76
PAYMENTS - THANK YOU	
FEBRUARY 8	157.76CR
BALANCE FORWARD	.00
CURRENT CHARGES	140.30
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT DUE</b>	<b>\$140.30</b>

**Compare Your Use**  
ELECTRIC METER 23639

SERVICE TO	DAYS	KWH USED	KWH/DAY
02/27/15	30	1690	56
01/28/15	32	1920	60
12/27/14	28	1650	59
11/29/14	36	1800	50
10/24/14	27	1300	48
09/27/14	34	1720	51
08/24/14	29	1660	57
07/26/14	30	1490	50
06/26/14	33	1590	48
05/24/14	29	1410	49
04/25/14	30	1390	46
03/26/14	28	1420	51
02/27/14	31	1610	52

Account number  
123-4567-891-0

Due date for payment  
March 14, 2013

Amount due  
\$140.30

PLEASE RETURN THIS STUB WITH YOUR PAYMENT

Please indicate amount enclosed

\$

**Clark Public Utilities**

Chris Q. Customer  
123 Main Street  
Vancouver, Washington 98661

R.O. Box 8900  
Vancouver, Washington 98668  
360-992-3000 • www.clarkpublicutilities.com

12345140030000083365314714003020

**Account Summary**  
All activity related to your account is shown here, providing a complete overview at a glance.

**History**  
Bold type highlights your current billing and the "year-ago" period for easy comparison.

**Payment Stub**  
For quick reference, the three boxes show your account number, the amount you owe and when your payment is due.

**IMPORTANT:**  
Be sure our name shows through the window of your return envelope.

Check the back of your bill for other billing and service information.