

## 2005: Another Year of Drought

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has issued a press release regarding this year's water levels. To no one's surprise, it is a very dry year. The BPA says "another winter of low precipitation makes six in a row—the lowest cumulative runoff on record."

Utilities are therefore asking customers to conserve electricity. The good news is—barring unscheduled plant outages or other unforeseen circumstances—the region expects to have enough electrical generating capability to meet demand. But we still need your help. Here are some steps you can take to save energy and dollars this spring and summer:

- Turn off computers, appliances and lighting when not in use.
- Insist on Energy Star<sup>®</sup> models when buying electrical products.
- Install compact fluorescent lights.
- Call Miquette Ihrig, Klickitat PUD's (KPUD) energy services specialist, at 773-7622 for information on our current weatherization rebates. Ask about our low-interest loans, which can help defray the cost of weatherization projects that qualify for our rebate program.

The primary effects of this year's drought are financial. Low precipitation reduces hydro system performance at the dams, and causes an increase in power purchases from other more costly sources. Low water in the rivers is also shrinking the expected revenues from surplus sales.

All of this puts upward pressure on BPA rates. The BPA adjusts its rates twice a year, in April and October. The April adjustments were in accordance with what was predicted last fall. We hope with normal or increased precipitation and with a little assistance from all of you, we can look forward to BPA rates remaining nearly the same in October.

Here at KPUD we are fairly drought resistant, with the exception of the BPA-supplied portion of our power. Our McNary hydro project is powered by the fish attraction water and must run to properly operate the McNary fish ladder. The landfill, however, depends on moisture to break down the biosolids into the methane gas that powers the generators.

Coincidentally, the recent addition of saturated dredge spoils to the waste stream has compensated for what Mother Nature has failed to provide.

The tight power supply also has been good for Calpine's Goldendale Energy Center. The giant combustion turbine in Goldendale has been running almost nonstop since the water picture drove up the wholesale price.

That brings us back to the original message. Please do your part to conserve. I am sure Calpine will understand—and the region needs your help.

**Tom D. Svendsen, General Manager**