

"An Industrial Re-volt!"

Flathead Electric Co-op has presented Plum Creek Company with a check for \$337,082 in a transaction made possible through an energy efficiency incentive program sponsored by the Bonneville Power Administration.

The program encourages industrial customers to install energy-saving technology by providing significant rebates toward the cost of the new systems.

Plum Creek's Ken Benson and Bob Hickey worked with BPA beginning in 2006 to conduct an energy audit, with results indicating that operations could become more energy-efficient if line voltages were more closely regulated.

"It's estimated that the new system will reduce Plum Creek's MDF annual energy costs by up to \$149,000 a year."

PCS UtiliData, based in Spokane, Wash., installed an AdaptiVolt system that monitors and adjusts or "optimizes" the delivery of voltages both at the plant and at the FEC substation. After the system had been in place for a year, it became apparent that the energy

savings were significant, while still maintaining operational reliability.

"Plum Creek is committed to reducing the impact of our operations," said Benson. "By working with the BPA and FEC rebate program, we were able to reduce our energy consumption and cover a greater part of the costs of the new system."

Ken Sugden, Flathead Electric General Manager, said the Plum Creek project is one of the largest stand-alone programs FEC has undertaken with an industrial customer. "Our goal is to encourage other members to invest in technologies that will help them achieve energy efficiencies and reduce costs," he said. "We consider this project to be a great example of what can be accomplished."



Plum Creek Electrical Engineer Ken Benson and Flathead Electric's Key Account Representative Don Newton monitor voltage levels.



Administration Backs Bi-Op

The Obama administration has joined the vast majority of Northwest leaders, including three governors, seven Indian tribes and most members of Congress, as well as citizens of Columbia and Snake River communities, in validating that the Federal Biological Opinion (Bi-Op or Plan) on hydro-operations is legally and scientifically sound. That comes as good news to Flathead Electric Co-op and other public power entities whose members depend on the clean, relatively cheap energy that hydropower provides.

"Our support for the salmon plan has not come lightly, given the hefty price tag for families and businesses," says Mark Johnson, Asst. General Manager for Flathead Electric. Johnson notes that the northwest region currently pays nearly \$1 billion annually on fish and wildlife costs, which translates to up to 30% of the cost of power that consumer-owned utilities buy from the Bonneville Power Administration. But, he says, the Plan is the result of years of work and unprecedented collaboration. "Everyone's goal is to find a balance between energy and the environment. This Plan was based on science and common sense as opposed to politics and emotion and it's a relief that the administration recognizes that."

While the administration's support was crucial toward actual implementation of the Plan, final endorsement must come from U.S. District Court Judge James Redden, who previously struck down two plans for dealing with fish in the Columbia River Basin system. Also, a revision to the Plan includes a dam breaching contingency which, although characterized as an action of last resort, would be an extreme and polarizing measure unsupported by the public or the science. These dams provide vast amounts of carbon-free energy and create an economic "superhighway" for billions of dollars in goods and services and thousands of jobs. In addition, studies strongly question the biological benefits of dam removal, suggesting instead that it could be harmful to fish runs.

"These are extremely tough economic times as is and every day of litigation puts a greater financial burden on our members," Johnson says. "Experience demonstrates that dams and fish are not only coexisting but thriving, so hopefully we'll finally get out of the courtroom with this Plan and move forward."

D "What the Heck is Ductless?"

If you are currently heating with an electric resistance system such as baseboards, wall units, ceiling heat or a boiler. You may be interested to know that **Flathead Electric Co-op's ductless heat pump rebate program will continue into the New Year.**

These ultra efficient units, also known as "split" or "mini-split" systems, can operate at twice the efficiency of your existing system, which can translate to a 25 to 50% reduction in your heating costs. Many FEC members have already



Indoor Unit

made the switch to this more comfortable and efficient method of heating which, as a huge plus, includes cooling as well.

"Many units are being installed in and around Libby (mainly because with no natural gas in that area there are many electric heat customers) but I expect them to really catch on

in the rest of our service territory as well," says Energy Services Supervisor Ross Holter. In fact, Formula Fabrication, a Libby area HVAC contractor, recently took home top honors as the highest volume installer of ductless heat pumps in Idaho and Montana at the Northwest Ductless Workshop in Portland, Oregon, last month.

If your primary heat source is electric you may be eligible for a \$1,350 rebate, and if you install a qualifying system, you may also be eligible for a 30% Federal and 25% State tax credit. "Projections are for this technology to displace electric resistance heat in over a million single and multi-family dwellings in the northwest region alone," says Holter.

Sue Schofield of Kalispell says her home is extremely comfortable and that, "the rebate was great and by the time you factor in the tax credits -- it is awesome!"

For more information go to www.goingductless.com/fec or contact FEC's Energy Services Department at 406-751-1875.



Quality Assurance Inspector Brenda Guzman inspects the evaporator/condenser outdoor unit.



Quality Assurance Inspector Brenda Guzman tests the indoor unit of a newly installed ductless heat pump.

Holiday Cooking Tip

Did you know that while cooking, opening the door to your oven can reduce the inside temperature by 25 degrees?

Flathead Electric, your Co-op, reminds you that using the oven light and window to check your holiday meal can help conserve energy and eliminate increased cooking times.



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Community...Integrity...Reliability

Roundup for Safety

September 2009 Applications Awarded

1 Application Pending

Marion Fire Department Extraction Stair Chair	\$1,856.79
D.R.E.A.M. Handicap Access Ramp	\$2,200.00
Deer Park Elementary Asphalt, Signage, Cones	\$10,000.00
St. Matthews School Fencing	\$1,295.00
Swan River Community Hall Exit Signs, Emergency Lighting, Defibrillator	\$1,575.00

Roundup For Safety is a voluntary program for FEC members. Participating members allow their electric bills to be rounded up to the next dollar, with the extra money going into a fund for community safety projects. Applications from non-profit groups are considered each month by a board of directors representing each Co-op district.

For information and application forms, call 751-4483 in Kalispell and 293-7122 in Libby or go to www.flatheadelectric.com and click on the Your Community button>Roundup For Safety information.