



Pipeline

NEWS YOU CAN USE

FALL 2013



EWEB line crew **rescues** baby osprey

Bucket trucks do come in handy sometimes. Like, for example, when a power line needs repair or a tree needs trimming. The equipment is also helpful when a baby osprey needs to be returned to its nest.

That's what happened in late July when a Eugene Water & Electric Board customer found a fledgling osprey at the base of a 40-foot-tall power pole along the utility's Waltherville Canal, east of Springfield off of Highway 126. The young raptor's nest was atop the pole, and the struggling osprey was tangled in seven feet of fishing line.

The customer called Cascade Raptor Center and the center called EWEB. After freeing the bird from the fishing line, the skilled CRC rehabilitators turned the job over to EWEB line technicians Gary Lay, Joe Henneman and Kevin Barkdull. Using their bucket truck to reach the top of the pole, the crew removed 30 feet of fishing line from the nest, and then returned the fledgling to its home.

It's not uncommon for fishing line to make its way into bird nests, said Andrew Talabere, an EWEB staff biologist. Fishermen will sometimes hook a tree branch while casting, breaking the line and sometimes the branch. A bird will later pick up the branch for nesting

(Continued on back cover)



Founded in 1911, Eugene Water & Electric Board is one of the oldest publicly owned electric utilities in the Northwest. Today, EWEB is Oregon's largest customer-owned utility.

The citizens of Eugene elect a five-member Board of Commissioners, which retains full control of the utility and sets policies that guide its operation.

Commissioners meet on the first Tuesday of every month, in the EWEB North Building at 500 E. Fourth Ave. Time is reserved at each meeting for you to speak to the Board on any utility-related issue. Check eweb.org for meeting times.

Written comments also are welcome. The mailing address is: P.O. Box 10148, Eugene, OR, 97440-2148.

The headquarters is located at 500 E. Fourth Ave., Eugene, OR.

Pipeline is a biannual customer newsletter provided to all EWEB customers. Its purpose is to offer tips about water and energy conservation, information about special programs and updates about issues at the utility. Pipeline is produced by EWEB's Public Affairs department.

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Rely on us.



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Sunday, Nov. 24 the Sunday before Thanksgiving

Join us for the 2013 Run to Stay Warm

EWEB's annual Run to Stay Warm includes a half marathon, 10K, 5K and Kids' 400-meter dash.

All proceeds benefit EWEB's Customer Care program to help income-eligible customers who are having difficulty paying their utility bills. eweb.org/runtostaywarm

YOUR Commissioners



JOHN SIMPSON
President
At large

Eugene Water & Electric Board is Oregon's largest citizen-owned municipal utility. A five-member Board of Commissioners, elected by the citizens of Eugene, governs the utility. Four commissioners represent specific wards within the city; the fifth member is elected "at large."



JOHN H. BROWN
Vice President
Wards 4 and 5



STEVE MITAL
Wards 1 and 8



DICK HELGESON
Wards 2 and 3



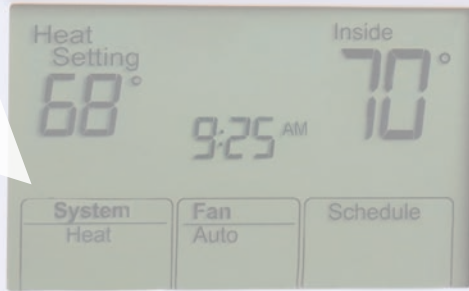
JAMES MANNING
Wards 6 and 7

Reduce energy waste

As the temperatures drop and winter approaches, keep in mind that there are many no-cost actions you can take to reduce energy waste and shave dollars off your electric bill. These tips provide ideas on what you can do to start saving now.

1. Turn down the thermostat. Set your thermostat to 68 degrees or lower to heat your home. Each degree that you lower the thermostat can reduce your heating costs by as much as 3 percent.

2. Heat only when home and awake. If you have



resistance heat such as ceiling heat, wall heaters or baseboards, turn down the thermostat before you go to bed at night and when you are away from home. You will significantly reduce your electric use by heating your home for only eight to 10 hours per day instead of 24.

3. Use zonal heat efficiently. Only heat those rooms in use if you have

baseboard, ceiling or wall heat.

4. Seal drafts. Keep doors and windows closed and block all gaps, cracks and openings to the outdoors. Keep woodstove and fireplace dampers and fireplace doors closed when not in use.

5. Clean your heat sources. Clean furnace filters regularly during the heating season and follow manufacturers' recommendations for replacing filters.

6. Turn off lights. Turn off unnecessary lights and use compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) or light emitting diodes (LEDs) that are energy efficient.

eweb.org/saveenergy/home/tips/nocost

EWEB's financial picture improving

Following unprecedented cost-cutting actions over the past couple of years, including the elimination of 50 positions in June 2012, the Eugene Water & Electric Board's financial picture is slowly beginning to stabilize.

As the utility's five elected commissioners and staff work to build the 2014 budget, it is becoming clear that the recent and ongoing austerity measures will result in lower-than-expected electric and water rate increases next year.

EWEB's financial challenges can be tied to the continued economic slump, warmer and drier weather, extremely low wholesale power prices, the higher cost of building

or acquiring renewable energy, and an oversupply of power generation from wind farms and natural gas-fired power plants.

Rather than the double-digit rate increases under consideration earlier this year, EWEB now anticipates much smaller rate actions in 2014. Preliminary estimates indicate that electric rates would likely go up by about 4 percent, and water rates would increase by approximately 3 percent.

EWEB was able to lower the amount of anticipated 2014 rate increases by taking the following actions:

- **2012:** Eliminated 50 positions

- **2012:** Reduced costs by \$7.5 million
- **2012:** Deferred or delayed \$60 million in capital projects to mitigate rate increases
- **2013:** Eliminated about 20 positions through attrition
- **2014:** Will reduce costs by an additional \$5.5 million
- **2014:** Will avoid about \$20 million in capital project costs
- **2011-2013:** Reduced senior management by 100 percent

Commissioners will hold public hearings in November and December so customers can weigh in on the 2014 budget and associated rate actions.

Tree trimming improves reliability

Trees are a source of beauty, shade our homes, reduce noise and increase property values. We also are a society that depends on electricity to heat and light our homes, schools and offices. Sometimes, our love of trees and our reliance on electricity can conflict. Trees growing too close to overhead power lines must be pruned or removed because they can threaten your safety or cause power outages.

That's why the Eugene Water & Electric Board conducts a comprehensive tree-trimming program that is sensitive to our customers' desire for a lush urban tree canopy. The program also limits the number of electric outages during the storm season.

Like other utilities, EWEB trims trees to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of power.



EWEB's arborist, along with three foresters, evaluate all trees near power lines within the utility's service territory, said Julie Nuttall, EWEB's vegetation management supervisor. She noted that EWEB uses directional pruning methods recommended by the International Society of Arboriculture and the American Standards Institute.

Trimming reduces outages during storms, and over the long-term, reduces maintenance costs.

EWEB developed its tree-trimming program to maximize public safety, electric reliability and tree health. Since 2007, EWEB has earned the Tree Line USA award from the National Arbor Day Foundation each year in recognition of its efforts to protect and enhance urban forests while ensuring reliable service.

For more information on the pruning methods EWEB uses, go to eweb.org/trees/pruning.

"We have to balance electric reliability with the acknowledgement that Eugene is a city of trees and a community that cares about trees," Nuttall said.

She recommends that people plant trees that are "power line friendly." For a list of trees suitable for growing near power lines, go to eweb.org/trees/selection

[OSPREY continued from front cover]



material, with the line still attached.

"In this case, we believe the young osprey became tangled in the line and fell from its nest," Talabere said. "Thanks to the caring customer, the expert staff at the Cascade Raptor Center, and

our willing and able line crew, we were able to rescue a bird who left the nest the hard way."

Mid-July is the time of year when young osprey start to fly and learn the ways of being a "fish-hawk." Ospreys feed almost exclusively on fish and that means nesting close to rivers and lakes. Additionally, ospreys prefer a nest with a view – the tallest and least-obstructed power pole will do nicely.

EWEB has approximately 3,200 poles within a quarter mile of the McKenzie and Willamette rivers, and that requires a proactive approach to managing these very stubborn nest builders.

To protect the birds, Talabere and electric operations crews

have developed a proactive program that provides platforms for the ospreys. Keeping the birds off active power poles also reduces customer outages during nest-building in the spring, and makes more efficient use of line crew time and resources. In July, there were 12 active nests on EWEB platforms with one or two fledglings each. Some of those platforms are monitored by customer volunteers who report use and provide pictures of the occupied nesting platforms.

"The platforms create conditions that provide safety for the birds, reliability for EWEB customers, and predictability for the line crews," Talabere said.