

# PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT No. 1

*of Whatcom County*

1705 Trigg Road • Ferndale, WA 98248

P: (360) 384-4288 • E: info@pudwhatcom.org

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 16, 2020

Contact: Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County  
Stephan Jilk, General Manager  
360-384-4288

### **Whatcom PUD Takes Precautionary Measures, Closes Offices to Public**

Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County is taking precautionary measures to protect both the health and safety of its customers, staff and the general public and to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of utility services.

Beginning Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, PUD General Manager Stephan Jilk has announced that all PUD offices and facilities will close to the general public. The only exception to this will be for regular scheduled commission meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 8:00 AM), and any special meetings of commission. Commission meetings will include only essential items, limited public comment and only necessary staff will attend. Public access may be limited to participation by conference call.

“The PUD’s main office is small and particularly vulnerable to the spread of viruses or germs,” said Jilk. “It is nearly impossible for us to perform the sort of social distancing and sanitizing measures recommended to stop or slow transmission. Therefore, to protect customers and our staff, I have made the difficult decision to close all PUD facilities to the public beginning Monday, March 23.”

The PUD is also working on a plan to protect PUD staff through increased social distancing, work from home, and other options, including the need for essential staff to be located at separate facilities, as it is imperative to have our electric and water crews healthy and ready to respond. “We are taking steps to reduce contact between our field crews, our customers and other staff, and social distancing measures with members of the public,” Jilk added. PUD staff can be reached via telephone and email.

According to Jilk, the PUD is not cancelling the regular public meeting of its Board of Commissioners on March 24 or April 14 at the PUD’s Administrative office. Subsequent meetings may be held remotely by conference call. Updates to the meetings and instructions on remote participation for members of the public will be made available on the PUD’s website [www.pudwhatcom.org](http://www.pudwhatcom.org) if this occurs, and will be included on the Commission agenda.