



Monthly Vera board meetings

We're your neighborhood water and power utility. Our board of directors is made up of Vera customers. **If you want to know what's happening at Vera, check out one of our board meetings.** The meetings are open to the public, and you are welcome to attend.

The Vera Water and Power board of directors meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the District office. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted at verawaterandpower.com.

We are a public utility that's governed by five directors who are elected to serve staggered, three-year terms. To learn more about how to join our board, visit verawaterandpower.com.

Register for ALERTSpokane

When seconds count, you want to be informed in the case of community-wide emergencies. By signing up for ALERTSpokane, you can receive advanced warnings of severe weather and other events in your neighborhood.

The service is free and easy to use. Simply register at spokanecounty.org/3007/Alert-Spokane.



Trimmed trees = better service

When you see us trimming trees near a power line, know we are doing it because:

Tree and foliage overgrowth can interfere with power distribution.

Power lines can give off a spark or arc that may land on a nearby branch and ignite.

The lights in your house may flicker when tree branches brush power lines during **high winds**.

Stormy weather can cause nearby limbs to break off and land on power lines.

Unobstructed power lines make it easier and **safer** for lineworkers to **maintain equipment or restore power**.

We trim trees to prevent outages

Trees that make contact with power lines can cause power outages—both short and long term. Maintaining a clearance on all sides of power lines helps keep the electricity flowing. That is why trees that grow into lines need to be trimmed and sometimes removed.

If you notice that your trees are growing into power lines, call our office or use the form on our website, verawaterandpower.com/services/tree-trimming. Only professionals that are trained to safely prune and trim trees for electric line clearance should be hired to do the work.

Plant the right tree in the right place

Nobody wants a bad haircut. Trees don't either.

However, if the wrong tree is planted too close to electric power lines, they will need to be trimmed for safety's sake.

To avoid the not-so-pretty chop job, be sure to plant the right tree in the right place.

When planting this spring, consider the mature height of trees. Never plant a tree near a power line that could grow within 25 feet of it. Tall growing trees should be planted a minimum of



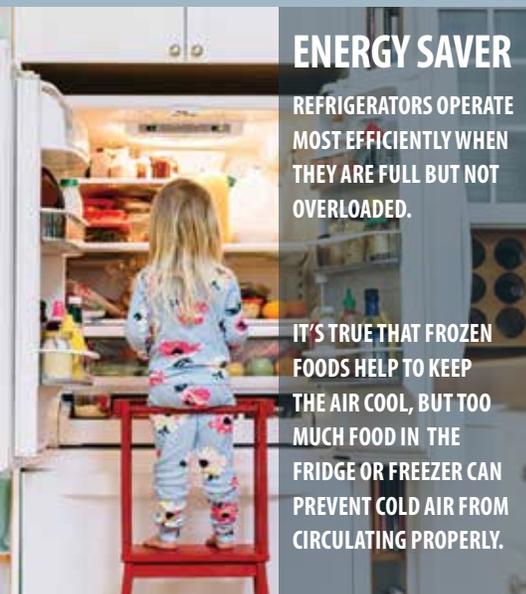
20 feet away from power lines, and 50 feet away to avoid future pruning. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended for trees planted near power lines.

Learn about choosing the right trees at verawaterandpower.com.

ENERGY SAVER

REFRIGERATORS OPERATE MOST EFFICIENTLY WHEN THEY ARE FULL BUT NOT OVERLOADED.

IT'S TRUE THAT FROZEN FOODS HELP TO KEEP THE AIR COOL, BUT TOO MUCH FOOD IN THE FRIDGE OR FREEZER CAN PREVENT COLD AIR FROM CIRCULATING PROPERLY.



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT



At this writing, we are expecting the **release of the new Biological Opinion regarding the operation of the Snake and Columbia Rivers**. This huge document is a collaborative effort between many federal

agencies, the northwest states, and the tribes. This document should outline a cooperative way of operating the river for the benefit of endangered species, flood control, public navigation, and power generation.

This is the first new operational document in several decades, and hopefully, moves the rivers' operation out of the courtroom. This river system is the **largest, low-cost, renewable source of carbon-free energy in the region** and serves as the balancing mechanism for all of the other intermittent renewable systems like wind and solar. Hopefully, this document ends the discussions on breaching the lower Snake River dams, which provide enough carbon-free power to serve a city the size of Seattle.

Also underway are **two critical actions with the Bonneville Power Administration**. In the short term, the rate case for Oct. 1, 2021, rates has earnestly started. A rate case resembles a legal proceeding with the presentation of evidence and witnesses in front of a judge. The difference is, a jury doesn't decide the case, the BPA administrator reviews the evidence and determines the new rates.

In a longer process, we have started a more

collaborative process to create new BPA power sales contracts to replace those in effect since 2010. The new power contracts should be ready for signature by 2025 and go into place in 2028. Our relationship with BPA is defined in the contract or in BPA's authorizing statutes. The current contract created tiered rates for the first time since our business relationship started in January 1946. This methodology established a base amount of BPA power that we were entitled to (our share of the BPA system) and left us several options on how to purchase the remaining needed power.

This is important since our single largest business expense is the cost of purchased power.

We opted to purchase our power on the open market, and after a learning curve, we were able to save our customers a substantial amount of money. Now, there are very few sections of the existing contract that are based in the statute and guaranteed to continue into the next contract. We will do our best to work to include those options that work in your favor and limit those that add to your costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. **We will continue to fight to keep your rates as low as possible and for those who keep the lights and water on.**

Kevin Wells
General Manager

Kindergartner's story features the big man

The group of children excitedly greeted Santa as he rolled into the Vera parking lot for the annual open house and tree lighting in a Vera bucket truck.

But one child, Robby Broderius, shouted in delight when he saw the big man.

Above the cacophony of the crowd, a voice surprisingly shouted out, "It's Steve. It's Steve!"

Sure enough, the big man was Vera Electric Foreman Steve Brearley behind the wheel, and Robby is his number one fan. While other children flipped to see Santa, in Robby's estimation, Steve was the star of the show.



Later, when his kindergarten teacher assigned the class the task of writing a hero story about a gingerbread boy, Robby used Steve as his inspiration. Along with writing the story, Robby illustrated his hero as a gingerbread man resplendent with a yellow hard hat and electric lineman gear.

WATER SAVER: Check your sprinkler for leaks

With spring weather on the horizon, now's the time fix your sprinkler



When your water systems running, look for obvious problems: areas getting too much or too little water,

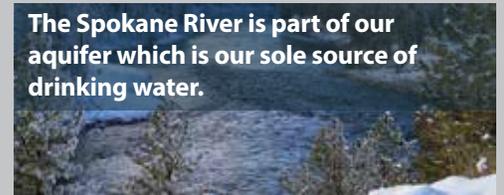
leaks, broken sprinkler heads, or a leaking water meter. If the sprinkler system isn't working properly, now's the time to make those repairs.

Some repairs are simple that you can do. Others may need to be done by a pro. While Vera doesn't provide those services, there are many resources available in the community.

If your water meter is leaking, call us at 888-774-8272 or email info@verawaterandpower.com.

Protect our drinking supply with a backflow prevention device

The Spokane River is part of our aquifer which is our sole source of drinking water.



Simply because your sprinkler system is outside, it is vulnerable to pollutants like pesticides, fertilizers, and yard and animal waste.

To protect contaminates from entering the drinking water supply, you must have a backflow prevention device on your irrigation system.

You need to have your backflow protection device tested annually by a licensed plumber. The Vera test form can be found on our website by searching for "backflow" at verawaterandpower.com.