Inland Power and Light Company

Light Reading

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Unclaimed Capital Credit Checks

One of the unique benefits of co-op membership is the capital credit. Since Inland Power and Light is a member-owned, non-profit electric utility, any excess revenues over expenses are returned to you, our members, in the form of capital credit checks.

Last year, Inland issued $1.25 million in capital credit refund checks. Some of these checks were returned to the co-op "address unknown." Perhaps you or someone you know is one of these recipients. To find out, go to our Web site, inlandpower.com.

You may have other unclaimed money.
Here are some helpful Web sites from National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators to search: missingmoney.com and unclaimed.org.

And while finding the money is easy, some warnings:

- Never pay anyone to get your own money back.
- There are companies that will call or send you a letter stating they've found money for you, but they'll want to take a cut of your money — as much as 30 or 40 percent, and there is absolutely no need for it.

Low Snow Pack and Its Impacts

River managers must balance a host of competing priorities

The mighty Columbia River and its tributaries touch the lives of nearly every resident of the Pacific Northwest—supplying drinking water, meeting irrigation needs, fostering world-famous Pacific salmon and, of course, supplying clean, renewable fuel for the majority of the region's electrical generation. In fact, 83 percent of Inland's electrical power is hydro power.

The "fuel" for generating low-cost electricity on the Columbia and Snake Rivers is the snow pack from the vast Columbia River drainage which stretches to British Columbia, Montana, Wyoming, and elsewhere.

Even with the wet spring, this years' snowpack is way below normal.

How low is the runoff?
An unusually dry winter has dropped projected river flows in the Columbia Basin to about two-thirds of their long-term average. This will reduce hydroelectric power generation. Only two other years in the past 50 years have had lower stream flows; 1977 and 2001. At this time in 2009, the regional snowpack was 91 percent of normal.

Will there be enough electricity?
Yes. The power system is designed to provide enough power for the regions needs even in low water years. However, there will be little or no surplus wholesale power to sell outside the region reducing income that offsets costs.

And there will be less hydro power to "back up" alternative power resources like wind-powered generation which is highly variable on a day-to-day basis.

What's the impact to river management?
As a result of the low water, hydro project managers will be balancing a host of competing priorities, from power generation to fish passage as well as navigation, recreation and irrigation uses.

The Columbia River, the second largest river system in the United States, is one of our greatest natural resources.

What's the impact to fish?
Lower-than-normal flows will also make salmon and steelhead migration to the ocean more difficult by slowing travel time and perhaps by increasing reservoir water temperatures.

Unfortunately, a controversial decision has been made to not follow the scientifically based low water year plan to maximize the number of juvenile fish collected and barged down river. Some scientists predict that that additional spill rather than barging will hurt, not help, fish by cutting future adult steelhead returns by as much as half.

What's the impact to power of the spill?
Water that is spilled over dams cannot be used to generate electricity and will reduce power generation. The additional spill on the Snake will reduce output by about 350 average megawatts — that's nearly enough energy to power 234,500 homes.

Helping Families, Friends and Neighbors with Project Share

When times are tough, it's good to know that there are people to help. That's where you come in.

Your voluntary donations to Project Share provide one-time emergency energy assistance to those in need when they experience unexpected challenges — like an illness or a job loss.

It's easy. Simply check the box for Project Share and include your donation with your Inland Power and Light bill.

The donation will go to the community action agencies who allocate the energy assistance.

Be that helping hand. You could be helping your family, friends and neighbors.

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Inland Power and Light Company

Inland Power is a member-owned, non-profit electric cooperative.

Outage Reporting: (877) 668-8243

Window Replacement and Energy Savings

Have you been thinking about replacing your older inefficient windows? It's a great idea.

Replacement windows are one of the best home energy efficiency improvements you can make. After all, it's estimated that up to 25 percent of the heat loss, or gain, in a home occurs through the windows.

Installing new windows is a logical first step in improving energy efficiency, as well as improving the look and security of a home.

Still, many homeowners are reluctant to make the investment due to the cost of the windows, and the effort and cost of installation.

To help you offset the cost of replacing your windows, Inland offers a $3 per square foot window replacement rebate for replacement of single pane windows or double-pane metal framed windows.

Qualifying replacement windows must have a U-factor of .30 or lower. This is a measurement of how well a window prevents heat from escaping. The lower the U-factor, the greater the resistance to heat flow and the better the insulating value. Additionally, homeowners can receive a tax credit of 30 percent of the cost of qualifying energy-efficient windows and doors up to $1,500.

Late spring and early fall are the best times of year to replace your windows, because they are usually the mildest.

With the money you save on your home energy bills, in addition to Inland's rebate and federal tax credits, you could easily pay for the windows in just a few years' time!

To learn more about Inland's Prime Window Replacement Program, visit inlandpower.com or call us at (509) 747-7151.

May is Electrical Safety Month

Help kick off Electrical Safety Month by taking a few minutes to inspect the condition of your electrical system, electrical cords, extension cords, plugs and outlets.

- Outlets are safety hazards once they become worn or damaged. Replace such outlets as soon as possible. Take a moment to gauge the temperature of the faceplates on your electrical outlets. If a plate is warm or hot to the touch, it could indicate a serious wiring problem that should be investigated by a qualified electrician.
- Take note of any switch plates that are discolored. Discoloration could indicate that the electrical wiring behind the switch plate is overheating. Inspect switch plates to see if they are warm.
- Once you have checked your electrical system, take a few minutes and check for worn or damaged cords. Statistics show that two-thirds of all electrical fires are caused by these items. Replace any electrical cords that are in poor condition. Also, check that all cords between power supply, extension cords and wall outlets are secure and that there are no exposed blades (prongs).
- Next, check all electrical plugs to make sure they fit properly into their outlets. Plugs that are loose in the outlet are potential fire hazards, and should be repaired or replaced.
- Finally, make sure that you have not overloaded any circuit or extension cord. Remember that extension cords are not intended to permanently extend a home's wiring system.
- Use a certified electrician for electrical repairs. Before any work is done on your electrical system, always disconnect power from the circuit breaker panel or fuse box before attempting to replace a worn or damaged wall outlet.