



ORCAS POWER & LIGHT COOPERATIVE

Main Office: 183 Mt. Baker Road, Eastsound, WA 98245-9413
(360) 376-3500 • Fax: (360) 376-3505 • www.opalco.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Suzanne Olson
Orcas Power & Light Cooperative
360-376-3537
solson@opalco.com

OPALCO Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Election: May 1st

Orcas Power & Light Cooperative (OPALCO) is a local electric cooperative that is owned and operated by its members. On Saturday, May 1st, the member-owners will exercise their right to elect their Board of Directors. Who is a member of the Co-op? Anyone who receives an OPALCO power bill has a membership (there may be multiple names on a membership, but each membership equals one member). In this year's election, District 3 (Lopez, Decatur, Center and Charles Islands) and District 4 (Shaw, Bell, Canoe and Crane Islands) are up for election. District 3 candidates running are incumbents Jim Lett and Bob Myhr. District 4 candidates are nominee John Ashenurst and incumbent John Bogert. Candidate bios are available at www.opalco.com. [and attached in case you can run them]

OPALCO's governing board consists of seven directors who are elected for three-year terms, with the elections staggered by district. Each director is elected by a vote of OPALCO members and **ALL members may vote in every election**, regardless of their home district. Each member household gets one ballot regardless of how many meters or accounts they may have.

Why does OPALCO have an annual meeting? The annual meeting is required by OPALCO's bylaws and by the federal government. It is a key component of our status as a 501 (c) 12 cooperative, which saves our member-owners from the rate burden of paying taxes, gives OPALCO a preferential position with federal lenders and allows OPALCO to set rates on a cost-of-service basis. In exchange, members have the responsibility to show up and vote; a quorum of at least 100 members is required at the annual meeting for the election to be held.

Ballot packages with absentee ballots will be arriving in mailboxes this week and the 2010 annual report is available online at www.opalco.com (or pick up a copy at OPALCO offices, county libraries or senior centers). Absentee ballots must be received at the Eastsound OPALCO office no later than Friday, April 30th at noon. Ballots can also be cast at the annual meeting on the ferry, Saturday, May 1st where the election results will be announced.

Due to the spring ferry schedule, the meeting is early this year. Members from San Juan Island will need to arrive at the Spring Street Landing at **6:45 a.m.** to register for the meeting and board a charter vessel (***Call 376-3549 to reserve a spot***); Orcas members should arrive at the ferry landing to register at **8:00 a.m.**; Lopez members register at the ferry landing at **8:40 a.m.**; and Shaw members board the ferry at **9:10 a.m.** For the full travel schedule, please go to www.opalco.com.

Members and their families who attend the annual meeting will be treated to a healthy and delicious breakfast catered by Avenue Catering. The menu includes hot breakfast entrees, baked goods, fresh fruit, yogurt, coffee and juice. Every member who attends will receive a \$5 credit on their next bill (one credit per membership)—and there are free gifts for everyone in attendance. Every member has a chance to win one of more than fifty fabulous door prizes such as power and garden tools, gift certificates, kitchen tools and appliances, camping and sporting equipment, OPALCO bill credits, art and merchandise from local businesses. If you are a local business and would like to contribute a door prize, please contact Bev at 376-3549.

OPALCO is a member-owned cooperative electrical utility serving more than 14,000 accounts on 20 islands in San Juan County. OPALCO provides electricity that is 97% greenhouse-gas free and is predominately generated by hydro-electric plants. OPALCO was founded in 1937 to bring electricity to rural islanders and is one of 900 electric co-ops in the United States today.

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