



ORCAS POWER & LIGHT COOPERATIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHALE MUSEUM SHOWCASES LED LIGHTING: OPEN HOUSE 12/14

The public is invited to an open house on Tuesday, December 14th at The Whale Museum from 2-4 pm to showcase their LED Lighting Project. Co-hosted by OPALCO and The Whale Museum, hot cider and cookies will be served and energy efficient door prizes awarded. Guests will be invited to check out the new super-efficient LED lighting, compare it to older existing lighting and share their opinions. The Whale Museum is located at 62 First Street North in Friday Harbor on San Juan Island.

The Whale Museum is participating in a regional demonstration project to test LED lighting. Through the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), OPALCO provided The Whale Museum with about 30 LED bulbs (Cree PAR 38 12-watt lamps) which museum staff used to replace many incandescents in the museum store and exhibit hall. The projected energy savings amount to about 3,600 kWh each year – or about \$250. “It’s been an interesting experiment,” reported Whale Museum executive director Jenny Atkinson. “Everyone likes the warm color balance of the LEDs, but they put out a narrow beam, which created some unevenness in our displays. Ultimately, we decided to add back in a handful of incandescent lamps to smooth out the lighting balance – at the cost of some unrealized energy savings. With 100% LEDs, we could be saving about 9000 kWh/year – or about \$600.”

The Bonneville Power Administration, in partnership with 12 utilities, is giving people across the Northwest a chance to compare light-emitting diode technology to traditional lighting in real-life settings. At 16 locations across the region, participating organizations have replaced half the traditional light bulbs with LEDs and are inviting people using these business and public spaces to compare the lights side-by-side, experience the difference and provide feedback.

LEDs are small light sources that become illuminated by the movement of electrons through a semiconductor. Popular in holiday lighting and other specialty uses, LEDs are durable, long lasting, and use about one-tenth the energy of incandescent bulbs. In some of the demonstration sites, the LEDs are expected to reduce the existing lighting energy consumption by 90 percent. Over the next year, BPA and the participating organizations will test and verify product life, performance and user satisfaction while learning how to alleviate any installation or market barriers that surround this technology.

Through BPA’s Conservation Program, OPALCO offers a **Commercial Lighting Retrofit Program** and can work with commercial co-op members on custom lighting and weatherization projects on a project-by-project basis. In addition, OPALCO offers the **EnergySmart Program** for grocery stores and other businesses with significant

refrigeration or HVAC loads. For more information, go to www.opalco.com or call the Energy Services office at 376-3586.

OPALCO is a member-owned cooperative electrical utility serving more than 11,000 members on 20 islands in San Juan County. OPALCO provides electricity that is 95% greenhouse-gas free and is predominately generated by hydro-electric plants. OPALCO was founded in 1937 to bring electricity to rural islanders.

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