



# Okanogan County Electric Co-op

## January 2017 Newsletter

### One Open Position for Upcoming Board Election

There will be an open Board position in the coming Board elections. Ardis Bynum has decided not to run. Dale Sekijima and Ray Peterson will run again.

As these positions are all "At-Large", all candidates will run together with the top three vote recipients elected to the Board.

If you are interested in running, please contact General Manager David Gottula at 509-996-2228 or dgottula@ocec.coop.

Also see the article on the nomination committee on the back page of this newsletter.

### Propane Appliances - Things to Consider

by OCEC / OCEI Board Member Dale Sekijima

Low propane prices; efficient, low cost appliances; and the availability of propane powered generators for use during power outages have raised interest in using propane in recent years. If you're considering adding propane as an energy source here are some things to think about:

**Propane vs Electricity:** In 2015, the average price for a kilowatt hour (KWh) of electricity for most OCEC members was 7¢ (not including the monthly base charge), while the same amount of energy from propane cost 5.2¢ (at the average price that year for propane not including tank rental). Propane is less expensive right now, but propane prices are also sensitive to supply and demand and generally change with the seasons.



**Okanogan County Energy offers tankless propane water heaters from Rinnai, and gas fireplaces and inserts from Regency and Hampton.**



Installing a propane appliance: Backup generators, tankless water heaters, propane heat stoves, shop heaters, clothes dryers and cook stoves are the most common propane appliances. Choosing and installing one is a team effort involving the homeowner, possibly a contractor, an electrician, OCEC's propane division (OCEI), and a plumber if water supply is needed.

**For example, here are the steps for putting a propane fired tankless water heater in a new house:**

- The contractor, plumber and propane staff (with owner input) jointly decide what size water heater is needed, the installation location, the optimal propane tank size and location, and the piping design.



### Office Info:

Fall / Winter Office Hours:  
Mon - Fri.  
8 am - 4:30 pm

Our customer service call center is available 24/7/365 to handle most electric & propane concerns.

(509) 996-2228

### OCEC Board:

**Ardis Bynum**

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### Contacts:

**General Manager**

David Gottula  
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**Information**

(info@ocec.coop)

## Propane Ctd.

- A qualified professional mounts the unit. This could be either the plumber or propane staff (we have certified installers for Rinnai brand tankless water heaters).
- The contractor or propane staff installs the appropriate venting.
- An electrician installs a properly grounded circuit and disconnect switch.
- Propane staff installs and tests the propane tank and line, ensuring that propane inlet pressure is within limits and there are no leaks.
- The plumber and/or propane staff complete the final check list and verify the unit is functioning correctly.

**Maintenance:** It is important to periodically check propane appliances and the supply system.

- Make sure the qualified professional installing your appliance reliably provides periodic maintenance checks. Warranty compliance and proper appliance operation, particularly for propane fired boilers and tankless water heaters, depends on annual tune-ups.
- Your propane supplier should offer reasonably priced maintenance service for leak checks from the tank to the house and ensure the propane inlet pressure is within the specified range.

**Customer service:** When choosing an appliance, consider how difficult and time consuming it could be to have it repaired. The middle of a Methow valley winter is not the time to discover it will take weeks to get parts or find out the nearest authorized repair facility is on the west side.

It's always possible to run out of propane, particularly during a long cold spell. **Consider whether your propane supplier:**

- Provides 'emergency delivery' outside of regular business hours.
- Responds quickly to reported problems from the propane tank to the house.
- Has enough propane inventory and delivery capability to keep your tank full in a long harsh winter when a lot of households run low on fuel and winter weather conditions slow delivery schedules.
- Has a 'keep full' program which minimizes the risk you'll unexpectedly run out of propane.

OCEI supplies propane fuel, installs storage tanks and piping to your residence, assists with propane appliance installation, and provides customer service. OCEI is also structured in a way that allows it to keep prices consistently low compared to the current market.

## Volunteer for the OCEC Nomination Committee

It's the New Year and the annual OCEC Board elections are coming soon. Per our by-laws, a Nomination Committee is appointed to make sure OCEC has quality Board members willing to serve your cooperative for a three-year term.

This committee is made up of at least three members who are not Board members nor are employees of the Cooperative.

The committee will only meet a couple times at most and is responsible for nominating members for the three Board positions open this year. If you would like to be on the Nomination Committee (or run for a Board position), please contact GM David Gottula at 996-2228 or dgottula@ocec.coop.

