

Customer Bill Assistance Program

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Presentation Purpose

- Review low-income assistance program approach as recommended by District's Clean Energy Implementation Plan
- Solicit Board feedback and confirm next steps
 - *No decision required today*

2026 Clean Energy Implementation Plan (CEIP)

Oct. 20 Presentation

- Staff presented proposed 2026 CEIP indicators, timeline, and public process
- Bill assistance is recommended by local stakeholder advisory group as part of the toolbox
- Goal is to eliminate energy burdened customers (those who have energy bills that equate to over 6% of their income)

Indicator: Energy Burden Reduction

- **Proposed Specific Action #1:** Bill Assistance Program for income qualified customers
- **Input Metric:** Funding and Resources
- **Output Metric:** Percentage of energy-burdened households; number of households receiving assistance
- **Outcome:** Measure energy-burdened customer count pre/post 2026 - 2029

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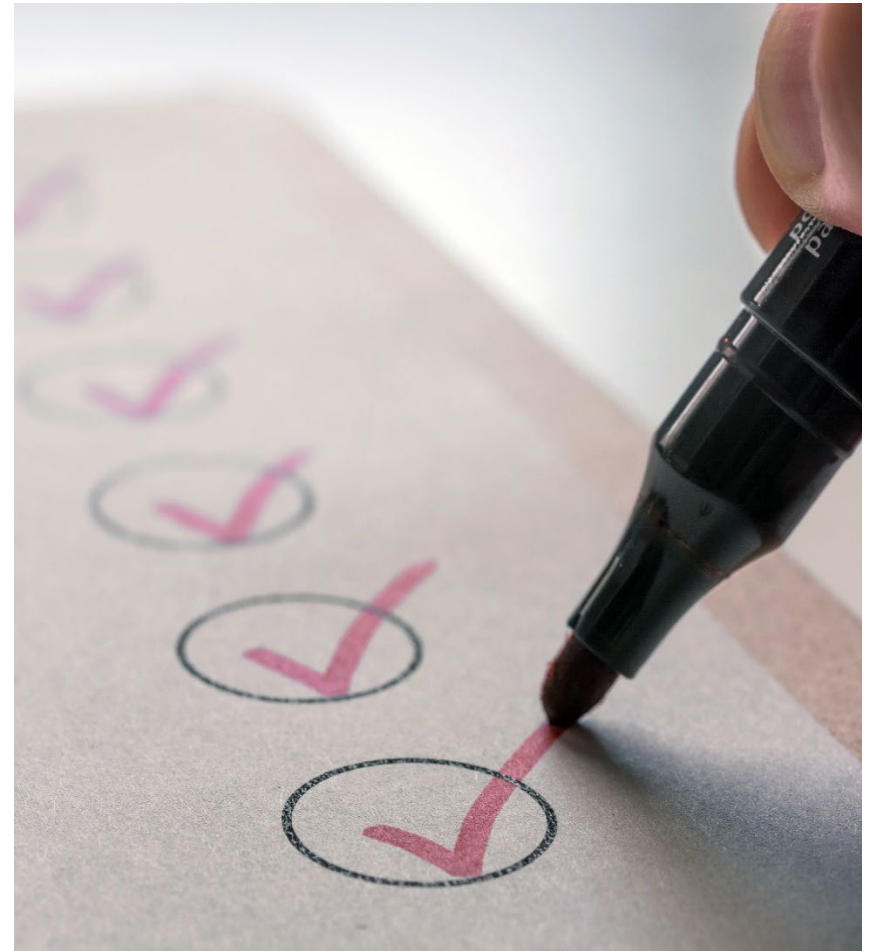
Current assistance program challenges

- **Fixed dollar amount discount**
 - Potentially insufficient aid for low to very low-income households
- **Limited eligibility**
 - Available only to segments of low-income customers; therefore, limited impact
 - Income threshold varies from other assistance programs
 - Current bill discount programs do not count toward CETA (Clean Energy Transformation Act)
- **Application barriers**
 - CDCAC visit required
 - No online or re-verification options



Program Design Principles

- ❑ Recognize District's low rates as our primary customer assistance tool; however, some need even greater assistance
- ❑ Structure program to support Board Strategic Directives
 - ❑ SD-04.c: Provide assistance for cost-burdened customers
 - ❑ SD-06.c: Ensure customers are treated consistently and receive fair value, regardless of the services they are receiving
- ❑ Meet existing statutory eligibility requirements of CETA
 - ❑ Income up to 80% AMI (e.g. family of 4 = \$72,000)
 - ❑ Open eligibility to all customers meeting income requirements; remove non-income-based criteria (Senior/Disabled)



Staff Recommendation

Building on the benefits all customers receive through below-cost electric rates, offer enhanced support to customers with income less than 80% of the area median income.

System	25% Discount	Estimated Annual Program Cost
Electric	~\$17.50/month	~\$1,300,000

- Estimated annual costs based on 50% of potentially eligible household participation, including program administration
- Monthly discount based on average customer bill¹; amount will vary depending on metered use

¹ Based on average bill amount of \$70/mo electric

Additional Option

Aligned with SD-06 (C. Ensure customers are treated consistently and receive fair value, regardless of the services they are receiving) also implement program for Water and Wastewater retail systems

System	25% Discount	Estimated Annual Program Cost
Water	~\$14.00/month	~\$166,000
Wastewater	~\$24.00/month	~\$14,000

- Estimated annual costs based on 50% of potentially eligible household participation
- Monthly discount based on average customer bills¹; amount will vary depending on metered use

¹ Based on average bill amount of \$56/mo water, \$96/mo wastewater

Bill Assistance Program

Example: Rate/Cost Impacts

	Electric	Water	Wastewater
Rate Revenue (2026 Budget)	\$78,500,000	\$9,500,000	\$1,000,000
Rate Increase Revenue (3% Electric, 4% Water & Wastewater)	\$2,286,408	\$365,385	\$38,462
Bill Assistance Program Cost Estimate	\$1,300,000	\$166,000	\$14,000
Equivalent Rate Impact to Cover Program Cost	1.7%	1.7%	1.4%

Does not include other customer programs in the Clean Energy Implementation Plan draft

Next steps

- ✓ Board preview
 - Gather feedback,
- ☐ Present rate action public outreach plan & motion – *optional discussion today*
- ☐ Launch public process
 - ☐ Outreach
 - ☐ Public hearing (Dec. 1)
- ☐ Resolution to the Board
- ☐ Implementation (Q1 2026)
 - ☐ Including community awareness campaign

Rate Action Outreach Plan

Rate discounts are embedded in Rate Schedules 1 (Residential) and 101 (Stehekin Residential), thus changes are subject to the standard public outreach process for rates

Example Timeline:

- Nov. 18 – Nov. 28
 - Display ad in local publications
 - Engage community partners
 - Legal notice – rate hearing date
- Dec. 1
 - Rate hearing and public comment opportunity
- Dec. 15
 - Resolution seeking adoption of program

Optional Motion

To approve the proposed public engagement plan and to set a public rate hearing on December 1, 2025, at 11:00am at the PUD Service Center.

Appendix

Current Program Summary

System	Low-Income Senior/Disabled	Avg. Annual Accounts	Avg. Annual Discounts	Avg. Discount %
Electric	\$11.00	1100	\$110,000	~15%
Water	\$12.00	160	\$ 20,000	~17%
Wastewater	\$13.00	9	\$ 1,000	~13%

Current Discount Program

- Established: 1989 (Board-approved), part of Rate Schedule 1 & 101
- Household income limits (regardless of size of household):
 - Seniors \leq \$48,000 (updates annually with Area Median Income)
 - Disabled \leq \$40,200 (updates annually with Federal Poverty Level)
- Administered by Chelan-Douglas Community Action (CDCAC)
- Eligibility:
 - Appointment at CDCAC (in-person or virtual)
 - Proof of identity, income, age and/or disability required
- Additional support: Helping Hand program

Utility	Eligibility method	Discount	Income threshold	Details	Administration
Douglas PUD	Income based	\$10 per month	80% AMI		In-house, proof of income required
Grant PUD	Income based	20% per month	80% AMI	Requalify every 3 years	In-house – considering streamlining
SnoPUD	Income based	25 – 50% per month	80% AMI	Auto-qualify with proof of WIC, HUD housing, free/reduced lunch programs, etc.	In-house, mail or fax supporting docs
Benton PUD	Senior, disabled, veteran	10 – 25% per month	150-225% FPL	Tiered discounts increase as income levels decrease	In-house, in-person or mail
Tacoma	Income Based	Up to \$28/month electric	80% AMI	Potential increased discounts if payments made timely	
	Senior/disabled	35% per month	80% AMI		

Utility	Eligibility method	Discount	Income threshold	Details	Administration
Franklin PUD	Senior/disabled	15-30% per month	125% FPL	Requalify every 3 years	Community agency
Clark PUD	Income	% based on income, late fees waived			In-house
	Senior	Up to 75% of previous winter's bills		NTE \$500/annually	In-house
Seattle City Light	All low-income	60% discount	70% State Median Income	Provide proof of income or auto-qualify if enrolled in other income based programs	Unknown
Avista	All	16-94%	80% AMI or 200% FPL	Requalify every 2 years	In-house and CA
PSE	All	Up to 6 tiers 5-45%			



FY 2025 INCOME LIMITS DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM

[HUD.gov](#) [HUD User Home](#) [Data Sets](#) [Fair Market Rents](#) [Section 8 Income Limits](#) [MTSP Income Limits](#) [HUD LIHTC Database](#)

FY 2025 Income Limits Summary

FY 2025 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income Click for More Detail	FY 2025 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Wenatchee- East Wenatchee, WA MSA	\$96,500	Very Low (50%) Income Limits (\$) Click for More Detail	33,800	38,600	43,450	48,250	52,150	56,000	59,850	63,700
		Extremely Low Income Limits (\$)*) Click for More Detail	20,300	23,200	26,650	32,150	37,650	43,150	48,650	54,150
		Low (80%) Income Limits (\$) Click for More Detail	54,050	61,800	69,500	77,200	83,400	89,600	95,750	101,950

NOTE: **Chelan County** is part of the **Wenatchee-East Wenatchee, WA MSA**, so all information presented here applies to all of the Wenatchee-East Wenatchee, WA MSA.

The **Wenatchee-East Wenatchee, WA MSA** contains the following areas: Chelan County, WA; and Douglas County, WA.