



THE PRICE OF POWER: The graph above shows how Cowlitz PUD rates have risen at twice the rate of inflation over the past 31 years. Below are some of the reasons



WPPSS projects

Bad management forced the Washington Public Power Supply System to abandon all but one of five nuclear power projects, leaving Northwest power customers on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars in debt.



Salmon protection

The cost of protecting threatened and endangered salmon from Columbia and Snake river hydroelectric dams has cost the BPA \$12 billion since 1978. Fish and wildlife protection costs account for about one-third of BPA's wholesale power rate.



Enron

Market manipulation by Houston-based Enron, coupled with drought conditions, led to PUD rate hikes totaling 80 percent over two years.



Swift, BPA, wind

In January 2011, PUD rates went up 10 percent due to an 8.5 percent hike in BPA's rates and sluggish power sales from the PUD's two Central Washington wind farms.



Wind energy

Cowlitz PUD expects an \$11 million dip in wind energy sales in 2012 due to California energy policies. Also, the PUD must replace low-cost power from Grant County PUD.

Sources: Cowlitz PUD; U.S. Labor Department; Bonneville Power Administration

Graphic by Rieva Lester and Andre Stepankowsky / The Daily News