Q: When was the last time Centralia City Light raised electrical rates?

Answer: City Light increased rates in 2010 for the years 2010-2012. This was expected to keep the utility solvent until 2013. A Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) rate increase of 9.25% went into effect October 1, 2013. The rate charged for transmission costs increased 7.6% in 2013. In response to these BPA increases a 3.4% increase per year was approved for the 2013-2015 period.

Q: Why is a BPA rate increase important to City Light?

Answer: About 60% of the City Light budget is for wholesale power costs. 25% of the City’s power needs are supplied by the City-owned Yelm Hydroelectric Project, the rest is purchased from BPA. Rate increases from BPA have a significant impact on the City Light budget.

Q: What else drives City Light rates?

Answer: In addition to paying for the operational costs of the utility, revenue received from rates also pays for debt service and capital work funded from revenue. Funding support is also used to bring the City in line with regional and national standards of reliability and safety.

Q: What is meant by capital work and what is planned?

Answer: Capital work is the investment made in the electrical system to modernize it, replace aging equipment, increase system reliability, and provide added capacity to handle growth. Many electrical distribution feeders in Centralia are in need of upgrades including new poles, protective devices, and larger conductors.

Q: Where can I go if I have further questions?

Answer: The City website at www.cityofcentralia.com is a good source for background information. The City Light utility offices are located at 1100 N. Tower or can be reached by phone at 360-330-7512. City Light’s friendly staff will be glad to respond if there are any additional questions.