



Benton PUD steps up to load reduction agreement

[Click here for other BPA news releases](#)

Bonneville Power Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY, June 14, 2001

PR 53 01

*CONTACTS: [Ed Mosey](#) or [Mike Hansen](#), BPA (503) 230-5131
[Karen Miller](#), Benton PUD, (509) 582-1228*

KENNEWICK, Wash. – The Bonneville Power Administration and Benton PUD signed a load reduction agreement on June 11 that will reduce the utility's demand on BPA by 10 percent for one year starting in October 2001.

Jim Sanders, Benton PUD's general manager, said, "This is a significant commitment for Benton PUD to make for our customers. We are optimistic and concerned that others do the same. This is a critical component to keep rates down."

Steve Wright, acting BPA administrator, praised Benton PUD's commitment, saying, "Benton PUD has taken a very important step toward reducing the rate increase planned for Oct. 1 and is helping ensure economic stability in the region. Benton is doing its part, and we hope that other public utilities will do the same within the next 11 10 days."

Beginning in October, Benton PUD will reduce its load on BPA by 21 average megawatts, or ten percent of its total load. Sanders said that the ten percent returned to BPA will be made up of conservation, curtailment, CT projects and by the purchase of energy.

BPA's goal is to reduce the load of its public utility customers by about 600 average megawatts. The goal is to reduce loads for the next two years so that BPA does not have to buy power in the expensive wholesale market, which could result in far

higher electricity rates. BPA expects that within two years sufficient new generation will have come on line so that market prices will stabilize.

"Negotiations are ongoing with all our customer groups," said Wright. "We hope that our recent load reduction agreements with other customers and now with Benton PUD will serve as catalysts to firming up additional agreements – and soon."

On June 6, BPA announced that the region's federal electricity system is headed for wholesale rate increases of 150 percent or more beginning October 1 unless its industrial and utility customers make additional commitments to reduce energy use by June 22, 2001.

###
