

**Likely electric utility rate increase should not affect residential users**

Should Clark Public Utilities' commissioners adopt rate increases this fall, residential customers probably wouldn't be affected because of a projected Bonneville Power Administration residential rate exchange rebate, commissioners were told by staff in a special Monday morning meeting.

When and if an increase is adopted, and it could be as soon as October, industrial and commercial customers likely will see increases in their power bills.

The cost of natural gas, which generates about half of the utility's electric energy is projected to cost Clark Public Utilities about \$16 million more during the next year than it did this year.

An across the board utility electric rate increase of 5 percent would cover the budget shortfall. However, utility commissioners have a number of options of deciding how to allocate the rate charges to make up the total deficit.

The BPA residential rate exchange program, if approved by the federal agency, could return about \$18 million a year to Clark, to be applied to residential customer bills only. In addition Clark has already set aside \$5 million to help soften future rate increases.

The BPA residential rate exchange program, for which Clark is applying allows electric utilities with higher than average power supply costs to receive credit to help offset the portion of costs associated with sales to residential and small farm customers. The program was created by Congress in 1980 to help equalize power costs for residential customers throughout the region. The primary beneficiaries have been customers of private electric utilities.

Since the rate exchange program does not apply to industrial or commercial customers, they could see increases in their power bills. If increases were meted out to industrial customers based on the cost of service, they could be as much as 3.6 percent.

The utility commissioners will receive rate recommendations from staff at the regular Tuesday, Sept. 6, meeting and could call for a public hearing on a proposed increase Tuesday, Sept. 13.

If rates are increased this fall, it will be the first increase since rates went up 5 percent in April 2003.

**Labor Day weekend features four-day Taste of Vancouver is Esther Short Park**

Esther Short Park, recovering from record-breaking attendance at the three-day Vancouver Wine & Jazz Festival last week, opens a four-day run of the Taste of Vancouver Friday, Sept. 2.

**Pink Martini** returns this year to headline the Labor Day Monday concluding concert at 3:30 p.m.

Friday acts are **North by Northwest**, **The Touchables** and **Johnny Limbo and the Lugnuts**. Saturday concerts are by **Obo Addy and Kukrudu**, **Tom Grant & Valerie Day**, **Dirty Martini** and **Quarterflash**. Sunday sets are by **Lloyd Jones**, **Linda Hornbuckle**, **Paul deLay & Duffy Bishop** and **Curtis Salgado**. Preceding Pink Martini Monday are **Aaron Meyer & Bill Lamb** and **3 Leg Torso**.

Admission is \$5 Friday, Saturday and Sunday; \$10 Monday. Children 6 and under are free.

For further information, go to [www.thetasteofvancouver.com](http://www.thetasteofvancouver.com).

**Smart traffic lights will warn pedestrians when to run**

The City of Vancouver plans to install "countdown" traffic pedestrian traffic signals at 17 intersections in

**Elson Strahan's well-deserved day in the sun**

**Executive director of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust, whose organization this weekend pulled of nation's greatest tribute to World War II veterans on the 60th anniversary of the end of the great conflict, relaxed only momentarily when it was over Sunday afternoon. Always the perfectionist, Strahan said, "It's not over, we have to clean up all this."**



**Elson Strahan**

the city, beginning with the intersection at Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fort Vancouver Way.

The new signals, similar to those currently in operation, have in addition, a numeric countdown, "increasing safety by giving the pedestrian accurate, real-time information to make informed crossing decisions."

The first signal will be actuated ceremoniously at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 7, by Mayor **Royce Pollard** and city chief of police, **Brian Martinek**.

### Calendar

A C-TRAN open house to discuss the Sept. 20 primary election ballot measure that would provide the transit agency with a .2 percent sales tax share to maintain services is at 5:30 p.m. this evening in the Battle Ground High School Library, 300 W Main Street. ☞ Clark County commissioners meet in regular session at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 30. ☞ Clark County commissioners meet with the mayors of Clark County's municipalities to discuss urban growth boundary requests at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 30, in the Northwest Regional Training Center (Fire District 5) at 11606 NE 66th Street. The meeting is open to the public.

### Monday on the air

Vancouver City Council Workshop (8/25)—4 p.m. CVTV

**NFL Exhibition: St. Louis at Detroit (live)—5 p.m. KATU**

Vancouver Business Journal Top Projects Award (7/21)—6:30 p.m. CVTV

**Portland Beavers at Tucson (live)—7 p.m. KKAD**

**New York Yankees at Seattle Mariners (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KFX**

Vancouver City Council (8/22)—7 p.m. CVTV

Veterans Reconciliation and Honoring Ceremony (8/17)—8:30 p.m. CVTV

World's Smallest War Museum Grand Opening (8/19)—10:30 p.m. CVTV

Fort Vancouver Tapestry Project Unveiling (8/12)—11:30 p.m. CVTV

### Town Tabloids and the weather

**Maria Manzo Kissinger** getting will deserved kiss. ☞ **Walt Evans** attending to dignitary details. ☞ **Don Russo** in catbird seat for second time. ☞ **Marge Martel** decorating park bench. ☞ **Kurt Jobe** taking baptism in stride. ☞ **Monday**, gully washers off and on, 69. **Tuesday**, drying out and warming up, 74. **Wednesday**, sunny and warm, 80.