

BRE RETAIL SURVEY SUMMARY

Business Retention and Expansion Survey

Overview and Use

The State of Washington is very interested in the success and growth of businesses around the state. The EDCs, though grant funding from CTED, are tasked to collect first-hand information about business needs and experiences in their counties. In the past, this survey was directed toward the manufacturing industry and did not apply well to Pacific County retailers. In order to improve the applicability to rural counties and shorten reporting time, a new retail survey was developed and an online database has been designed by Synchronist. Now, information from all over the state is rapidly accessible by state decision makers. The goal of this process is to identify the economic climate of Pacific County as a place to do business and to learn of areas in need of improvement. *Surveys are a great tool in identifying needs, trends, etc. Please take the time to respond to surveys, they are of great importance.*

PACIFIC COUNTY ELECTRIC RATES

Keeping the cost of doing business affordable is always of concern to business owners and the PCEDC. With the help of Pacific County PUD #2, we have compiled the electric service rates for small businesses in Pacific and surrounding counties. As you can see in the chart at right, Pacific County's rates are higher than some, but *lower than most*. Care to guess which two of these listed utilities have their own energy production facilities?

Voters demonstrated in the 2006 election their position on renewable energy with the passing of I-937. I-937 will require that by 2020 15% of the electricity sold in Washington by utilities *must be from wind, tides, solar and selected biomass projects.*

This initiative, however, excludes our state's most affordable and successful form of renewable energy, hydropower. More than 2/3 of our state's electricity comes from 31 dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Presently, Pacific County is not

	Kw Hours			
	1000	2000	3000	5000
Lewis	\$52.00	\$94.70	\$137.40	\$222.80
Seattle City Light	\$55.10	\$110.20	\$165.30	\$275.50
Pacific PUD #2	\$80.99	\$145.99	\$210.98	\$340.97
Wahkiakum	\$81.20	\$150.40	\$219.60	\$358.00
Grays Harbor	\$81.40	\$149.20	\$217.00	\$352.60
Mason PUD #3	\$83.70	\$145.80	\$207.90	\$332.10
Puget Sound Energy	\$84.46	\$162.11	\$239.77	\$395.08
Mason PUD #1	\$92.30	\$158.30	\$224.30	\$356.30

Comparison of Commercial Electric Rates; Assuming Single Phase and Demand < 50 kw Source: Pacific Co. PUD #2

impacted by the passage of this initiative. But if our PUD grows in electrically accounts to 25,000, Pacific County will have 10 years to comply with I-937. Bottom line is our families, employers and major industries will feel the financial impacts of these changes. Renewable energy has its place in the wholesale portfolio of our

local PUD. The decision to purchase such resources must be left to our locally elected utility officials where an evaluation of quality and cost can be factored along with the rest of the wholesale power mix to fit our local economy.

We must consider our choices wisely. *"Washington Business, Sept/Oct 2006"*

SERVICES AND UTILITIES - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

We Asked: What do you think of Pacific County's Utilities and Public Services?

We Heard: Positives and Negatives. On a scale of 1-7, 4 was average. Housing, Sign Regulations, and Regulatory Enforcement received the lowest scores, with scores between 3.3 and 3.8. The highest scores were for Local Roads, Public Transportation, Visitor's Bureaus, Fire, Ambulance, Economic Development, and Chambers of Commerce, rated from 5.5 to 5.3, respectively.

Repeated issues and opinions.

• **Affordable worker housing is hard to come by all over the State.** The average house price in 2006 in Pacific County was \$155,000, up from just \$120,000 in 2005. This confirms what we're all seeing: builders are building high-end housing. Those new residents will want services, increasing the need for workers and worker housing. The Pacific County Housing Authority exists to find solutions to these growing problems.

• **Businesses are unable to put up their own signs on the highway.** This is true statewide on all Washington Highways, however you can buy a spot for your business logo on a state highway sign for as little as \$182 per year. For information on the State Motorist Information Sign Program contact the PCEDC or visit: www.wsdot.wa.gov. Within city limits, contact your City Hall office for local ordinances.

• **"A real key to our economy is to Shop Locally!** It is about providing a job for your family, neighbor, and friend."

• **We need more industrial and technical businesses.** The PCEDC is currently working on an update of the Pacific County Industrial Lands Study. Industrial and technical businesses are looking for existing buildings with varying amount of square footage and basic amenities (like roads and utilities). The first step in recruiting these type of businesses is knowing what land we have available, with infrastructure. The PCEDC is actively working with our County, Ports, and Cities to update this information.