

# From Two to One: Navigating a Utility Takeover Through Clear Communication

## The Acquisition

- Acquired Cathlamet water and wastewater systems
- Contentious acquisition
- Systems in need of significant repair and capital investment
- Acquisition accelerated due to near emergency
- Absolute necessity for our community

## The Challenges

- Small utility with limited communications resources & budget
- Billing payment periods not in alignment
- Some customers believed doubled paying
- Difficulty in getting customer's attention

## The Plan

- Most of the “new” customers were already our electric customers
- In-house development of outreach
- Proactive communication via website, direct mail, and email

## The Results

- < 1% of customers contacted the PUD questions/concerns
- Detailed information via direct mail mitigated most calls
- No issues after the 1<sup>st</sup> billing cycle
- Replicated the communication plan for a second sewer system acquisition with similar results