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## **Columbia Generating Station Increases Energy Output**

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – The Northwest’s only nuclear energy facility is generating an average of 22 megawatts of additional power as a result of maintenance work completed during its refueling outage last year. Columbia Generating Station is operated by Energy Northwest.

Columbia’s cost of power averages about \$0.04/kWh. Hydroelectric is the only carbon-free power source that’s cheaper.

“Cost of power varies with the market, but regardless of market cost, 22 megawatts of increased public power output will have a substantial positive impact – potentially \$6 million per year – on regional cost-of-power,” said Brent Ridge, vice president, chief financial and risk officer for Energy Northwest.

Projects contributing to Columbia’s increased output include maintenance on 350 valves; replacement of the plant’s main generator rotor and condenser, and efficiency work on two of the plant’s six cooling towers, among a list of lesser preventative maintenance and upgrade work.

The 22-megawatt average increase was determined by comparing pre-outage and post-outage thermal performance data. The increase is averaged due to fluctuations in weather, such as wind and temperature, which can have an impact.

“A lot of work was done to ensure the plant continues to operate reliably, and averaging 22 extra megawatts of generation is a huge bonus,” said Mark Reddemann, CEO of Energy Northwest. “It bolsters Columbia’s already impressive low cost-of-power record, which ultimately benefits Northwest ratepayers.”

For comparison, 22 megawatts represents 80 percent of the electric generation potential from Energy Northwest’s Packwood Lake Hydroelectric Project near Mount Rainier.

Columbia averages more than 1,170 megawatts of electrical generation and accounts for nearly 10 percent of the power generated in Washington state.

*(more)*

**About Energy Northwest**

*Energy Northwest develops, owns and operates a diverse mix of electricity generating resources, including hydro, solar and wind projects – and the Northwest’s only nuclear power plant. These projects provide enough reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy to power more than a million homes each year, and that carbon-free electricity is provided at the cost of generation. As a Washington state, not-for-profit joint operating agency, Energy Northwest comprises 28 public power member utilities from across the state serving more than 1.5 million ratepayers. The agency continually explores new generation projects to meet its members’ needs. Energy Northwest – [www.energy-northwest.com](http://www.energy-northwest.com).*



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