

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 14, 2012**John Dobken, Public Affairs, 509-420-0379  
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## **Columbia Generating Station Attains Environmental Landmark**

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – Through an ongoing commitment to pollution prevention and excellence in environmental stewardship, Energy Northwest’s Columbia Generating Station nuclear energy facility recently achieved medium quantity generator status for hazardous and mixed waste.

Columbia had been categorized as a large quantity generator of such waste throughout its 27-year history. The classification change is a significant achievement under Washington state’s environmental rules, administered by the state Department of Ecology.

“The more substantive benefits of the new status are increased confidence and trust of our stakeholders and the public,” said Robert Nielson, supervisor of Environmental & Regulatory Programs for Energy Northwest. “We already produce carbon-free energy at Columbia. We look very hard at other aspects of the operation to ensure our total environmental footprint is as small as possible.”

Ecology has three categories of what it classifies as waste generators: large, medium and small. Waste generator status is based on the amount of such waste produced each month, as well as the amount of waste accumulated on site. Each category has a series of requirements to follow, with large quantity generators subject to the most stringent regulations. Regulations for medium quantity generators are less stringent, but retain the same reporting and manifesting requirements. Small quantity generators have the least stringent requirements.

As an organization, Energy Northwest is committed to taking care of the environment. Through a comprehensive environmental stewardship program that touches every aspect of the operation, this commitment is formalized in an Environmental Management System.

“Energy Northwest made a commitment to improving our environmental processes. This is an achievement the entire organization can be proud of – because we have all played a role,” said Mark Reddemann, Energy Northwest CEO.

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International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001:2004 certification, which specifies EMS requirements, underscores Energy Northwest's commitment to the environment; exhibits compliance to international environmental standards; and provides third-party validation that the Energy Northwest EMS is effective and sustainable.

**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 generating facility. 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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