

# Coastlines

2018/11



*A sharp-eyed customer spotted this submerged pad-mounted transformer, and called us. We were able to move it above the water line. Transformers should not be touched. Why? See page 2.*

## GM Debra Smith Hired by Seattle City Light



*Debra is sworn in as Seattle City Light's General Manager, with Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan (left) looking on.*

Central Lincoln's General Manager, Debra Smith, was recruited and ultimately chosen as the new General Manager for Seattle City Light, also a community-owned electric utility.

"We are certainly sad to lose Debra," says Central Lincoln Board President Judy Matheny. "Debra has positioned Central Lincoln to become a utility of the future. She has significantly strengthened our emergency preparedness, overseeing the construction of our new operations center built to withstand earthquake damage, and it's located well above

the tsunami inundation zone. In her five years with us, Debra led the way in providing new ways for us to interact with our customers, and has strengthened our financial footing, while improving our approach to negotiations with union employees with interest-based bargaining."

"A piece of my heart will stay here on the Central Coast," Debra reflected. "I've developed an incredible appreciation for the resiliency, hard work and kindness of people on the Central Coast, and I have learned so much from our employees here."

## Brian Barth Appointed Interim GM

Central Lincoln's Board has begun the recruitment process for our eighth permanent general manager, but until the right candidate is hired, Brian Barth, CPA will serve as Interim GM. Brian was weeks away from retiring after 33 years at Central Lincoln when he was chosen.

"I'm honored the Board would select me to serve during this time, says Brian. "It was a bit of a shock at first, especially for my wife, Karen, but she was supportive and we were glad I could help out. I look forward to continue working with and serving our board. Our board members do

an excellent job in setting policy and leading the utility. As far as our employees, I work with some of the most hardworking employees who really care about our customers. If it weren't for my coworkers' support, I probably wouldn't still be here."

"During this transition period, we'll continue to hold ourselves accountable for the work that needs to be done. All employees have tasks and projects that are part of the overall work plan that was created last spring, and the need to accomplish that work has not changed."



*Central Lincoln's Interim General Manager Brian Barth*



Change in elevation: The transformer on page 1—after we added a ground structure to keep it above water following heavy rains.

## Transformers Are Not Picnic Tables

A customer really wanted her favorite travel mug back—she'd left it on a transformer, and called, hoping we'd moved it. Sadly, we weren't able to find her mug, but we realized we needed to share some transformer info. "Pad-mounted" transformers are inherently safe; they're designed to operate perfectly in hot, cold, rainy, or windy conditions," explains Senior Distribution Engineering Technician Troy Delle. "Transformers are a machine taking one voltage of electricity and adjusting it to a new voltage to power homes, businesses, etc."

But he shakes his head when hearing about the missing mug: "We discourage people using transformers as coasters, or a warm place to sit when the weather's cold. Please don't do that—ever—because machines fail, and a transformer box could become hazardous. It's super-rare for that to happen, but we want folks to be safe always."

We do ask you to keep an eye on your neighborhood transformer. If there's oil around it, or it gets submerged in water, "Please call us immediately," Troy says. "We use highly safe mineral oil in transformers as a coolant, and if it leaks out, the transformer could overheat, causing power to go out. And, being submerged in water definitely isn't good for them."

## Not Quite Ready for an All-Electric Car? What About a Gas-Electric PHEV?

After 17 years and 200,000 miles in the same SUV, Central Lincoln customer Wayne B. went shopping. He knew he wanted an affordable electric car, but needed one large enough to carry his wife's wheelchair and walker without lowering the back seat. After researching and test-driving the Chevy Volt and the Toyota Prius Prime, he picked the Honda Clarity, and it's been an excellent fit.

The Volt, Prime, and Clarity are all PHEVs—**plug-in hybrid electric vehicles with batteries, an electric motor, a gasoline tank, AND an internal combustion engine.** Some PHEVs operate primarily on electricity until the battery is nearly empty, then burn gas in the engine. Other PHEVs—sometimes called "blended

mode" PHEVs—use both gasoline and electricity to power the vehicle while the battery is charged on the go.

The average American drives about 40 miles a day, meaning most PHEV drivers rarely need to buy gas. Wayne gets about 48 miles on his car's battery power—and at about three miles to the kilowatt hour, a full charge at home costs him about \$1.30. For road trips to the Willamette Valley or beyond, Wayne's gas tank holds "only" about 7 gallons of gas, but when using blended mode, he can get about 97 miles to the gallon for a range of more than 650 miles on a tank of gas—and the electricity used to charge his PHEV's batteries. "It is like a game to me driving in EV mode as long and as often as I can," Wayne writes.



Wayne B. with his PHEV—plug-in hybrid electric vehicle.

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