What is Kitsap PUD Proposition 1?

Kitsap Public Utility District Proposition 1, on the November ballot, would hand control of the entire county's electric service to the Kitsap Public Utility District (KPUD). It would give the PUD the authority to condemn and purchase private utility property, acquire more public debt, set electricity rates and take over all electrical facilities in Kitsap County — no matter the cost.

How much would it cost to acquire the entire county's electric system?

Preliminary estimates show that taking over Kitsap's electrical infrastructure will cost at least $1.2 billion,* more than $7500 per customer. A recent independent analysis shows that the cost of just the physical assets (poles, wires) will cost at least $1.2 to $1.5 billion.** But the truth is that it could cost much more than that. We don't have clear estimates because Kitsap PUD did no studies or analysis prior to placing Prop. 1 on the ballot.

Who would pay for this?

You. Taxpayers and customers in Kitsap County would pay for the cost of taking over the system. The cost would be paid through some combination of higher taxes, higher public debt or increased rates and fees. If paid for by property taxes, the PUD would need to raise property taxes 20 times what they are today. *

Didn't Jefferson County take over their electric system recently?

Yes. In 2008, after being told the cost would be $47 million, Jefferson County voted to have their PUD acquire Puget Sound Energy's electric system. The final cost was $109 million — more than double what voters were told. Kitsap County has over 130,000 customers compared to 18,000 customers in Jefferson County — making this an even riskier gamble.

What experience does Kitsap PUD have providing electric service?

None. Kitsap PUD is a small government agency with experience providing water, sewer and broadband service. KPUD are governed by three part-time Commissioners and has no expertise or experience maintaining an increasingly complex grid and responding to storms, wildfires and electric emergencies.

Did the PUD do any studies before placing this on the ballot?

No. Prop. 1 was rushed to the ballot with minimal public input and no plan. Rather than conduct a study ahead of the vote and provide voters with answers to critical questions, the Kitsap PUD

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rushed PUD Prop 1 to the ballot and now claims they will study the issue after the vote. Critical questions such as total cost, power supply, property tax impacts and future rates remain unanswered.

Would I be able to choose my electric provider?

No. Prop.1 authorizes the PUD to become the only electric utility provider for the entire county.

Will this be cheaper?

There is no evidence rates would be lower because there's been no study. And paying for the $1 billion or more acquisition cost will have to be paid back through taxes or customer rates and/or fees.

Can't KPUD get cheaper BPA power?

Not necessarily. BPA may be required to offer power to new public utility, but NOT at it's lowest cost Tier 1 rates. Currently, allocation of Tier 1 power is to new utilities is capped at 50 average MW (and access to all 50 average MW is not guaranteed). Kitsap County's load is roughly 370 MW and growing.

Even BPA's more expensive Tier 2 power is not guaranteed to be available to meet Kitsap's electric needs meaning they would need to acquire power from other expensive and volatile markets.

Doesn't the vote just mean the PUD will study the issue?

Kitsap PUD is saying they will conduct a feasibility study after the vote. But the fact is that this is the only vote required before giving them full authority to take over the electric system — no matter the cost. Voters have no ability to say "stop."

Won't this mean more local control over our electric system?

The current electric provider, Puget Sound Energy, has two local operations in Bremerton and Poulsbo. They have 70 Kitsap employees and more than 50 Potelco employees (including 34 line workers) working in the county. PSE is based in Bellevue. Any rate increases are approved by the Washington Utility & Transportation Commission.

* SOURCE: July 2026 email exchange between Angela Bennink, General Manager, Kitsap Public Utility District, and Stacie Amasaki, Attorney, Foster Garvey. Bennink: "We believe that purchasing the PSE asset will be between $800 million and $1.2 billion. This would require a levy of about $.92 on the thousand." The current property tax rate for the KPUD is $0.04444 per $1,000 assessed value.

**SOURCES: Concentric Energy Advisors independent analysis of the financial value of PSE's electric transmission and distribution assets in Kitsap County, September 22, 2026. "The starting price is $1.2 billion to $1.5 billion for poles and wires alone. It doesn't include the substantial costs of creating, financing or operating a new facility." — Josh Nowak, Vice President at Concentric Energy Advisors. Download the analysis fact sheet. Kitsap Sun, 9/23/26: "PSE study says takeover of Kitsap assets could cost KPUD $1.5 billiont."

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