COMMUNITY-BASED POWER: SAVING RATEPAYERS MONEY AND IMPROVING GRID RELIABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

Community-based power is a network of customer-owned energy resources — such as battery storage systems, smart thermostats, electric vehicles, and rooftop solar — that are coordinated to support the electric grid, known as a Virtual Power Plant (VPP). Together, these distributed technologies function like a traditional power plant, but at a much lower cost, helping to save ratepayers money. When electricity demand surges, participating customers are compensated for sharing stored energy with the grid or reducing their usage. By leveraging existing energy resources, **VPPs provide community-based power that lowers costs for all customers and helps prevent power outages.**

The Washington Post

HOME BATTERIES ARE SAVING AMERICA FROM BLACKOUTS

8/13/2025

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... [VPPs] MAY EVEN SAVE RATEPAYERS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

11/8/2024

Senate Bill 1582 requires utilities to create a community-based power program. Community-based power offers a range of benefits to Oregonians:

☀ REDUCING ENERGY COSTS FOR ALL RATEPAYERS

For both ratepayers and Oregonians who contribute energy to the grid, VPPs can offer significant savings. The Brattle Group estimates that VPPs cost 40-60% less than other energy sources and that deploying them nationwide could save ratepayers up to $35 billion. Businesses and homeowners that contribute energy to the VPP can be compensated through upfront incentives, bill credits, rebates, and other payments. More broadly, VPPs also reduce the need for costly new ratepayer-funded infrastructure and transmission investments.

☀ KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON. REDUCING GRID STRAIN

In states across the country, VPPs are already working to prevent blackouts and meet demand during extreme weather events. Here in Oregon, where extreme weather has intensified, VPPs can help stabilize our grid and better prepare our communities for heat waves, wildfires, storms, and more.

☀ SUPPORTING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural communities in Oregon face frequent outages, sprawling and dated transmission lines, and some of the highest energy burdens in the state. As more community-owned microgrids — self-contained energy networks that leverage wind, solar, and other energy sources — are planned to keep critical rural infrastructure running through outages, VPPs offer a low-cost way to harness community-owned power to keep the lights on and bills down.

☀ HELPING OREGON MEET OUR ENERGY & CLIMATE GOALS

The Governor's Energy Strategy is clear: use customer-stored energy to lower costs and keep the lights on. SB 1582 delivers this solution **NOW** through Virtual Power Plants, enabling greater energy freedom and self-sufficiency and rewarding investment in clean energy sources that reduce our emissions.

☀ PROTECTS CONSUMERS

The Public Utility Commission will create rules of the road for third party aggregators and utilities.

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HOW COMMUNITY-BASED POWER WORKS

CONSUMER-OWNED ENERGY IS TAPPED

When demand for energy surges, consumer-owned devices such as battery storage systems, smart thermostats, electric vehicles, and rooftop solar provide stored energy to a Virtual Power Plant.
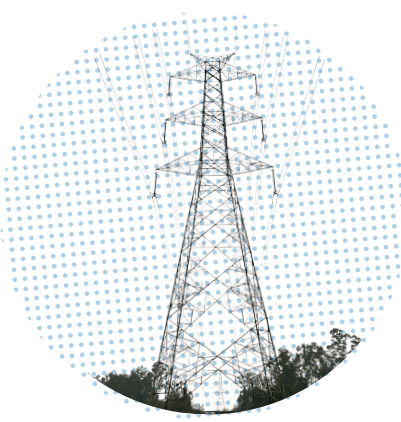
VPPS SEND THAT ENERGY BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

The Virtual Power Plant then distributes out that community-supplied energy back to the community, stabilizing the grid and meeting demand.

COMMUNITIES KEEP THE LIGHTS ON & BILLS DOWN

VPPs are able to keep the lights on and energy bills down by providing power close to where it's needed. Consumers who contribute power to VPPs are also compensated.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS • OSSIA (Oregon Solar + Storage Industries Association) • LOC League of Oregon Cities • OLCV (Oregon League of Conservation Voters) • MCAT Mobilizing Climate Action Together • OREGON BUSINESS FOR CLIMATE

Community Renewable Energy Association • NW Energy Coalition • Building Potential • APANO • Oregon Environmental Council (oec) • Rogue Climate

climate solutions • SUSTAINABLE NORTHWEST • The Nature Conservancy • SOLAR OREGON • ZERO • CONSOLIDATED OREGON INDIVISIBLE NETWORK

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