

# TIPS FOR COUNTRY LIVING



## Klickitat County, Washington



Revised 8/23/2018

telephones and residents who have registered with the ENS in the affected area. Emergency personnel may contact residents through door-to-door notifications.



**Level 3 (GO)** means danger is currently affecting your area or is imminent and you should leave immediately. During this level, Klickitat County Emergency Management may send an Emergency Notification System (ENS) to all landline telephones and residents who have registered with the ENS in the affected area. Emergency personnel may contact residents through door-to-door notifications.

***During evacuations, the Red Cross may establish shelters at schools, churches or community buildings.***

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**TO SIGN UP, VISIT:**

<http://www.klickitatcounty.org/249/Emergency-Management> and click the "Register for Emergency Notifications" icon at the top of the page. Follow the instructions to create a managed account or Log In using your Google, Facebook, or Twitter account and choose the methods of delivery for your notifications; landline, cell phone, text, email, TDD/TTY. The best supported browsers are: Google Chrome, Firefox, and the most current version of Internet Explorer.

**\*\*\*\*\* Important:** Your username and password are necessary to access your profile and make changes, as well as your registration email.

Username: \_\_\_\_\_

Password: \_\_\_\_\_

Email used to Register: \_\_\_\_\_

Add 866-419-5000 as a contact to make sure you don't miss notifications!

If you have any questions please feel free to contact:

**Klickitat County Emergency Management 509-773-0582**

**email: [emergencymanagement@klickitatcounty.org](mailto:emergencymanagement@klickitatcounty.org)**



**1.6 GORGE COMMISSION PERMITS.** It is likely that regulations within the Columbia River Gorge area will be more restrictive than the County when it comes to land use. The *Klickitat County Planning Department* can identify which lands fall within the *Gorge National Scenic Area*.

**1.7 FENCES** that separate properties can be misaligned with the property lines. A survey of the land is the best way to confirm the location of your property lines. Klickitat County does not verify the location of property lines or become involved in property line disputes.

**1.8** Many subdivisions and planned unit developments have **COVENANTS** that limit the use of the property. It is important to obtain a copy of the covenants (or confirm that there are none) and make sure that you can live with those rules. Also, a lack of covenants can cause problems between neighbors. Klickitat County does not become involved in the enforcement of covenants. You can inquire at the *Klickitat County Auditor's Office* to see what covenants may be recorded.

**1.9 HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS** are often formed to take care of common elements such as roads, open spaces, etc. A dysfunctional homeowners association or poor covenants could cause problems for you and even involve you in expensive litigation.

**1.10 DUES** are almost always a requirement of a homeowners association. The by-laws of the homeowners association will tell you how the organization operates and how the dues are set.

**1.11** Scenic, undeveloped, surrounding properties may not remain as they appear today. You can check with the *Klickitat County Planning Department* to find out what the **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION** for a particular area is, how neighboring properties are currently zoned and what future developments may be in the planning stages.

## OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

For more information, visit the Klickitat County website at: <http://www.klickitatcounty.org/>

Department of Natural Resources (DNR): <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/>

Washington State Department of Ecology: <https://ecology.wa.gov/>

FEMA: <https://www.fema.gov/>

U.S. Geological Survey: <https://www.usgs.gov/>

Washington Geological Survey: <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/geology>

Locate Services: <http://www.callbeforeyoudig.org/washington/>

[http://ucdwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/UCD-LandownerHandbook\\_8.1.2017.pdf](http://ucdwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/UCD-LandownerHandbook_8.1.2017.pdf)

Columbia River Gorge Commission: <http://www.gorgecommission.org/>

*Klickitat County Senior Services and Mt. Adams Transportation Service provide dial-a-ride public transportation service for all ages throughout Klickitat County to get people to medical, social service, and essential shopping services. Additionally, seniors and people with disabilities that are in need of assistance and supports should call to find out programs and services they may be eligible for.*

*West End of Klickitat County call 509-493-3068 for Information & Assistance and 509-493-4662 for Transportation.*

*East End of Klickitat County call 509-773-3757 for Information & Assistance and 509-773-3060 for Transportation.*

## LARGE SCALE PHONE SERVICE OUTAGES

Winter storms, fiber optic line cuts, wind storms and wildfires have caused the loss of phone service to portions of Klickitat County in the past. These incidents have affected both landline and cell phone service depending on the severity of the situation.

areas you may be unintentionally relocating the flood waters that could cause problems for others. This type of action could lead to private civil actions in court.

**1.16** Flowing and standing **WATER CAN BE A HAZARD**, especially to young children. Before you decide to locate your home near an active creek or stream, consider the possible danger to your family.

**1.17** Property near creeks, streams, rivers and wetlands are regulated by either the **Klickitat County Shorelines Ordinance** and/or **THE Klickitat County Critical Areas Ordinance**. These regulations establish setbacks and buffer zones adjacent to these various bodies of water. Natural vegetation cannot be disturbed in these areas. If you are contemplating development on property near water, marsh, or other wet areas be sure to check with the *Klickitat County Planning Department* before commencing any work.

**1.18** A **NUISANCE ORDINANCE** has been established in Klickitat County. This allows the county to require removal of junk cars, abandoned mobile homes, piles of debris and other nuisances that shall endanger the life, limb, health, morals, property, safety or welfare of the general public. Contact the *Klickitat County Building Department-Code Compliance* for additional information.



## JOINING THE COMMUNITY

Although wide open spaces appear to separate rural dwellers, fewer residents mean you are likely to see familiar faces on a regular basis. Small towns provide gathering places that often foster a close-knit sense of community and common understanding. We invite you to consider the following:

**6.1** In times of need or emergency, rural residents often find their **NEIGHBORS** to be their greatest resource. An open dialogue is often the best way to mitigate problems and forge new alliances.

**6.2** We also encourage you to participate in our **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES** to learn more about the pride we share in our local heritage and rural culture. Annual events are held in nearly every community throughout Klickitat County. These include the county fair, rodeos, community days, farmer markets, pow-wows and festivals. A county-wide calendar of events is available through the *Goldendale Chamber of Commerce* 509-773-3400 or the *Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce in White Salmon* 509-493-3630. A partial list of annual events includes:

- April: Bingen Community Pride
- June: Alder Creek Pioneer Rodeo, Bickleton  
Ketchum Kalf Rodeo, Glenwood  
White Salmon Spring Festival
- July: Community Days, Goldendale  
Husum Days  
Columbia River Pow-wow, Roosevelt  
Klickitat Canyon Days, Klickitat
- August: Klickitat County Fair, Goldendale
- September: Huckleberry Festival, Bingen



owned easements or access roads. It is wise to obtain legal advice and understand the easements that may be necessary when these types of questions arise.

**2.3** Klickitat County maintains 1,084 miles of county roads of which 30 miles are unimproved dirt, 633 are gravel and 421 miles are paved. If the road to your property is gravel, it is highly unlikely that Klickitat County will pave it. Check carefully with the *Klickitat County Public Works Department* when the seller of any property indicates gravel roads will be paved.

**2.4** It is possible to experience problems with the **MAINTENANCE AND COSTS OF MAINTAINING YOUR ROAD**. Although Klickitat County maintains over 1,000 miles of roads, many rural properties are served by privately owned access roads which are maintained by homeowner's associations, private parties or other landowners. There are some county roads not maintained by the county year round (no grading or snowplowing). There are some public roads and right of ways that are not maintained by anyone. Make sure you know what type of maintenance to expect and who will provide that maintenance. State law prohibits maintaining or plowing private roads by the County.

**2.5** In extreme weather, even county maintained **ROADS CAN BECOME IMPASSABLE**. You may need at least a four wheel drive vehicle with chains for all four wheels to attempt travel during these episodes, which could last for several days. School buses and other types of vehicles may not be able to travel during these times. There are several primitive County roads, with no warning signs, that may be impassable when wet or closed in the winter.



**2.6 EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS CAN DESTROY ROADS**. Some public and private roads are not built to current standards and may not hold up during the spring thaw. Load restrictions will be placed on county roads to prevent truck traffic from damaging them, so plan to haul rock before your access road becomes impassable.

**2.7 MANY LARGE CONSTRUCTION VEHICLES CANNOT NAVIGATE SMALL, NARROW ROADS**. If you plan to build, it is prudent to check out construction access, especially for delivery of a manufactured/modular home. A permit to

# LIVING WITH AGRICULTURE

Klickitat County is largely an agricultural area. Much of the rural land is actively used for growing crops, feeding livestock, and providing lumber and mineral resources. The tradition of agricultural land use has preserved our county's open space for more than a century. Owning rural land requires a basic understanding of agricultural processes. There are a few things you need to know:

**5.1 The AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS** is a very important aspect of Klickitat County and its economy. If you choose to live among the farms and ranches of our rural countryside, do not expect county government to intervene in the normal day-to-day operations of your agri-business neighbors. In fact, Washington State protects farmers and ranchers from nuisance and liability lawsuits. Klickitat County has also enacted a "Right to Farm" ordinance. Both enable farms and ranches to continue producing food and fiber.

**5.2 FARMERS OFTEN WORK AROUND THE CLOCK**, especially during planting and harvest time. Dairy operators sometimes milk without stopping and hay is often swathed or baled at

night. It is possible that adjoining agricultural uses may unintentionally disturb your peace and quiet.

**5.3** Land preparation and other operations often cause **DUST**, especially during windy and dry weather.

**5.4 FIELDS AND DITCHES ARE OCCASIONALLY BURNED** by farmers to keep them clean of debris, weeds and other obstructions. Logging operations burn slash piles, grain growers burn stubble to help generate next year's crops. This burning creates smoke that may blow in your direction as the winds change.

**5.5 CHEMICALS** (mainly fertilizers and herbicides) are used in growing crops. If you are sensitive to these substances, they may cause allergic reactions. Many of these chemicals are applied by low-flying airplanes that often fly early in the morning.

**2.12 NATURAL DISASTERS**, especially floods, **CAN DESTROY ROADS**. Look out for water over the roadway. Klickitat County will repair and maintain county roads. Private roads, including private subdivision roads, are the responsibility of the landowners that use those roads. Residents have had large bills for repairs and/or reconstruction after floods. A dry creek can become a raging torrent and wash out roads, bridges, and culverts. Floods can change the landscape. A new creek or ditch may be formed on your property where there previously wasn't.



**2.13 A PRIVATE APPROACH TO A COUNTY ROAD** must be permitted by the Klickitat County Public Works Department. Adequate drainage and site distance is required prior to a permit being issued.

**2.14 MAIL DELIVERY** may not be available to all areas of the county. Ask the postmaster to describe the system for your area.

**2.15 NEWSPAPER DELIVERY** may not be available to all areas of the county. Check with the newspaper of your choice before assuming you can get delivery.

**2.16** Standard parcel and overnight **PACKAGE DELIVERY** can be a problem for those who live in the country. Confirm with the service providers as to your status.

**2.17 ROAD VEGETATION MANAGEMENT.** A residual herbicide treatment program is performed to prevent vegetation from encroaching into the paved portion of county roads. This is a maintenance type of program performed following manufacturers label recommended rates for residual season long total vegetation control.

**2.18 NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL.** All roads in the county are subject to treatment for noxious weeds. State Law mandates that the landowner is responsible for the control of noxious weeds, so it is the duty of the County to comply.

**2.19** The **MOWING OF ROADWAYS** is used to control vegetation in populated areas, organic farming communities, and areas with a high water table.

**2.20 BRUSH CONTROL.** The Klickitat County Public Works Department crews do brush removal either manually or mechanically. To delay regrowth, a maintenance program using brush control herbicides is performed, usually in the late summer or early fall.

**4.2 STEEP SLOPES** can slide in unusually wet weather. Large rocks can also roll down steep slopes and present a great danger to people and property.

**4.3 EXPANSIVE SOILS** can buckle concrete foundations and twist steel I-beams. You can determine the soil conditions on your property if you have a soil test performed, or consult an engineer.

**4.4 NORTH FACING SLOPES** or canyons rarely see direct sunlight in the winter. There is a possibility that snow will accumulate and not melt throughout the winter.

**4.5 The TOPOGRAPHY** of the land will tell you where water will go in the case of heavy precipitation. Pay close attention to these areas in order to determine how water will flow on your land and develop your land accordingly.

**4.6 SNOW REMOVAL** from roofs, especially manufactured homes, may be necessary as many are under rated for some areas of the county.

**4.7 WINTER AND SPRING RUN-OFF** or a heavy rainfall can cause a very small creek to become a major river. It is wise to take this possibility into consideration when building. You need to ask if your property is in a flood zone. If it is, construct your home and outbuildings above the flooded areas. Development in frequently flooded areas is regulated by the *Klickitat County Planning Department*. Many residents use sandbags to protect their homes. The county does not provide sand, sandbags, equipment, or people to protect private property from flooding.

**4.8** Nature can provide you with some wonderful neighbors. Most **WILD ANIMALS** such as deer and eagles, are positive additions to the environment. However, even "harmless" animals like deer can cross the road unexpectedly and cause traffic accidents. Rural development often encroaches on the traditional habitat of coyotes, bobcats, cougar, bears, rattlesnakes, raccoons, skunks, porcupines, mice, mosquitoes, ticks and other animals that can be dangerous or become a nuisance. You need to know how to deal with them safely, legally and effectively. In general, it is best to enjoy wildlife from a distance. Let the animals be themselves, watch them, but avoid chasing them or allowing pets to do so. Also know that if you do not handle your pet refuse and trash properly, it could cause problems for you and wildlife. *The Washington State*



provided to your property. If you are purchasing land with the plan to build a large service at a future date, there is a possibility that **ELECTRIC LINES** (and other utilities) may not be large enough to accommodate you if others connect during the time you wait to build.



**3.5** Due to our limited infrastructure, **ELECTRIC SERVICE AND TELEPHONE SERVICE** may not be readily available in every area of Klickitat County. It is important to determine the proximity of the nearest electrical power and/or telephone service, as it can be very expensive to extend utility service power lines in remote areas. It may be necessary to cross property

owned by others in order to extend utility service (electrical, telephone, etc.) to your property in the most cost efficient manner. Easements may not be available to access your property with power. You will need to check your title report for existing easements and discuss proposed easements with neighboring landowners that may be affected.

**3.6 OVERHEAD POWER LINES** are very costly. Some areas, including the *National Gorge Scenic Area* and selected subdivisions, require new line to be buried underground. If an underground line is required to a residence or other structure, the costs will at least double that of an overhead line. The cost of electric service starts with an amperage charge and line extension cost to hook up to the system. Then there's a monthly charge plus a kWh usage charge for energy consumed. It is important to know both costs before making a decision to purchase a specific piece of property.

**3.7** Check to see if there is an existing or proposed **LOCAL UTILITY DISTRICT** with an assessment tied to your parcel of land. Information can be obtained at the *PUD or County Treasurer's Office*.

**3.8 POWER OUTAGES** can occur in outlying areas with more frequency than in more developed areas, particularly if power lines are difficult to access, as in heavy timber areas. A loss of electric power can interrupt your supply of water from a well. Interruptions in power may cause you to lose food in your freezer or refrigerator and may cause problems with computers as well. If you live in the