

Washington state leaders seek energy

By Hunter T. George
The Associated Press

OLYMPIA — As California's energy crisis worsens, Washington state leaders are busy patting themselves on the back for resisting the urge to follow the Golden State's lead and restructure the electricity market.

But Washington shares the western power grid with California, which means the Evergreen State hasn't totally escaped the high-voltage mess.

As the 2001 legislative session begins, businesses are curtailing operations and senior citizens and others with limited incomes are struggling to pay electric and gas bills that are shooting skyward.

Fearing the crisis could drag Washington's economy down, Gov. Gary Locke, lawmakers and special-interest groups are exploring ways

to entice utilities and corporations to build more power plants while encouraging more energy conservation.

They generally agree on the sources of the problem and the need for a comprehensive solution. Any doubt about the urgency of the matter was dispatched Wednesday when the governor declared during his inaugural address that he won't let legislators go home until they take steps to stabilize the energy market.

"We only have so much energy, and we need to treat it as a precious resource," Locke said, calling the situation one of the top four issues of the session.

But political differences already are threatening to short-circuit the effort. Leading Democrats are proposing ideas that rely on government intervention, while a key Re-

publican leader prefers a free-market approach.

Experts have been aware of the risk of an energy crisis for some time, but most consumers didn't notice until the state moved to the brink of power outages and the governor ordered state agencies to conserve electricity.

But even the experts didn't expect the situation to get so bad so quickly.

A primary concern is the lack of an adequate supply. Simply put, the number of power plants remained constant while the state experienced rapid growth. Experts say the state needs more power, and soon.

Republicans and Democrats have a number of proposals to jump-start the development of new power sources, including tax breaks for utilities or private developers that want to build power plants and regulations aimed at shifting the focus from natural-gas-fueled plants to such environmentally friendly sources as wind and solar.

Tax breaks will be hotly debated.

Leading Democrats say they won't back taxpayer-funded incentives for private developers without guarantees that the electricity would remain in Washington, instead of being sold to a higher bidder in California. That was partly why Locke vetoed a bill last year that would have granted a \$20 million break to the developers of the \$400 million Sumas 2 plant near the Canadian border in Whatcom County.

"We're looking for solutions that help Washington citizens first and California citizens last," said Rep. Erik Poulsen, a Seattle Democrat and co-chairman of the House energy committee.

Poulsen's Republican counterpart, Co-Chairman Larry Crouse of Spokane, opposes such limits. Crouse says Washington consumers benefit as long as the power goes into the Western power grid.

"They're going to build where they can get the best bang for the buck," he says.

Chuck Martin agrees. A vice president of Sumas 2 developer National Energy Systems Company of Kirkland, Martin says Oregon and Idaho are more attractive to power-plant developers because of their lower taxes.

But critics question the need for tax breaks at a time when the electricity market is generating huge profits.

"If an independent developer in

this market cannot build a plant, they shouldn't be in this business," says Mark Glyde of the Northwest Energy Coalition, an alliance of community and environmental groups, utilities and businesses in four states and British Columbia that promote conservation.

Instead of tax breaks for private developers, Locke and Poulsen are working on proposals that would direct utilities to either develop a still-to-be-determined amount of electricity from such "renewable" energy sources as wind and solar power, or find ways to conserve a similar amount of energy.

That idea also is being championed by Glyde's group, which complains that dramatic cutbacks in energy efficiency investments by utilities have contributed to the power shortage. Experts estimate the state could conserve 2,400 megawatts of electricity, enough to power two cities the size of Seattle.

But Crouse opposes such "big government" approaches. The government has an obligation to offer incentives and remove roadblocks, not get in the way of free enterprise, he says, pointing to the California government's role in the crisis.

Crouse says "green" power is the future, but present-day issues require the construction of natural-gas-fired plants.

Other proposals also are in development stages.

Locke's policy adviser on energy, David Danner, says the governor is drafting bills that offer tax credits to homeowners and businesses that convert to solar or wind power, utilities that enhance pollution controls at power plants and businesses that build their own power generators.

Crouse and Senate energy committee Chairwoman Karen Fraser, D-Lacey, are working on proposals to streamline Washington's lengthy and confusing permit process for power plants.

Leaders of both parties agree the state needs to beef up spending on a program that helps low-income families make their houses more energy efficient. Locke's budget includes \$1 million for the program.

Puget Sound Energy plans to ask for permission to start charging customers higher rates during peak hours, similar to the way long-distance telephone service works. The idea has some appeal to lawmakers because consumers presumably would conserve more energy if they had a financial incentive.

poppi's
Anatolia

"The Land East"
Traditional
Greek & Indian Food



Lunch
Monday through Saturday
Dinner
7 Nights a Week
992 Willamette
Eugene, Or 97401
343-9661

JOIN MCKENZIE OUTFITTERS AT THE LANE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Outdoor Clothing & Equipment Liquidation

Save UP TO 60% OFF

Jan. 12th - 13th - 14th ONLY!



MARMOT ALPINIST
LT. WEIGHT JACKETS
REG. \$380.00 NOW \$250

SELECTED COLUMBIA
SKI JACKETS & PANTS
NOW 30% TO 50% OFF

POLYPRO UNDERWEAR
REG. \$26.00 NOW \$12

SELECTED 200 WEIGHT
FLEECE JACKETS
REG. \$60.00 NOW \$30

SELECTED PATAGONIA
NOW 30% OFF

ONE GROUP
THERMAX
GLOVE LINERS
REG. \$10.00 NOW \$6

WIGWAM WOOL SOCKS
(SLIGHTLY IR)
REG. \$9.50 NOW \$5.00
or 5 PAIR FOR \$20

FLEECE BLANKETS XL
REG. \$60.00 NOW \$30

SNOWBOARD JACKETS &
PANTS NOW...50% OFF

PENDLETON
BLANKETS
30% OFF

WOOLRICH
INSULATED
JACKETS
REG. TO \$150.00
NOW \$60



In-Line Skates
Take advantage of factory direct pricing.
20% TO 50% OFF

MTN. HARDWEAR
SELECTED GORE-TEX®
JACKETS 40% OFF

ACORN SANDAL SOCKS
REG. \$16.95 NOW \$10

POLARTEC® SNAP-TS
REG. \$75.00 NOW \$40

Footwear

ALL TEVA SPORT
SANDALS
NOW 40% OFF

ALL NIKE
DESCHUTZ SANDALS
REG. \$60 NOW \$30

SELECTED MODELS
AVAILABLE FROM:
VASQUE, MERRELL, TEVA,
ONE SPORT, ROCKPORT,
SALOMON, NIKE & MORE

Camping

CHOOSE FROM TONS OF
GREAT CAMPING VALUES!

Clothing

COLUMBIA & WOOLRICH
FLANNELS NOW \$25

HEAVY WEIGHT
CHAMOIS SHIRTS
REG. TO \$40.00 NOW \$25



Blow Out Sale!
Come Early For Best Selection
Up To **50% OFF**
Selected Items

200 WEIGHT
FLEECE VESTS
REG. TO \$50.00 NOW \$30

200 WEIGHT
FLEECE PANTS
REG. \$60.00 NOW \$35

CAMPING EQUIPMENT
Choose from an
amazing selection of
Tents, Sleeping Bags
and more...
Now... 30% OFF

Friday 11 - 9
Saturday 10 - 6
Sunday 11 - 4

LIMITED TO STOCK AT FAIRGROUNDS LOCATION ONLY!

LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED
MCKENZIE
OUTFITTERS

FIND THINGS IN ODE CLASSIFIEDS (BICYCLES, PETS, CARS, JOBS, ROOMMATES, APARTMENTS, CONCERT TICKETS, PLANE TICKETS, STUFF YOU LOST, TYPING SERVICES, ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES)

All Ways Travel

• Last Day of SALE!!! •
Chicago - \$198.00*
Ft. Lauderdale - \$198.00*
Newark - \$168.00*
New Orleans - \$198.00*
*tax not included, restrictions may apply. Subject to change without notice.

Saving Students \$ since 1990!
E-mail: awt@luv2travel.com

1200 High St.
338-4199
Student Travel Experts

Advertise in the ODE
Classifieds 846-4848!

JANUARY SPECIAL

**Vintage German
Pressed Glass Beads**

50% Off
Loose Beads
25% Off
Bulk Prices




Beautiful & unusual shapes & colors
Made by hand between 1920 & 1950

Harlequin
Beads & Jewelry

Sale expires 1/31
10% Off with Student I.D.
1016 Willamette ♦ 683-5903

DOCS



Cocktail Research

FRIDAYS
Live
Alternative Music!

MONDAYS
Rooster's
LIVE BLUE'S JAM!

683-8101 • 11th & Charnelton • Eugene