



The Bonneville Dam

No one ever thought the boom of the roaring '20s would end. But in 1929, Wall Street crashed and the nation entered the Great Depression. Cities that depended on heavy industry were hit especially hard. Construction was stopped dead in its tracks.

President Hoover would try several programs to help America regain its footing, but the country would only sink deeper into debt. It wasn't until President Roosevelt's New Deal, would the economy start to turn.

The same year as the crash, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recommended 10 dams in the Pacific Northwest be built. However, no steps were taken until Roosevelt's New Deal.

In 1933, the Roosevelt Administration announced their approval to begin construction on the Bonneville Dam.

In 1937, the Bonneville Project Act was signed by Roosevelt, giving the dams power over to the public, creating the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

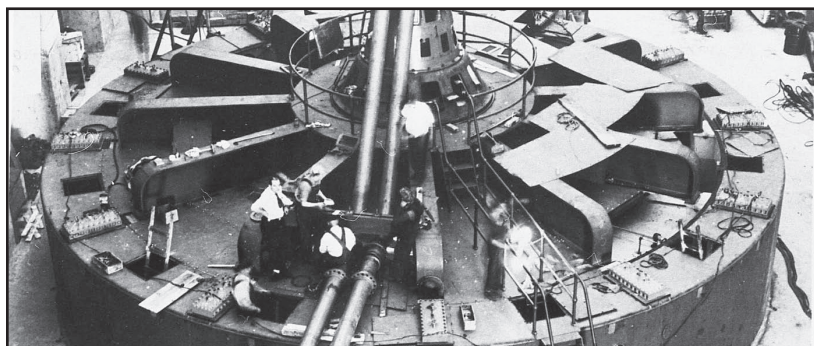
A rate of \$17.50 per kilowatt-year (about .2 cents/kWh) was maintained by the BPA for the next 28 years.

During the next four years of major dam construction, an average of 3,000 people, which included hundreds of apprentice, journeymen electricians, and Portland area contractors, worked around-the-clock to complete the first two generating units. Eight more would follow.

Power production is the primary function of the Bonneville Dam. The two Bonneville power houses generate nearly 5 billion kWh of electricity each year. The dam supplies nearly 500,000 homes with electricity, assuming each household consumes 10,000 kWh of electricity per year.

Though Oregon and the nation were in the middle of the Great Depression, NECA/IBEW Local 48 members worked hard to bring electricity to residents and businesses. It is a tradition that these organizations continue to uphold, even to this day as NECA contractors work on the dam to help keep its technology up to date.

The construction of Oregon's Bonneville Dam is just one of the many historic moments that NECA and IBEW Local 48 share.



New Capitol Building



*Capitol Building on Fire
Salem, OR 1935*

Fire lit up the night. Searing flames climbed the hollow columns enclosing the domes eight supporting steel lattice girders. The red-orange blaze swirled higher, racing through the rotunda toward the upper stories. The intense heat burned the copper dome lighting up the night sky. What had begun in the basement of the capital building, was now threatening to destroy the capital.

That day was April 25, 1935. The Salem Fire Department fought to save our state Capitol buildings from total destruction. Later it was determined that the fire started in the basement of the east wing and quickly spread to piles of old records.

Through tragedy, transformation often springs. The reconstruction of a new State Capitol created hundreds of desperately needed jobs. Many NECA/IBEW Local 48 professionals were employed. This would be the third time our state capitol required rebuilding. Construction began on Dec 4, 1936 and was completed in 1938.

Over 70 years later, the Oregon State Capital stands as a testament to the hard work, dedication, and superior craftsmanship of our NECA/IBEW Local 48 members.

Throughout the years updates have been made to the building. In 2002, NECA contractors, with volunteer labor from IBEW Local 48, installed solar panels on the Capital. Oregon became the first state in the United States to embrace solar energy.

Throughout Oregon's history NECA/IBEW Local 48's have blazed the trail with innovative practices and cutting edge technology. In times of misfortune or hardship, our organizations have seized every opportunity to keep members working

As Portland Metro continues to change and grow, NECA/IBEW Local 48 will be there. Whether due to unforeseen circumstances or not, our professionals will continue to create livable communities, and define the landscape for future generations.