



Columbia REA

For Immediate Release

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COLUMBIA REA's CEO ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

After Les Teel's recent announcement, Columbia REA is in search of a new CEO.

WALLA WALLA, Wash., January 24, 2018 --Les Teel, CEO of Columbia REA, has announced his retirement after working 47 years in the industry. His retirement will become effective July 9, 2018. The board of directors for CREA has retained the executive search service from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to facilitate the selection of the next CEO.

In a recent announcement at an all-employee meeting, Mr. Teel expressed his gratitude and thanks to all of the employees and stated, "Working at Columbia REA has been the highlight of my career. I will miss interacting with such a great group of employees and a cooperative with a very bright future." He also expressed his thanks to the board of directors of the cooperative, who have been supportive of his management.

Les began his career in 1971, obtaining his certificate of electrical engineering and followed that with a degree in business management. Throughout his career, he held the positions of operation manager, assistant manager and CEO and worked at Thumb Electric Cooperative, Southeastern Energy Cooperative, Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative and Columbia REA.

Board President Katie Wooldridge commented that, "Les has led the cooperative through a time of tremendous growth and has positioned the company for a positive future. Les has always been a great supporter of our communities and especially our children. The board of directors wishes Les well in his retirement, and thanks him for the positive momentum he has instilled here. His shoes will be hard to fill."

Les plans to remain in the Dayton, Wash., area.

About Columbia REA

Columbia REA is a member-owned electric cooperative that sells electricity to over 4,500 members in Columbia, Umatilla and Walla Walla Counties. Their headquarters is located in Walla Walla.

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