

## Welcome to the WIWSA March 2023 Newsletter!

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association sends a monthly newsletter to keep our community up to speed with water news. We send this newsletter to our email list and post it on our website. We aim to provide an easy place to find all the month's news and upcoming events.

Please share this newsletter with your fellow water system board members, commissioners, operators, members, friends, neighbors, and anyone who drinks water on Whidbey and beyond, and encourage them to [subscribe](#).

## News from Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

### Board of Directors

At the March meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association, **Culley Lehman** was elected president. Culley is general manager of Cascadia Water, which owns and operates many water systems in Island County and beyond. Culley has been involved in water system ownership and operation on Whidbey Island for many years. Thanks, Culley for stepping into this role.

The other officer positions remain unchanged. A [full list of directors and officers](#) can be found on the web site.

We're looking for a couple more board members. We'd like to include a representative of a Group B system.

### New Members

We'd like to welcome the following new members:

**Scenic Heights Water Association**

**Fort Nugent Water Association**

**Crockett Heights Community Association**

A couple of members noted that they were not included in the [list of current members](#) on the web site. We've corrected that. Starting this month, we'll also welcome new members in this newsletter.

### PFAS Public Participation Grant

Washington State Department of Ecology's Solid Waste Management Program Management Team has approved WIWSA's application for an emergency [Public Participation Grant](#) and the agreement is active. We have some actions completed and many more planned under this grant.

### PFAS News from EPA

There were two major announcements from EPA about PFAS. The first is the proposal to regulate two compounds, PFOA and PFOS, under CERCLA, also known as the Superfund act.

Key takeaways from a [listening session on EPA's enforcement intent](#) were:

- EPA will focus enforcement efforts on federal facilities, including **military bases**, and manufacturers.
- EPA proposes **exempting** from CERCLA liability State, tribal, or municipal airports, and tribal or **local fire departments**, in exchange for full cooperation with investigations.

The first is good news for residents near Ault Field and OLF whose water has been contaminated by firefighting activities at these Navy facilities, and the second for others whose water may have been contaminated by non-military firefighting activities.

Recordings of the sessions can be found here:

View the March 14 and March 23, 2023, listening session recordings:

- [CERCLA PFAS Enforcement Listening Sessions March 14 and 23, 2023](#) (YouTube playlist)

Download the Agency's PowerPoint presentation prepared for the March 14 and March 23, 2023 sessions:

- [Listening Session: CERCLA PFAS Enforcement - EPA PowerPoint presentation \(March 2023\) \(pdf\)](#) (1.27 MB)



## Certain Airports & Fire Departments

State, tribal or municipal **airports**

Tribal or local **fire departments**

May **use or have used** Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF), which contains PFOA or PFOS

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The EPA also announced proposed [Maximum Contaminant Levels for several PFAS compounds](#) in drinking water. Washington State Department of Health has a clear explanation of what that might mean for our water systems here: [2023 EPA Proposal to Regulate PFAS in Drinking Water](#).

Another PFAS story that made the headlines was PFAS in toilet paper. Is PFAS from toilet paper contaminating our drinking water? Read all [About that Toilet Paper](#). (Spoiler alert – no. Focus on firefighting foam.)

The first day of **AWWA-PNWS** Section Conference is in Kennewick WA, May 3-5, [Information and registration here](#), is devoted to PFAS.

The State Department of Ecology has begun to investigate groundwater contamination around **Harrington Lagoon** on Whidbey and **Mabana Shores** on Camano.

We're working with the State Department of Health, the Climate Change Action Committee, and the State Department of Ecology on several public meetings and workshops on Whidbey and Camano Islands.

Check the [PFAS page](#) on the web site for updates as they happen.

### Web site updates

We have changed the look and feel of the [website](#) so you can see recent posts and other features more easily. It also works better on mobile devices. Check it out and let us know what you think!

We have added an [events calendar](#) to the web site. You'll find it on the main menu. The calendar contains WIWSA events and those from partners. There's a submenu that lets you choose just [WIWSA events](#).

We've also added a special [PFAS resource](#) section to the web site.

### Billing

If your water system's contact information needs to be updated, please use the [Membership Application/Renewal/Update](#) form. Invoices this year have been sent out by email. Thank you to those who have already send in their payments.

### Scholarship/Apprenticeship Program


WIWSA is partnering with ERWoW/RCAC and SMAs and water systems on Whidbey Island to offer a scholarship and apprenticeship for persons interested in pursuing a career in drinking water. Please contact us for details. Our first applicant is already enrolled in the program and is doing well! If you know of someone who needs this program, please have them reach out.

### Dates and plans for 2023 member meetings:

**Save the date!** Our next Member Meeting will be **Thursday June 15, 2023, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm**. The tentative topic is **Revised Lead and Copper Rule**. A full agenda and zoom link to follow. Remember that to receive the invitation email with the meeting link you need to [subscribe](#) to this email service.

## News from our Partners

### Office of Drinking Water | Washington State Department of Health



#### Who you gonna call?

DOH Island Co. Regional Engineer - Alexis Medina  
Alexis.Medina@doh.wa.gov or 253-395-6764  
Island Co. Health Department - Aneta Hupfuer  
AnetaH@islandcountywa.gov or 360-678-7895

DOH Island Co. Regional Planner - Jennifer Kropack  
Jennifer.Kropack@doh.wa.gov or 253-395-6768  
DOH Sanitary Survey Program Manager- Carmen Tupas  
Carmen.Tupas@doh.wa.gov or 253-395-6752

Island County regulates all Group B Public Water Systems and private wells.

Washington State DOH regulates all Group A Public Water Systems.

#### Profile of Water Systems (WS) in Island Co.

Total Group A WS	296
Number of Connections	
>1001	4
501-1000	5
101-500	47
<100	240
Governance	
Cities	3
Water Districts	21
Investor Owned	42
Association	209
Other	21
Group B WS	584
Private Wells (2016 data)	6216

#### Climate Awareness

Climate change brings rising sea level among many other challenges that can impact our WS, homes, and lives. Are you preparing?

176 active sources within 1/4 mile of coast (500 state-wide)

19% of Group A & B WS have sources with High or Very High Seawater Intrusion (SWI) Rating

See WWSA website for more information on climate awareness and emergency preparedness.

DOH Publications on Emergency Preparedness: 331-242, 331-115, 331-468, 331-183, 331-211.

### From the Tap, Island County, 2023

#### Who you gonna call?

Our friends at Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water have made a flyer just for Island County! It has a wealth of information about Island County drinking water systems and contact information for all the people you need to know at County and State.

### Drinking Water Week 2023—May 7-13

We celebrate National Drinking Water Week annually during the first full week of May. We recognize individual water systems and operators that do an outstanding job providing safe and reliable drinking water to their customers. Award winners are nominated by their peers, customers, stakeholders, or others in the industry. Every year the Governor signs a proclamation for Drinking Water Week that we post on this page.

Nominations are closed. Watch this space for the winner announcements in May! **There may be some local winners!**

Some of the categories we use are below. We also adjust categories to fit special situations.

**Above and Beyond.** Recognition for going above the normal call of duty and/or to provide assistance to neighboring water systems.

**Commitment to Excellence.** For those who continuously strive for excellence in providing safe and reliable drinking water.

**Grace Under Pressure/Perseverance Under Adversity.** For handling a crisis well, or for persevering under consistent challenges.

**Lifetime Achievement.** Reserved for those who are retiring.

**Most Improved.** This award is typically presented to water systems that overcome a bad situation and now provide excellent service.

**Operator of the Year.** To recognize an operator for their dedication and commitment. They also help educate and mentor others in the water industry, lending help and knowledge where needed.

**Most Innovative.** Presented to water operators/systems/organizations that come up with innovative solutions for challenges they face.

[ODW Newsletter | Washington State Department of Health](#)

Take a look at the [January ODW NOW](#)

[Drinking Water Advisory Group](#)

Next Meeting June 5, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Microsoft Teams meeting Information will be added closer to the meeting date.

[AWWA](#)

AWWA looks forward to ACE23 June 11-14, 2023 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Call for abstracts is open. [ACE23 CFA - 9/8 \(contentsharing.net\)](#)

[PNWS-AWWA | Drinking Water Management Resources for Northwest Professionals](#)

Latest newsletters: [PNWS-AWWA Newsletters - PNWS-AWWA - Drinking Water Management & Resources for Northwest Professionals](#). We suggest you subscribe to the AWWA-PNWS newsletter [here](#).

The Section Conference is in Kennewick WA, May 3-5. [Information and registration here](#).

[NWWA-AWWA](#)

[NWWA Water Olympics \(constantcontact.com\)](#) is Tuesday, March 21, 2023 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM PDT at Blue Taco Restaurant and Bar, 2300 Market Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

[Circle of Blue | Water Reporting, Data & Convening](#)

[EPA Warns of Health Problems When PFAS Levels in Drinking Water Are Inconceivably Tiny - Circle of Blue](#)

[Opposition to CAFOs Mounts Across the Nation - Circle of Blue](#)

[Evergreen Rural Water of Washington > Home \(erwow.org\)](#)

[Calendar \(erwow.org\)](#)

[BC Water News](#) is a great resource.

We suggest you sign up for a [free subscription](#).

[NRWA's](#)

[WaterPro Conference 2023 held in Aurora, CO | NRWA](#)

September 25-27, 2023 | Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center | Aurora, CO

[Wateroperator.org](#) is also well worth a subscribe.

Click the subscribe link at the top of the email.

All their Newsletters and Innovations for Small Water Systems can be found in the [WaterOperator > Newsletter](#)

## Podcasts

Podcasts are a great way to catch up with news while giving your eyes a rest. Here are some of the best water podcasts. You can also find the links on the resources page of our web site.

**Circle of Blue** [What's Up with Water](#) “What’s Up With Water” condenses the need-to-know news on the world’s water into a weekly snapshot.

**Water Environment Federation** [Words on Water](#) A podcast featuring conversations with influential and interesting people from the water sector and news from the Water Environment Federation.

**The H2duO** [Water in Real Life](#) Award-winning communication professionals, Arianne Shipley and Stephanie Corso, aka The H2duO, chat with thought-leaders from both inside and outside of the water industry to serve as a resource for both personal and professional growth. Water in Real Life was created for water professionals who believe that if you desire to build the right relationships with your community, and thereby overcome many of the challenges you face, then your ability to connect with them through storytelling is essential.

**(Don’t) Waste Water** weekly water podcast covers case studies, market trends, and technology breakthroughs.

[talkingunderwater | Water & Wastes Digest \(wwdmag.com\)](#) Talking Under Water is the premier podcast for the water industry, including municipal and industrial water and wastewater, residential water treatment, storm water management and erosion control. It is produced in coordination between [Water & Wastes Digest \(WWD\)](#), [Water Quality Products \(WQP\)](#) and [Storm Water Solutions \(SWS\)](#).

## Do you have news you want to share?

If you have water news you'd like to share with the water drinkers of Whidbey Island, please send a message to mail (at) [whidbeywatersystems.org](mailto:whidbeywatersystems.org)

## Subscribe!

Please [subscribe](#) to receive our emails including this monthly newsletter and quarterly meeting invitations.

## Join!

We encourage water systems, private well owners, and companies serving water systems to become members of WIWSA. Please use the [Membership Application/Renewal/Update](#) form to apply.