



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, February 2024

Welcome to Water on Whidbey February 2024!

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association publishes a monthly newsletter to keep our community up to speed with water news. The newsletter is sent to our email list and posted on our website. We aim to provide an easy place to find all the month's news and web content.

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

News from Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Group B Meet-up in March, and Membership Drive

WIWSA is kicking off a Group B membership drive this month with a postcard mailing to the approximately 500 Group B water systems on Whidbey Island. The postcard is an introduction to those who don't know about Whidbey Island Water Systems Association and our community. We are inviting newcomers along with existing Group B members and newsletter subscribers, to attend a Group B Meet-up on March 14, 2024 from 5 pm to 6:30 pm on Zoom. The meeting will provide more information about WIWSA and the County's role before focusing on current issues that are affecting our small water systems.

Group B systems share some of the challenges faced by larger water systems but have unique issues, many of which might be resolved by sharing information and best practices with each other. WIWSA is in a good position to facilitate sharing by providing a forum through the website, this newsletter and the member meetings, supported by connections to experts when needed.

We hope that some new water systems will decide to apply for membership and help strengthen the association as a resource for the Group B community. As a further incentive, new members who join by March 31st will have their 2024 dues waived, they won't see a bill until next year.

See the new [Welcome Group B Water Systems!](#) web page for more information and to register for the March 14th Meet-up. If you're not currently a member, you can apply for membership online and receive the membership drive discount. We would also invite you to [email](#) with suggestions for topics you'd like to see addressed at the Meet-up.

Home Owner Association Registrations

Just a reminder to HOAs to keep your state registration up to date. We've had reports of some associations not following their bylaws to keep current with the secretary of state registrations. They may be at risk of losing some of their legal authority to manage their water systems. Visit the SOS page [here](#) to use the *Corporation Search* function if you want to check the status of your HOA's registration.

Scholarship/Apprenticeship Program

WIWSA is partnering with [Evergreen Rural Water](#) and local water service providers to offer a scholarship and apprenticeship training for persons interested in pursuing a career in drinking water. Please see the [Scholarship page](#) on our website or contact us for details.

Our first applicant should complete their second and final year in the program this May, while another is in their first year. **We are actively seeking applicants for 2024**, so please refer anyone who might be interested in this program by [email](#). The deadline for applications is May 31, 2024.

New Members

No new members since the last newsletter.

Billing—Annual WIWSA Dues Invoice Emails Coming in March

You should be on the lookout for the annual membership dues invoice which will be sent by email in March. In advance of that, if any contact information has changed for your water system (water system contact name, email address, mailing address, phone number), please email treasurer@whidbeywatersystems.org with the changes so that we can ensure that the bill is sent correctly.

Dates and plans for 2024 member meetings:

Save the date! Our next Member Meeting will be Thursday March 21, 2024 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Remember that to receive the invitation email with the meeting zoom link you need to [subscribe](#) to this newsletter email list.

PFAS News & Events

The Navy held two Open House Public Meetings on February 1st, 2024. There was a good summary published in the [South Whidbey Record](#). You can also read about it in a [recent post](#) by John Lovie at Mostly Water.

The Naval Air Station will expand testing to include areas south of the Area 6 Landfill this year. Property owners who drink water from a well on a property located within the sampling area may request sampling by calling **1-844-WHI-PFAS (1-844-944-7327)** and leaving a message, or by sending an email to naswi.pfas@jacobs.com. Please include your name, property address and telephone number.

Some PFAS news links:

- [West Plain Coalition](#)
- [Ecology gives Spokane airport one more chance](#)
- [EPA announces new steps to protect communities from PFAS](#)
- [EPA is proposing that 'forever chemicals' be considered hazardous substances](#)
- [PFAS in Washington's well water could make you sick](#)

- [EPA and Washington Department of Ecology to provide free well testing to West Plains residents amid investigation into PFAS contamination](#)

News from our Partners

Island County

- The [Hydrogeology Dashboard](#) has seen regular updates and recently an addition was made to the Interactive Maps options. There is a new tab for **Long-Term Monitoring Wells** which displays the location of sixteen long-term monitoring wells. Twelve wells are located on Whidbey Island and four on Camano Island. There is water level data available from the wells but the interface doesn't yet link the map view to the data. More to come!
- The county held open houses on the **2025 Comprehensive Plan** over the past few weeks to inform the public about the planning process and to solicit comments and feedback. The plan will be completed in June 2025 and you'll be able to follow the progress by visiting the county's [Comprehensive Plan page](#) on their website. On that same page you can make comments, provide feedback and take any of the several surveys available. It's still early in the process and the best time to weigh in.
- Island County is also conducting a **Community Health Survey** through the end of April. This is an online survey and according to the county's flyer:

"The results of the survey will identify areas of improvement and set a path towards creating a healthier community for all. There are questions about quality of life, access to health care, how people get health-related information, and what are some of the barriers to good health in our county. The more people we hear from, the more complete our picture will be of how Island County community members are doing."

You can find the survey [here](#). It's expected to take an estimated 10-12 minutes to complete.

Department of Ecology

A couple of news items this month:

- [July drought declaration still in effect](#)
- [Water users in Nooksack Basin targeted in new survey](#)

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

The **DOH Office of Drinking Water is holding their quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group meeting on March 4**. You can find the meeting agenda and zoom information [here](#).

If you missed it last month you might check out the latest **[ODW Newsletter](#)**.

AWWA Webinars & PNW Training

<https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Webinars>

<https://www.pnws-awwa.org/training/training-opportunities/>

NRWA Webinars

<https://www.gotostage.com/channel/nrwawebinars>

RCAC Workshops

<https://www.events.rcac.org/rcac/Calendar.asp>

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@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.