



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, September 2025

Welcome to Water on Whidbey September 2025!

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

Please share this newsletter with your fellow water system board members, commissioners, operators, friends and neighbors, and anyone who drinks water! Encourage them to subscribe to receive it directly to their inbox along with invitations to member meetings and other events.

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association News

JOIN US: Q3 Member Meeting—September 18, 2025, 5:30 to 7:30 pm IN-PERSON or ZOOM

September's Q3 Member Meeting will once again be a hybrid meeting but note the meeting time is 5:30 to 7:30, slightly later than usual. This means that we will be hosting an in-person meeting at the Coupeville Library (788 NW Alexander St, Coupeville, WA 98239) with a Zoom option for those that prefer to join virtually. This month's topics include a preview of the Small Water System Management Plan workshop (see next item), a presentation on the Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant Program and updates from the DOH Office of Drinking Water organization and programs.

All subscribers to this newsletter will receive meeting notices including location and Zoom information for upcoming member meetings along with the planned agenda. If you are not currently on the email list, you can sign up here.

Meeting notices have gone out. Email us if you didn't receive an invitation and would like to attend.

SAVE THE DATE: Small Water System Management Program (SWSMP) Workshop—October 25, 2025 IN-PERSON

Following up from a topic at June's Member Meeting, WIWSA is sponsoring an all-day, in-person workshop led by the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) with support from the Office of Drinking Water on developing and maintaining a Small Water System Management Program (SWSMP). The workshop will be a full day at a location in Coupeville. Full details will be available next week at the September Q3 Member Meeting to be followed by an official announcement which will include information on registration.

RECAP: WA DWSRF Road Show, July 31, 2025 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

The Washington State Department of Health Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) held a one-day workshop for Island County water systems members.

The topics included: funding & program updates; registration and navigation with Washington Loan Tracking (WALT); eligibility and review process; Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities; Environmental Justice, Technical Assistance and Engineering help. Links to the workshop presentations are below:

- [DWSRF Overview \(PDF\)](#)

- [Cultural-Environmental Review \(PDF\)](#)
- [Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant \(PDF\)](#)
- [Free Technical Assistance \(PDF\)](#)
- [Funding and Good Applications \(PDF\)](#)
- [Funding and Technical Assistance for DW Projects \(PDF\)](#)
- [Washington Loan Tracking Tool \(PDF\)](#)

Check out [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund \(DWSRF\) | Washington State Department of Health](#) for more information.

Welcome New Members!

This month we welcome:

- Patton's Retreat Water Association (Group A, 32 connections)
- Porter Hill Water System Association (Group B, 4 connections)
- Race Lagoon Water Association (Group A, 65 Connections)
- Subeca (Associate)

WIWSA's membership has grown to 116 members: 65 Group A water systems including municipal systems, 42 Group B systems and 9 associate members. Thank you all for your participation!

Billing—Unpaid Annual Dues are Due

If you haven't paid the annual membership dues for this year, please send in your payment or contact us by email at treasurer@whidbeywatersystems.org at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your support!

WIWSA Website — Refresh Project

Recently a new version of the [Resources](#) page has been published with more elaborate descriptions and links to our government and training partner's websites, plus some interesting news sources. Still to come is a revised home page and perhaps a new look. Please let us know of any suggestions or feedback that you have.

More News in August and September

- [Cleaning up: Addressing PFAS contamination at Paine Field Airport](#); Like other airports in Washington and across the nation, Paine Field Airport is addressing per- and poly-fluoroalkyl (PFAS) contamination from decades of activities that involved their use.
- [WA ramps up pressure on Army over PFAS contamination near Yakima](#); Years after a group of substances often described as forever chemicals were found in drinking water near Joint Base Lewis-McChord's Yakima Training Center, families are still waiting for water filtration systems.
- [WA state: Spokane city and county now liable in PFAS crisis, too](#); The two governments jointly own Spokane International Airport, which discovered the chemicals six years before disclosing to the public.

News from our Partners

Island County

- The county website has links to several very useful tools. One is the [hydrogeology dashboard](#) which includes a tab for *Groundwater Quality* which you can use to view maps of concentration levels for PFAS and various minerals (Arsenic, Chloride, Manganese, Iron and Nitrates). Another is the [hydrogeology map app](#) when you select *Seawater Intrusion Risk* you can view a map of the risk levels across the county. A big thank you from Island County staff to the hundreds of individual county water systems for protecting public health through regular water quality testing and protecting water resources through seawater intrusion monitoring.

- [Revised Goals and Policies for Island County’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan update](#) were released back in May and open for public comment through July 14th. The public comment period on the goals and policies statements is now closed but general comments can be made through the end of the year if you have something to add to the conversation. General comments can be made [here](#) under the GENERAL COMMENTS tab. The Revised Goals and Policies can still be viewed and are listed below; click on element name to view drafts:
 - [Introduction Chapter – New Vision and Values](#)
 - [Land Use](#)
 - [Housing](#)
 - [Natural Resources](#)
 - [Capital Facilities and Utilities](#)
 - [Parks, Recreation, and Open Space](#)
 - [Climate \(new\)](#)
 - [Economic Development](#)
 - [Transportation](#)

Department of Ecology

- [EAGL Modernization Update](#); Last month, the Department of Ecology released an email update on the EAGL Modernization project.
- [Washington Water Supply Update July](#); Three Washington counties have been designated primary natural disaster areas by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- [Washington Water Supply Update August](#); Let’s start with the big, wet elephant in the room. Yes, it rained on the west side of the state recently. No, the drought is not over. Deficits in soil moisture, streamflow, and precipitation could mean a continued drought next year.
- [PFAS in East Selah drinking water](#); Years of training exercises at the Yakima Training Center leached PFAS – a harmful group of “forever chemicals” – into groundwater, leaving nearby drinking water unsafe for people and animals.

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- In June, the Office of Drinking Water announced an organizational restructuring, which we posted about [here](#) with a link to the [official release](#).
- [Group B SMA Rule Exemptions](#); There was some discussion at the April 2025 Group B meetup about pending legislation that would exempt some Group B systems from the requirement to hire a Satellite Management Agency (SMA). That legislation has gone into effect and the Office of Drinking Water (ODW) issued a statement in July about the implementation details.
- The [July ODW Newsletter](#) includes information on the organizational changes at DOH/ODW, a recap of new legislation that is coming into effect, Backflow Assembly Tester Program Update, Same Farm Exemption Policy, Guidance on Water Shortage Response Planning, the DWSRF roadshow and more.
- The Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meeting was held on September 8, 2025 from 9 am to 12 pm. The meeting [agenda](#) is posted on the DWAG page [here](#) where you will soon find any meeting notes that are made available. Meeting agendas and notes from previous meetings are posted here, along with some presentation materials. At any time you can sign up for email notifications for all DWAG notices [here](#).
- [Amending Fees for All Programs](#); On September 5, 2025 the Washington State Department of Health (department) filed proposed amendments to:
 - WAC 246-290-990 for Water system evaluation and project review and approval fees.
 - WAC 246-292-995 for Certified operator and public water system certification fees.
 - WAC 246-294-070 for Operating permit fees.

Naval Air Station Whidbey Island Restoration Advisory Board

- There is an upcoming meeting of the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), an advisory group that includes community members and representatives of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington State Department of Ecology and local government organizations that meet on a regular basis (typically 1-2 times per year). RAB meetings provide a forum for discussion and exchange of information about the Environmental Restoration Program (ERP). RAB meeting topics include ERP updates on the status of per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) investigations, Area 6 Landfill, State Petroleum Cleanup Program, and Military Munitions Response Program. Additional information regarding the RAB, including how to join the RAB, can be found at [the RAB website](#).

American WaterWorks Association (AWWA)/Pacific Northwest Webinars & Training

- Check out AWWA's full catalog of webinars and training events:
 - <https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Webinars>
 - <https://www.pnws-awwa.org/training/training-opportunities/>

National Rural Water Association (NRWA) Webinars

- <https://nrwa.org/training/>; complete listing of scheduled webinars plus you can register to receive new training notifications.
- <https://www.gotostage.com/channel/nrwawebinars>; view recordings from previously held webinars.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) Workshops

- RCAC's full training catalog is available here:
 - <https://www.events.rcac.org/rcac/Calendar.asp>

Evergreen Rural Water of Washington (ERWOW) Calendar of Events

https://www.viethconsulting.com/members/calendar6c_responsive.php?org_id=ERWW

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 Apply Online or print out and mail in the Membership Application/Renewal/Update form to become a member.