



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, October 2025

Welcome to Water on Whidbey October 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

Welcome New Members!

This month we welcome:

- Cascade Water LLC (Associate)
- Dugualla Community, Inc (Group A, 221 Connections)

WIWSA's membership has grown to 118 members: 66 Group A water systems including municipal systems, 42 Group B systems and 10 associate members. Thank you all for your participation!

RECAP: Q3 Member Meeting—September 18, 2025, 5:30 to 7:30 pm IN-PERSON/ZOOM

The Q3 Member Meeting was held in person on September 18, 2025 at the Coupeville Library with over 50 members and guests attending either in person or joining over Zoom.

Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities (EC-SDC)—Samantha Delmer from Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) spoke about the EC-SDC program from background and eligibility criteria through a step-by-step description of the application process. In addition she provided a glimpse of some upcoming programs.

Group A systems from small or disadvantaged communities with PFAS, Manganese or Cynotoxins are the target for these programs which provide substantial grants to those that qualify. Interested systems are encouraged to file a [Technical Assistance Request](#) whether to start the application process or for other types of funding or support. Submissions should receive a response quickly. Take a look at Samantha's complete presentation which includes contact information and links to more information and resources: [EC-SDC Presentation](#).

Small Water System Management Program Workshop—Samuel Rodriguez of RCAC (Rural Community Assistance Corporation) presented an overview of the all-day workshop planned for October 25, 2025 in Coupeville exclusively for Island County water systems. He gave a brief introduction of RCAC before reviewing the workshop agenda. See Samuel's presentation

([SWSMP Presentation](#)) for a detailed description of the workshop and look for the registration details in our next newsletter item below.

Apprenticeship Program; Randi Perry announced that the most recent recipient of the WIWSA Scholarship, Jeremiah Pace, has received his Water Operators Certificate after completing his two year program. Congratulations, Jeremiah!

More meeting information including the video and additional reference links can be found [here](#).

TRAINING: Small Water System Management Program (SWSMP) Workshop—IN-PERSON

October 25, 2025 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm at Pacific Rim Institute for Environmental Stewardship, 180 Parker Road, Coupeville, Washington 98239

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association announced last week that registration is now open for the all-day workshop on the Small Water Systems Management Program (SWSMP) to be held in Coupeville on October 25, 2025 as discussed [at the Q3 Member Meeting last month](#).

The workshop will be led by Samuel Rodriguez of Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) supported by Washington Department of Health staff members. The workshop is free and open to all WIWSA members as well as non-members who are part of a Group A or B water system in Island County.

Space is limited, registration is required for all participants. We have already filled more than half the available spots. You should register soon if you are interested in attending.

See the formal [WIWSA Announcement](#) for more information on the SWSMP and workshop details.

TRAINING: Perspectives in WaterWorks OpCert — ZOOM

October 20, 2025, 9:00 -12:30pm PST Live via Zoom

Register now for a free, CEU approved training event! Sponsored by Washington Certification Services. Earn 0.3 CEU!

This no-cost, virtual event will feature a diverse panel of water industry professionals sharing their perspective on waterworks operator certification. Learn new strategies and practical tips to better manage your certification and advance your career!

Who should attend? Utility Managers, Operators, or Professionals seeking to enter the field

Questions? E-mail WCS@greenriver.edu

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)

Scholarship/Apprenticeship Program

The lack of trained technical professionals is not just a local problem, it continues to be a critical shortage in Washington state and across the country. Once more in 2026, WIWSA is teaming with Evergreen Rural Water (ERWOW) to offer a scholarship for an applicant of Evergreen's one-year [QUEST](#) program or their full two-year [Apprenticeship](#) program. As mentioned earlier, the most recent scholarship recipient, Jeremiah Pace, completed the program in 2025. We would like to enroll at least one new participant this year.

QUEST applicants will receive training for Level 1 certification in Water Treatment and Water Distribution Management. Local municipal and SMA employers are invited to sponsor applicants from their organizations, along with Group A water systems looking to certify back up operators. The full Apprenticeship program takes the applicant through to Level 2 certification and is intended for those working in the field to enable on-the-job apprenticeship as well as classroom time.

We are actively recruiting scholarship applicants for either of these programs (Apprenticeship or QUEST), and are looking for help with outreach to employers and educational programs to recruit potential applicants. WIWSA's scholarship covers full tuition for either program.

Please reach out by [email](#) if you are someone you know might be interested in learning more, or visit our [Scholarship page](#). The deadline for the scholarship application is May 31, 2025.

WIWSA Website News Feed to your Email Inbox

You may have noticed that many of the newsletter topics are also posted on our website. Sometimes they are posted days or even weeks before the newsletter comes out. You can have the news items sent to your email inbox as they are posted on the website instead of waiting for the monthly newsletter by enrolling in WIWSA News Notifications. Click [here](#) to sign up to try it out.

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!

More News in October

- [Unprecedented water rationing to begin in WA's Yakima Basin](#); Drought conditions east of the Cascade crest are so dire that state officials plan to cut off water for farmers, ranchers and more, something they've never done before.
- [Defense Department Delays Cleanup of 'Forever Chemicals' Nationwide](#); The new timeline could slow cleanup in some communities by nearly a decade. The chemicals, widely used in the military, are linked to cancers and other health risks.

News from our Partners

Island County

- Franchise Requirements are under review; members who may be applying for a new franchise or renewing an existing franchise might want look into some discussions at the Board of County Commissioners. A recent Board of County Commissioner's work session discussed potential changes that would affect water system franchise holders. Check out the [meeting agenda \(pages 63-70\)](#) for details, and you can listen to the audio of the discussion [here](#) though you'll have to search ahead for the franchise discussion.
- Check out the [Fall 2025 Drinking Water newsletter](#) issue which is covering water career opportunities, water quality, technical assistance and resources. Visit the Drinking Water website and sign up to receive the newsletter directly to your email [here](#).

Department of Ecology

- [State launches disposal program for toxic firefighting foams](#); Collecting and properly disposing of “forever chemicals”. Ecology is partnering with fire departments across the state to help protect firefighters from exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – or PFAS – in firefighting foams.
- [Lower Yakima Valley nitrates in drinking water](#); How Ecology is reducing nitrate pollution for safe, drinkable groundwater in Yakima County.
- [The truth about adjudication for water users in the Nooksack watershed](#); Access to water is a big deal. When water is in the news — whether it’s for drinking water in the home, irrigation, or some other purpose — people have questions. And sometimes they make up their own answers. This can cause stress and anxiety for water users who are doing their best to understand a complex process.
- [Dwindling water supplies force new restrictions in Yakima Basin beginning Oct. 6](#); In the Yakima Basin, a third consecutive year of drought has caused historically low reservoir storage and streamflows. To address those conditions, the Washington Department of Ecology is issuing an unprecedented halt to surface water use from Oct. 6 through the end of October.

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- [Help Washington State Department of Health Understand Your PFAS Gardening Needs!](#) DOH is asking for your help with the safety of eating home-grown fruits and vegetables from gardens watered with PFAS-contaminated water. Please read their [announcement](#) and participate in the survey before October 31st.
- [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.

The department invites you to comment on the proposal through October 21, 2025 at midnight. A public hearing will be held on October 21, 2025, beginning at 1:00 p.m. to give you an opportunity to provide oral comments to the department.

If you wish to attend the public hearing virtually, please register [here](#).

- The [September ODW Newsletter](#) includes information on seasonal shutdown procedures, changes to the website and many more news items.
- The Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meeting was held on September 8, 2025 from 9 am to 12 pm. Here are links to the [meeting agenda](#) and [detailed meeting notes](#). The general DWAG page can be found [here](#) with meeting agendas and notes from previous meetings along with some presentation materials. At any time you can sign up for email notifications for all DWAG notices [here](#).

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.