



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, November 2025

Welcome to Water on Whidbey November 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:

- South Pebble Beach Water System (Group A, 15 connections)

WIWSA's membership has grown to 119 members: 67 Group A water systems including municipal systems, 42 Group B systems and 10 associate members. Thank you all for your participation!

SAVE THE DATE: December 17, 2025 — 2025 Annual Member's Meeting, 5 pm to 7 pm IN-PERSON and ZOOM

The Annual Member's Meeting will be held in person on **Wednesday, December 17, 2025** at the Coupeville Library and online over Zoom.

We will continue to host hybrid in-person and online meetings each quarter given the excellent turnout at the library for our June and September Member Meetings. We are hoping for an even larger turnout at that library for this 2025 annual meeting, so please come in person if you are able to.

We expect to have a full agenda with our annual director elections and budget review, along with several proposed bylaws revisions to support online meetings and clarify WIWSA voting procedures. We are still working on the featured topics for the meeting and hope to have speakers to present on waterline replacement and the proposed changes to the county's franchise agreements.

The agenda, zoom information and other details will be emailed in early December to all subscribers of this newsletter. If you are not currently on the email list, you can sign up [here](#).

RECAP: Small Water System Management Program (SWSMP) Workshop—October 25, 2025 IN-PERSON only

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association sponsored an all-day workshop on the Small Water Systems Management Program (SWSMP) in Coupeville on October 25, 2025 as announced at the Q3 Member Meeting. The workshop was led by Samuel Rodriguez of Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) supported by the RCAC team and the Washington Department of Health staff members Sarah Spotts and Jocelyne Gray. Over 35 Group A and B water systems were represented with 45 participants. The workshop was well received by all and we are grateful to the RCAC and DOH staff for taking their Saturday to lead the workshop for us.

Sam's presentation along with supporting materials can be found at the links below through the end of December. If you need them at a later date please contact Sam by [email](#):

- [SWSMP Presentation and Materials](#)
- WA WARN: [Washington Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network](#)
- Island County Map: [ICGeoMap](#)
- Water Rights Self-Assessment: [331-370-F.docx](#); [331-372-F.docx](#)
- Look up your water system information at the DOH [Sentry Site](#)

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

- New Events Page; check out the revised [Events page](#) which highlights upcoming events and recently held events. This page may be updated several times a month so you can see the latest events news before the monthly newsletters come out.
- News Feed to your Email Inbox: 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 directly to your email inbox as soon as they are posted

on the website instead of waiting for the monthly newsletter. [Subscribe to the WIWSA News notifications to sign up](#). You can unsubscribe anytime.

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!

Circuit Rider & Technical Assistance Program

Early in November, the USDA Drinking Water Circuit Rider Program was paused with a 'Stop Work Order' due to the government shutdown but there is currently an alternative Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program for small water systems (under 10,000 connections) to receive Technical Assistance. [For more details, click here](#).

More News in November

- [Testimony before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Chemical Safety, Waste Management, Environmental Justice, and Regulatory Oversight](#); Tracey J. Woodruff, PhD, MPH UCSF Professor and Director, Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment and member of the National Academy of Medicine
- [WA cities face unprecedented water cuts amid drought](#); In a severe drought year, like this one, some farmers and ranchers in the Yakima River Basin come to expect a letter from the state cutting off one of their main water sources, and they plan accordingly. But this year's drought was so bad, the state had to cut deeper than ever before.

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

- [Supporting productive farms and clean water](#); Ecology's guidance available for review, extended comment period now ending Dec. 5, 2025. As part of a multi-year effort, the last chapters of the Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture are available for public review and comment. This marks a major milestone in the development of this technical resource, which outlines best management practices (BMPs) that agricultural producers can use to protect water quality.

- [Water restrictions for Yakima Basin expire after Oct. 31](#); The Washington Department of Ecology's orders halting water use in the Yakima Basin end on Oct. 31. Cities, towns, and other surface water right holders with a year-round authorization may resume diverting water on Nov. 1.

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- Have a waterworks professional that deserves recognition? The Office of Drinking Water (ODW) is accepting nominations for the 2026 Drinking Water Week (May 3 - 9) through February 26, 2026. Read all about it [here](#).
- The Office of Drinking Water has released the November ODW Now newsletter: Drinking Water Week Awards 2026, Water Rights, New Waterworks Operator Job Postings Webpage and much more. Check it out [here](#).
- The Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meeting will be held on December 1, 2025 from 9 am to 12 pm. Here is the **[December 1 agenda](#)** (including Teams meeting links) and also available on the [DWAG meeting webpage](#). Topics include PFAS updates, DWSRF Guidelines, Water Use Efficiency, and Challenges and Issues Facing Public Utilities, among other items. Please note that the meeting will be via Microsoft Teams only, see the agenda page for meeting links. 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.