



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, August 2026

Welcome to Water on Whidbey, our Quarterly Newsletter!

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association has switched to a quarterly newsletter. Our aim is to keep the community up to date with water news through our website and to publish a quarterly round up of information, meeting and training announcements and association news in the newsletter. [Click here to subscribe to receive the website posts in your email inbox in between newsletter issues.](#)

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

WIWSA's Membership!

WIWSA's membership is currently 120 members: 68 Group A water systems including municipal systems, 42 Group B systems and 10 associate members. All together WIWSA member systems serve over 10,000 connections in Island County.

Thank you all for your participation!

SAVE THE DATE: Q3/2026 Member's Meeting—September 16, 2026; 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm IN-PERSON and ZOOM

The next Quarterly Member's meeting will be held in-person on **Wednesday September 16, 2026 (5:00 - 7:00 pm)** at the Coupeville Library and online over Zoom. We expect to have a followup Q&A on Rate Structure, which was featured at the Q2 meeting in June. Continuing with the theme of financial management, the first topic in September will be on Inventorying your WaterSystem, asset management and how it factors into reserve planning. In addition, we hope to have some updates on testing lab options with representatives from Island County and the Department of Health. The agenda and meeting details will be emailed to the newsletter subscriber list near the end of August.

RECAP: Q2/2026 Member's Meeting—June 16, 2026; 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm IN-PERSON and ZOOM

Thanks to everyone who attended the June Member's Meeting which was held in person on Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at the Coupeville Library and online over Zoom. There was a quorum present at the library with over 40 people attending and another 25+ people joining on Zoom.

As usual the meeting began with introductions and approval of the minutes and treasurer reports. Of note, there has been some recent changes with WA Department of Health and we were joined by Sarah Spotts and Ben Majors who discussed those changes. Ben is handling regional planning duties for several counties including Island County and he passed on his contact information and hours: Ben.majors@doh.wa.gov or 564-669-0855; Monday-Thursday from 6am-5pm.

The featured topics this quarter were financial planning with Jim Talaga and Garrett Halsey from Association Reserves speaking on Reserve Planning, and Randi Perry presenting on Rate Structures using the City of Langley's models and plans as examples. For the financial topics, it's best to review the presentations and view the meeting recording. You can find links [here](#) along with additional links referenced during the meeting.

We were also fortunate to have Ed Sewester from Island County Public Works coming back with an update on the new requirements for Franchise holders and to address some additional questions and concerns. Ed emphasized that there are two years before these requirements will take effect and that the details are still being worked out. He encouraged questions and feedback using the contact information on the public works webpage [here](#). Randi also indicated that WIWSA will be documenting some of the major issues voiced by members in a formal letter to the county.

Thanks to everyone for coming out of the sunshine to meet together and special thanks to our presenters and guests for taking the time to speak to us. You can find links on the [full post](#) covering the recap including the [Meeting Recording](#), speaker presentations and supporting documents.

Annual Dues Invoices have been Emailed!

The annual dues invoices were emailed in March. If you did not receive an invoice, it may be that we need to update our records. At your earliest convenience, please contact our treasurer at treasurer@whidbeywatersystems.org.

We greatly appreciate your support and participation in Whidbey Island Water Systems Association. Your financial support allows us to put out this newsletter, maintain the website, put on the quarterly meetings and periodic training sessions, offer a scholarship, advocate on behalf of the membership and provide email support to members with questions or issues. If there's an opportunity for us to help in other ways please let us know!

WIWSA Board of Directors

Just a reminder that WIWSA has nine board members and is considering adding 1 or 2 additional directors subject to a member vote at the next annual meeting. We do not have any employees, meaning that just about all that we are able to do at WIWSA is handled by a board member.

We are interested in growing the board particularly with candidates who can broaden our board's representation within the community. Already on the board, we have members representing public and private water systems, Group A & B systems, municipalities and water districts, with backgrounds in water systems management, technical services and engineering along with legal, financial and computer skill sets. Please get in touch at mail@whidbeywatersystems.org if you are interested in learning more about joining the board or want to refer someone.

Scholarship/Apprenticeship Program

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.

ERWOW has moved the QUEST program to a calendar year format. The next program starts in January 2027, so while the deadline has passed for the 2026/27 Apprenticeship program there is still time to enroll in QUEST and apply for the WIWSA scholarship. 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 or members as back up technical staff.

Reach out by [email](#) if you or someone you know might be interested in learning more, or visit our [Scholarship page](#). Scholarship applications should be submitted by November 30, 2026.

Other News

- [Updated notice to those using Eurofins for compliance testing](#). We made several posts over the last few months along with emails to members on the new laboratory compliance testing procedures and forms for Eurofins. Eurofins has recently informed us that they've now changed lab forms and there are now different forms for different types of water systems and/or account holders. [See the updated post for details and links to the forms](#).
- There is new legislation concerning ADUs that impacts how rural water systems manage ADU connections. [Here's a quick summary of some of the main takeaways of the new ADU rules for rural areas under Chapter 36.70A.696 along with links to the detailed legislation materials](#).
- [Evergreen Rural Water: Cybersecurity Advisory](#) and [Office of Drinking Water: EPA and CISA Alerts](#); Formal notices have been issued by the Office of Drinking Water (ODW) and Evergreen Rural Water (ERWOW) regarding the current cybersecurity threats to water systems across the country. If you aren't familiar with the recent events, you should review some of the national news reports concerning the threats. At a minimum, this is a reminder to tighten up your own systems if you have any online or wireless access points, along with your system's physical security. Additional updates [here](#) too.
- [Broke and On Their Own: Small Water Systems Lose Ground as Federal Support Wavers](#); For systems serving rural and low-income communities, the finances were already precarious. [Read the article from Circle of Blue....](#)
- [The \\$2-trillion problem](#); Published by WaterWorks Daily, [The \\$2-trillion problem facing U.S. water infrastructure](#). A new AWWA report shows what 2050 could look like if local ratepayers foot the whole bill for projected drinking water infrastructure needs.
- [L.A.'s perilous game of water pipeline triage](#); The LA Times recently published a story on the repairing and replacing hundreds of miles of pipeline, including some that are 100 years old.

News from our Partners

Island County

- The Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) had two meetings since the last newsletter and while there hasn't been much information released, WUCC did approve and select two purveyor representatives, Joe Grogan (Town of Coupeville) as the municipality representative, and Culley Lehman (Cascadia Water) as the corporate or for-profit representative. Both Joe and Culley are members of the WIWSA board of directors. The next WUCC meeting is scheduled for October 2026. You can find more information about the WUCC and the Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP) and links in the WIWSA blog post [here](#).
- The updated county Franchise requirements released last year, continue to be discussed following the Q1 Member's Meeting topic with Ed Sewester of Island County's Public Works department. Clinton Water District and WIWSA both submitted comments to the county with copies posted [here](#) on WIWSA's website. Ed returned for the Q2 Member's Meeting which was recapped above emphasizing that there are two years before these requirements will take effect and that the details are still being worked out. He encouraged questions and feedback using the contact information on the public works webpage [here](#).

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- In June, the Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water (ODW) released an update on staff assignments and overall organization structure. There are major changes to the Water Quality Monitoring Section among others, plus a review of the overall organization structure. [Read the full announcement from the Office of Drinking Water](#). For Island County specifically, we recently updated the [Resources](#) page with the new contacts shown [here](#).
- [Lead and Copper Rule Revisions](#); On July 14, 2026, the Washington State Department of Health (department) adopted final rule revisions to chapter 246-290. [Read the release here](#).
- The Office of Drinking Water published two ODW Now newsletter issues since our last WIWSA newsletter. The [May 2026 ODW Now newsletter](#) included topics on: Alternative Drinking Water Program for Group B Systems, Drinking Water Week Award Winners, Drought 2026, Recognition for Next Generation of Water Professionals and much more. The [July 2026 ODW Now newsletter](#) talked about: Nitrate Videos, a new Job Posting page, PFAS rule changes, ideas for wildfire preparations, and TOP award winners.
- The Office of Drinking Water has published updated guideline documents for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) 2026 Application Cycle that closes November 30, 2026. There will be online workshops from 8:30 am to Noon on September 9th and October 14th. See the [full announcement](#) for more details on the guidelines and workshops. You can find the draft guidelines on the [DWSRF webpage](#). They are open for comment through October 1st.
- The most recent Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meeting was held June 1, 2026. See the DWAG page [here](#) for [meeting notes](#) and presentation materials. The scheduled topics included Drought, DWWSA/SRF Updates, PFAS Federal announcements and more. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2026. You can sign up anytime for email notifications for all DWAG notices [here](#).

Department of Ecology

- [Washington's Water Future](#); Water supplies across the state are under increasing stress. Drought, flooding, warmer winters, and changing snowpack are affecting rivers, aquifers,

ecosystems, communities, and farms. These changes are making it harder to ensure clean, reliable water for people, fish, agriculture, and the economy. Washington's Water Future is a new statewide initiative led by Governor Bob Ferguson and the Washington State Department of Ecology to help Washington prepare for growing water challenges.

- [Washington water supply update](#); The drought declared in April is still in effect and shows no signs of ending any time soon. For those who haven't been paying attention, we're now just a little bit past the halfway point of our state's fourth consecutive drought year. Additionally, DOE is looking for public input through an [online survey](#) which will be open through August 31.
- [The science behind drought declarations](#); When the Washington Department of Ecology issued a statewide drought declaration on April 8, there were a lot of questions, and even some skepticism, about the analysis that informed the drought emergency...Drought declarations, however, are guided by Washington state laws, and informed by a lot of very detailed science, so it's important to understand the work that goes on behind the scenes before an emergency is declared.
- [Joint statement on EPA PFAS rulemaking proposals](#); In July, the Washington Department of Ecology, the Washington State Department of Health and the Washington State Board of Health submitted comments on proposed regulatory changes by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that would extend compliance dates to meet standards for PFAS chemicals in drinking water systems and weaken drinking water standards for certain PFAS chemicals.
- [Water Supply Availability Committee \(WSAC\)](#); WSAC meets monthly to review measurements and projections. You can dig into details at their [website](#), where you'll find meeting videos and presentation materials including the most recent July 9th meeting.

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
- Evergreen Rural Water of Washington's (ERWOW) 2026 conference & trade show; August 25-27, 2026, Yakima Convention Center. Check out Evergreen Rural Water of Washington's annual conference & trade show, and register [here](#). Registration Deadline Extended! After August 7, 2026 \$50 late fee is added to all registrations.

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.