Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, November 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 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

Welcome New Members!

This quarter we welcome:

- Moody Water Association (Group B - 5 connections)
- Northwest Water Systems, Inc. SMA, Associate Member
- PSI Engineering, Associate Member
- Smuggler's Cove Heights Water Association (Group B - 4 connections)
- Sunset Ridge Community Association (Group A with 55 connections)
- Freeland Water District (Group A)

WIWSA's membership is currently 126 members: 70 Group A and 44 Group B water systems along with 12 Associate members. All together WIWSA member systems serve over 10,000 connections in Island County. Thank you all for your participation!

PLEASE NOTE: Due to a technical issue, WIWSA's online membership application system failed to forward some applications to us between March and September 2026. If you submitted an application online for membership or for a change to your membership, and did not receive a reply, then we failed to receive it. We apologize for any inconvenience. The issue has been corrected so we hope you will try again if you were affected.

SAVE THE DATE: 2026 Annual (Q4) Member's Meeting—Tuesday, December 15, 2026; 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm IN-PERSON and ZOOM

The next Quarterly Member's meeting will be our 2026 Annual Meeting held in-person on **Tuesday December 15, 2026 (5:00 - 7:00 pm)** at the Coupeville Library and online over Zoom. We expect to have a panel presenting on the regulatory reporting requirements,

specifically the required Department of Health (DOH) forms: Water Facilities Inventory (WFI), Water Quality Management System (WQMS), Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), and Water Use Efficiency report (WUE); and the Island County Public Health (ICPH) Water Availability Verification (WAV) form.

The agenda and meeting details will be emailed to the newsletter subscriber list in early December. If you aren't on the subscriber list, click here to receive the invitation and future newsletters directly to your email inbox.

RECAP: Q3 Member Meeting; September 16, 2026 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm IN-PERSON and ZOOM

Thanks to everyone who attended the September's Member Meeting which was held in person on Wednesday, September 16, 2026 at the Coupeville Library and online over Zoom. There was a quorum present at the library with over 40 people attending with another 30+ people joining on Zoom.

President Randi Perry opened the meeting with introductions and approval of the agenda, minutes and treasurer reports. We had a quorum within the library alone with many Group A and B members present along with representatives from the WA Department of Health, Island County and the SMA Water and Wastewater Services plus many others joining on Zoom. Thanks again to all who turned out!

We returned to the topic of Rate Structures with Randi opening the floor for questions and followup from the June meeting. A discussion followed — view in the recording (links below).

The main topic of the meeting followed with Jeff Tasoff (WIWSA board member) and Robert Bennion of Facet presenting on Asset Management; Creating and Maintaining a Water System Asset Inventory. They stressed the importance of establishing and maintaining an Asset Inventory to create a reasonable rate structure and to enable any kind of reserve management. A healthy reserve reduces the financial stress for you and your consumers. You can view the presentation via this link and you will find many supporting documents in the links included on this full recap post.

Our final topic was an update on water quality testing requirements and lab updates. Randi presented a lab update that had been prepared by Culley Lehman (WIWSA Board Member) on the various options to conduct water quality testing. Joyful Bell (Acute Water Quality Monitoring Program Manager, PHA3 from Office of Drinking Water) presented on Water Sampling Requriements providing an overview of the topic. Aneta Hupfauer (Island County) recapped the changes that Eurofins had made to their Chain of Custody process which WIWSA had posted to members through the website. If you have questions you can email us and we can make sure it gets to the right person to respond.

You can find links on the full post covering the recap including the Meeting Recording, speaker presentations and supporting documents.

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 Board of Directors

Another reminder that WIWSA has nine board members and is considering adding 1 or 2 additional directors subject to a member vote. 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 in interested in growing the board particularly with candidates who can broaden our board's representation within the community. We have board members representing public and private water systems, Group A & B systems, municipalities and water districts but would benefit with an addition from the service sector or a training organization. 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.

Regenerative Whidbey

You are invited to read "**A Guide to Whidbey's Water Future: Stewardship of a Sole Source Aquifer**" and explore 15 supporting Whidbey Island Water Fact Sheets. These practical resources are designed to spur community-wide discussion on water system challenges, aquifer recharge, governance, and sustainability.

Authored by local water system members David W. Haskell and Perry Lovelace, the guide asks how we can best work together to ensure a resilient, affordable water supply for future generations. For more information visit www.regenerativewhidbey.org or contact Perry and David at Whidbey@RegenerateCascadia.org.

Other News

- We posted about this last quarter but it bears repeating: 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.
- Moses Lake explores alternative water sources to address long-term supply concerns; The City of Moses Lake is working with state agencies and local partners to find more sustainable water sources as the community continues to grow and water demand increases.

- Latest News from Whatcom County on Adjudication process; Do you use water from a well, stream, or lake? New deadline to file the water adjudication form: June 1, 2027.
- Washington farmer challenges how the state enforced its water-rights rules ; A farmer from Grant County is at the center of a Washington State Supreme Court case challenging hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties imposed on him, in a dispute that could test the limits of the state Department of Ecology's enforcement authority.
- 3M agrees to pay more than $7 billion to settle 'forever chemical' groundwater contamination claims; Chemical manufacturer 3M will pay up to $7.35 billion to settle lawsuits by people who say they were sickened by groundwater contamination from compounds used in firefighting foam and other consumer products.

News from our Partners

Island County

- The Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) met again in October where they specifically reviewed the WUCC charter. You can view past meeting minutes and the October meeting agenda and presentations here. All WUCC meetings are included in the Island County Agenda Center where you can view documents from previous meetings and where new meetings will be posted when scheduled. You can find more information about the WUCC and the Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP) with links in the WIWSA blog post here.
- The county released their Fall 2026 Drinking Water newsletter, which includes information on common minerals found in county groundwater and how to use the hydrogeology dashboard to monitor your system trends. In addition, there was a description of custom tools available for Group B systems to prepare and maintain their water system plans. Streamlined with custom forms to guide the planning, these tools will make it easier for small systems. Check it out and sign up for the newsletter if you aren't receiving it already.

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- The September 2026 ODW Now newsletter was released with topics on: Cyberthreats, DWSRF update, Seasonal Shutdown and some interesting statistics.
- Drinking Water Week is still a few months away but the Office of Drinking Water is asking for nominations for the Drinking Water Award through February 15th. Click here to get more information and to submit a nomination..
- The most recent Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meeting was held September 14, 2026. See the DWAG page here for meeting notes and presentation materials. The scheduled topics included HB 1906 on water system rates, Lead and Copper Updates, ODW's role in Water Future and more. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 7, 2026. You can sign up anytime for email notifications for all DWAG notices here.

Department of Ecology

- Recording and reporting water use; you may have received an email announcement from Ecology regarding a new process and forms for reporting water use data each year. Visit the website and if you need assistance or more information, contact the designated metering coordinator for Island County: Joe Kim (joe.kim@ecy.wa.gov; 206-594-0188).

- Washington Ecology baffles engineers with new twist on old rule ; The Washington Department of Ecology told water conservancy boards that it will require geologists to approve work previously done by engineers. The policy changes longstanding practice and could increase costs for farmers seeking to amend a water right.
- 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 November 6th 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, 33rd Annual Conference And Tradeshow, February 9-11, 2027. ERWoW encourages Operators, Utility Board Members, Mayors, Council Members, Public Works Directors, and other community leaders to attend our conference! There are specific classes designed with utility officials in mind, focusing on the roles and responsibilities that come with overseeing your community's water and wastewater systems. REGISTER HERE.

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.