



WELCOME TO OUR NEW OFFICE DIRECTOR

In mid-November 2021, ODW welcomed new Office Director, Holly Myers. Ms. Myers joins us after working as the Operations Manager for the state Department of Ecology's Office of Columbia River since 2019. Prior, Holly Myers served as Environmental Health Director at Yakima Health District overseeing programs including drinking water, on-site sewage disposal systems, solid waste facilities, water recreation, and food safety. Her career includes working at Kittitas County Public Health as an environmental health supervisor and writing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits at the City of Yakima Wastewater Treatment Division. Ms. Myers' volunteer commitments include training residents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to create bio-sand water filters for clean and sustainable drinking water in 2018.

NEW! WFI WEBPAGE

We recently created a new [Water Facilities Inventory \(WFI\) webpage](#), where you can access your WFI form and download or print it. We wrote [detailed instructions](#) to help you fill it out correctly. We also answered frequently asked questions on the webpage. The WFI helps water systems tell us about their facility equipment. When you know your equipment inventory, it helps you manage your budget for repairs and replacement. Additionally, accurate records help us contact the correct person during emergencies. Please keep your WFI current for these and other important reasons.

BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) increases Washington's funding to the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This funding will be available in Washington October 2022 through September 2026. The EPA released an implementation memo that outlines a strategy for collaborative implementation with state, local, and Tribal partners. The memo highlights the flexibility provided to states and borrowers to address a wide variety of local water quality and public health challenges. We have not completed our review, but wanted to share it with our partners. You can find the implementation memo, and registration for webinars discussing it, on EPA's website at [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law SRF Implementation Memorandum | US EPA](#). The national webinars are scheduled March 10 and March 16. This memo does not include guidelines for Build America Buy America requirements.

We are reviewing the memo to identify program changes, timelines, and implementation requirements. We appreciate your patience as we evaluate this document, our program, and determine how this memo and future guidance impact our program. We created the [DWSRF Infrastructure Bill Funding Fact Sheet 331-685 \(PDF\)](#) to help you learn what the BIL means for your drinking water system. We will use the same DWSRF program eligibility requirements for this funding. We will post guidance on our [DWSRF webpage](#) at least 30 days before any funding cycle.

The BIL also includes money for water systems dealing with [PFAS contamination](#). The money covers finding a new water source, or another option for treating PFAS. Find more resources and links on our [PFAS in Drinking Water—Monitoring and Analysis webpage](#).

CYBER SECURITY—A FIRST LINE DEFENSE

Last year, a [well-publicized attack involved a Florida utility's caustic soda supply](#). The treatment plant operator noticed unexpected actions on the plant's monitors and stopped the attack. The hackers exploited poor password and network security on an outdated operating system.

It is critical to prepare for and reduce the risk of a cyber-attack on water and wastewater infrastructure. The Russian-Ukraine war heightened this threat. In January, three federal agencies issued a joint advisory alert on [Russian Cyber Threats to U.S. Critical Infrastructure](#). WAWARN and some other larger utility groups shared that message in late February.

With the heightened threat of an attack, we want to make sure you know where to find tools to help you prepare. EPA offers a [cybersecurity action checklist](#). It helps you train for and respond to a cyber attack.

You can find many resources at the [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency \(CISA\) website](#). They recently shared [Preparing for and Mitigating Foreign Influence Operations Targeting Critical Infrastructure \(PDF\)](#). This article explains how foreign hackers use social media and other online programs to influence public opinion and spread falsehoods. It helps you identify risks and gives you tools to reduce them and protect your communication channels.

CISA's [Shields Up](#) provides guidance to help prepare for and respond to disruptive cyber activity.

AWWA's [Cybersecurity and Guidance webpage](#) offers cyber security resources.

BATALK NEWSLETTER

Did you know? Washington's Backflow Assembly Testers (BAT) have an electronic newsletter, [BATalk!](#) Developed by Washington Certification Services (WCS), it shares important certification program information. Visit the WCS website to view the [BATalk Archives](#). To get on the email list, send a message to batnews@greenriver.edu.

Backflow Assembly Testing Requirements

A Department of Health certified backflow assembly tester (BAT) must test all backflow assemblies. Installation, maintenance, and repair of backflow assemblies may require licenses, registrations, and certifications issued by the Department of Labor & Industry (L&I). L&I made slight changes to their rules that include plumbing contractor certification for some activities. Please review our new [Backflow Assembly Testing Requirements Fact Sheet 331-680](#) for details.

FREE EPA INTRODUCTORY WEBINAR: BUILDING RESILIENCE AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Webinar Training for Drinking Water and Wastewater Utilities

EPA's [Creating Resilient Water Utilities \(CRWU\) initiative](#) provides a series of free webinars that focus on building resilience to climate change impacts as well as options for adapting, and utility infrastructure financing. The webinars provide information on EPA's [Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool \(CREAT\)](#). Earn CEUs by registering, attending, and filling out a survey. There are five webinars in the series:

- ◆ April 20—introductory webinar Climate Trends for the Water Sector in the Northwest Climate Region. [You must register by April 19](#) for the introductory session.
- ◆ May 3—Provides training overview and details on using EPA's CREAT Module 1 and 2.
- ◆ May 5—Details on using EPA's CREAT module 3 and 4.
- ◆ May 10—How to use CREAT module 5.
- ◆ May 24—Facilitated discussion on how a utility applies for specific funding.
- ◆ To learn more about this training series and CREAT, [read the flyer](#).

WHY YOU SHOULD USE A DIGITAL CHLORINE METER

While regularly used, data show that chlorine color wheels and test strips are not accurate enough for use in the drinking water industry. Neither follows a method approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. ODW's own Steve Deem, Nancy Feagin, and Krista Chavez share their research and experience in this [December 2021 Opflow article](#).

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