



News Release

For immediate release: May 3, 2022

(20-064)

Contacts: [DOH Communications](#)

Department of Health honors “best of the best” in drinking water

Drinking water professionals recognized during National Drinking Water Week

OLYMPIA—Eight people from around Washington state who ensure their communities have access to safe, clean drinking water are being honored during annual National Drinking Water Week, May 1-7, 2022. Over 40 years ago, the [American Water Works Association](#) started National Drinking Water Week to highlight the essential role drinking water plays in the everyday health of our communities and economy.

The Department of Health (DOH) recognizes these professionals for maintaining high-quality water systems, a critical part of public health, especially over the last two years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The winners are:

- *Commitment to Excellence*: Tom Krebs, Water Treatment Plant Supervisor, City of Walla Walla; Chris Orkney, Lead Operator, South Bend Water Department, Raymond/South Bend; and James Jensen, Operations Manager, Washington Water Service
- *Above and Beyond*: Kathy and Oz Noboru Ausley, co-managers of Bethel Green Acres Association, Spanaway
- *Most Innovative*: Jude Grounds, Senior Project Manager, Carollo
- *Grace Under Pressure*: Tom Martin, Water and Wastewater Systems Manager, Clallum PUD #1, Sequim
- *Friend of Drinking Water*: Arnica Briody, Environmental Health Specialist, Chelan-Douglas Health District, East Wenatchee

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- *Perseverance Under Adversity*: Mark Combs, Water Operator, Rumbolz Sunset Water Association, Maple Valley

Washington's Drinking Water Week winners are from all over the state and work at organizations ranging from small, rural systems serving 15 households to very large utilities serving hundreds of thousands of households. DOH recognizes them in a variety of categories: innovative solutions; those who overcome difficult, recurring problems; and others who demonstrate a commitment to excellence, or who go above and beyond the normal range of duties. Winners were nominated by supervisors, colleagues, or peers from DOH's Office of Drinking Water.

Learn more about our winners at doh.wa.gov/DWWeek.

The [DOH website](#) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. [Find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#). Sign up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

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