



Meeting Notes
Drinking Water Advisory Group
June 6, 2022

Note: Presentations are linked on the agenda item title. Handouts are linked in the notes section.

Agenda Item	Notes
1. Welcome Brad Burnham, Policy and Planning Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ National Drinking Water Week celebrated recently. We had eight winners. ◆ Next meeting September 12. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tyler Clary states that the next meeting scheduled September 12 conflicts with the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water Infrastructure Conference in Portland. ○ Brad—We may move the date if possible.
2. ODW Update Holly Myers, Office Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Working hard to hire new staff for several vacant positions. Recently had four new hires: Forms and Records Analyst in Tumwater, two Engineers in SW office, and a permanent Administrative Assistant for the director. NW Office Manager, Compliance and Enforcement for SW still in recruitment. ◆ SDWIS—Safe Drinking Water Information System used by most states. We will begin transition from Sentry to SDWIS. ◆ Moving to digital environment with electronic filing and receiving only electronic files. This is a big project with more information to come. ◆ Kent office lease is not being renewed. The office will be closed at the end of August. We are working with our facilities team to find a location for files. ◆ Working closely between regions for a statewide effort to catch up on sanitary surveys. Working from a priority list and hired a few non-perm positions to help with this. ◆ Voluntary PFAS testing has resulted in some systems that are over the SAL. We are working closely with these systems to provide access to resources for treatment. ◆ Lower Yakima Valley has a large nitrate contamination issue. Working with Yakima Health District to provide alternative water supply to homes with elevated nitrate samples/contamination. Brad will follow up with information about decision package to provide additional funding for this. ◆ Looking for grant funding to assist Ferry and Stevens counties with receivership for some water systems. <p>Questions? None.</p>
3. Legislative and Rule Update Brad Burnham, Policy & Rules Section Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two provisos in the budget bill were approved. ◆ One related to fluoridation to provide health assessment and engineering assistance to water systems. ◆ Policy bill related to fluoride did not make it through legislation. ◆ Second is related to PFAS to coordinate with offices to create a public forum and outreach. ◆ Next session—Following draft proposals in the works: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Provide alternative drinking water resources to those impacted by widespread contamination.



	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2.) Addressing failing water systems and receivership. Recent legislative session policy bill did not make it through, but we are working on new draft to increase funding to between \$5,000,000 and \$10,000,000.3.) Thinking about changing the name from Water System Acquisition and Rehabilitation Program to the Drinking Water Consolidation and Rehabilitation Program.4.) Increase staff to fill needed positions to help with new and emerging contaminants. This would be \$500,000 annually.5.) Consolidation Grant funding of \$400,000 per year to provide additional grants. Max of \$50,000 per consolidation.6.) Construction loan increase of the state match for the 2023-2025 biennium.7.) Another increase to allotment for set-asides.8.) Working on memorandum of understanding for policy update with the Department of Ecology for water system planning and water rights. <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Emergency Response—a lot of staff participation in training and exercises recently.◆ Rule update:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Proposed changes to non-site non-potable water system rule. We are at the 102 stage.○ Lead and Copper Rule Revisions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Still waiting on guidance from EPA.○ Workgroup working internally on this.◆ Operator Certification◆ Proposing changes to a definition: changing “grandfathering” to “legacy.”<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ At the 102 stage right now.○ Virtual Public Hearing on July 12 at 1:00 PM. <p>Questions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Wynn Grcich—Fluoride should not be in our water due to causing many health problems such as cancer, ADD, and Alzheimer’s. Brad encouraged her to send an email to him directly with detailed questions and concerns to possibly add to a future agenda.
<p><u>4. Infrastructure Funding and Feedback</u> Corina Hayes, DWSRF Program Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) grant funding updates presented.◆ Next construction funding cycle 10/1/2022 to 11/30/2022. This includes BIL funding.◆ Lead Service Line Replacement Eligible Projects<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Replace entire lead service line○ Replace goosenecks, pigtails, or connectors.○ Replace some galvanized lines.◆ Emerging contaminant Eligible Projects<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Focus on PFAS○ Used for Treatment Systems, pilot testing, and new sources.○ Consolidation or development of a new public water system to address contamination of individual wells.◆ Prioritizing Disadvantaged Communities.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Buy America, Build America<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Still awaiting EPA Implementation guidance.○ Applies to all projects receiving federal funding (BIL and standard)○ EPA is working with OMB on National level waivers.◆ Applications go through WALT application portal.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Contact Sara Herrera for assistance at sara.herrera@doh.wa.gov.○ Deadlines and rates/fees shared for construction and pre-construction loan applications.◆ Consolidation Grant cycle is currently open—closes June 30, 2022.◆ Thinking about Lead Service Line Inventory Loans.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Would be similar to preconstruction loans.○ First come first serve until funding is exhausted.○ What are thoughts on making this loan cycle available?<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No comments, but a lot of “thumbs up.”○ Reach out to Corina directly if you have any additional questions.○ Presentation posted to website. <p>Questions? None.</p>
<p>6. Value of Water Campaign Mike Means, Capacity Development and Policy Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ How actively should we continue to engage with water systems on campaign? What should our role be? How well did it work in the past? S◆ John Weidenfeller—What have our efforts been in the past and what outreach did we do?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Historically we worked with Seattle Public Utilities and others on ad campaigns.○ Conversations with communities.○ Derek Pell—utilized publications to raise awareness on the value of water and worked with utilities to have conversations with customers about value of water. See link: thevalueofwater.org.◆ Michele Campbell—Not familiar with this campaign and hasn’t seen utilities pursuing this. Thinks this is very important and would love to see DOH get behind this campaign and work with utilities as well.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mike Means—this is a national campaign.◆ Dan Sander—Thinks it is a critical piece of asset management and rate structures and increases. Would be very beneficial, especially to smaller utilities.◆ Lori Blau—RCAC has been working with small utilities and water systems to change terminology from “rate studies” to “cost of service analysis.” Education tool for decision makers to translate this message to customers.◆ Jeff Johnson—Would like to see a “Day Without Water” campaign also. Doesn’t think public understands how critical this service is until it isn’t available.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Day Without Water sprang from the Value of Water campaign. See link: imagineadaywithoutwater.org.◆ Derek Pell—How do we take this to the next level? Do we want to look at approaching the legislature?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Comments from the TEAMS chat:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Culley Lehman—"Absolutely get Utilities and Trade Commission involved."▪ Darci Mattioda—"We promoted AWWA Drinking Water Week."
<p><u>7. Future of Asset Management</u> Brian Sayrs, Planning Policy Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Introduction<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ ODW's approach is to ensure that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Every new and existing public water system acquires and maintains technical, asset management.◆ Five core questions of asset management review<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Current state of assets.▪ Level of service.▪ Critical Assets.▪ Minimum life cycle cost.▪ Long-term funding plan.◆ How are we encouraging asset management?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Passive—Publications.○ Collaborative – Policy Development.○ Technical Assistance—Coordinated TA.○ Regulatory—Compliance Assurance and Enforcement.◆ Tomorrow's asset management<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Inclusive.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Will all community systems have asset management plan? Noncommunities?○ Systematic.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Will capital improvement plans be in a common format for regional funding opportunities?○ Regional.○ Equitable.◆ Potential barriers for small systems<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lack of minimum standards/required topics?○ Inconvenient group training sessions?○ Limited direct technical assistance?○ No sense of urgency?○ Lack of enthusiasm to invest in the future?○ Unaware of the risk?○ Lack of funding?○ Distrust or disinterest in the electorate?◆ Potential solutions<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Publications to encourage AM?○ Help develop peer networks, e.g. mentors?○ More specific rules and guidance?○ Webinars, conferences, video?○ More direct technical assistance?○ Require assets management at some point?



◆ **Breakout Discussion**

◆ Questions for Breakout Session

1. Who here already has an AM program?
 - How much public engagement was there in setting your level of service?
2. Which of the five questions is our weakest?
3. What other organizations encourage or assist with asset management (i.e. RCAC)?
4. What barriers are small systems struggling with?
5. What should ODW do to help small systems use AM and what should others do?

◆ Handout—[Future of Asset Management Discussion](#).

◆ **Report Back**

- Room 1
 - Difficult to get public engaged. A way to explain it is it's like a new roof. Needs to be replaced every 25-30 years. You need to plan and save money for this.
 - Small systems often aren't prepared to manage a water system (HOA's for example) and need assistance and education on how to plan and apply for funding when needed.
 - Importance of education and an asset management program.
- Room 2
 - PUD has an asset management plan, created in 2012 and updated in 2018. Use it in all aspects of management of 208 water systems.
- Room 3
 - Focused on financial aspect of capacity and the prevailing thought that water is "free" but the service to get water is not. To best service the future, HOA's and small water systems, need to bring to their boards importance of investing in future improvements.
 - One solution is to emphasize the Small Water Management Plan for smaller systems.
 - Recommend a brief "snippet" on customer water bills to keep customers constantly informed about repairs and improvements currently needed or in process.
- Room 4
 - Challenge—city council members frequently change, and water systems are constantly needing to explain needs and costs.
 - City of Vancouver put together a Finance and Asset Management group, working with consultants on planning and risks.



- Derek Pell shared the following link in the chat: [Planning Guidebook with Asset Management Chapter \(3\)](#).
- Room 5
 - Sammamish have an asset management program.
 - Lakewood is currently working on one.
 - Direct impact to rates/fees gets people involved.
 - How detailed should asset management plans be?
Suggestion of different levels of intensity for different water systems depending on size of system.
 - Level of service is difficult to address in a technical way, but it ultimately drives what rates/fees will be.
 - Organizations that can assist with developing assets management programs are ERWOW and RCAC.
 - Impression that it may be easier for smaller water systems to create asset management plans as there are less communications needed.
 - Barrier is that people don't understand the importance of asset management programs. "People" are often the most important asset to a water system.
 - Solutions – mentorship between cities and water systems to compare what level of service each has established and help each other for creating asset management programs.
 - Additional regulation would not be helpful.
 - Ability to assess, mentor, and evaluator more systems would be helpful.
- Room 6
 - Dynamic and continuing evolving assets is a challenge.
 - Importance of asset management plan in keeping good records and assisting with attaining grant funding.
 - Important to coordinate and communicate with systems as a piece of attaining funding from Public Works Infrastructure.
 - Small systems find it daunting.
- ◆ Email Brian with any further thoughts or questions brian.sayrs@doh.wa.gov.
- ◆ Comment from TEAMS chat:
 - Chris McCord— "Brian, I do want to add that we are likely to use asset management plans as we begin to evaluate work on climate impacts/emergency response, equity and affordability."



**8. Agenda Ideas for
Next Meeting**
**Brian Sayrs, Planning
Policy Lead**

- ◆ What topics would you like to hear about in future meetings?
 - Water policy, consolidations, water rights issues.
 - Utilities would like to see a more active role from DOH in helping facilitate water rights transfers.
 - Drought and snowpack.
 - Kent office closure and how it is impacting work.
 - In-person meetings with non-DOH staff, off site only.
 - Still not able to have in-person meetings at state facilities.
 - How do you want to get messages? Concern that we are overcommunicating but fear we may not be communicating enough.