DW Now

JULY 2025

Highlights

Notable Dates

Next DWAG meeting 9/8

DWSRF Roadshow Events (see ▸p8)

- July 17, Yakima
- July 31, Coupeville
- August 4, Tumwater
- August 19, Tacoma
- August 25, Ridgefield
- September 15, Spokane
- September 23, Leavenworth

Connections

The Office of Drinking Water Newsletter
SIGN UP to get this in your inbox!
Find Offices and Staff in Your Area
Drinking Water Home Page

Guidance for Climate Resiliency Element in Water System Plans

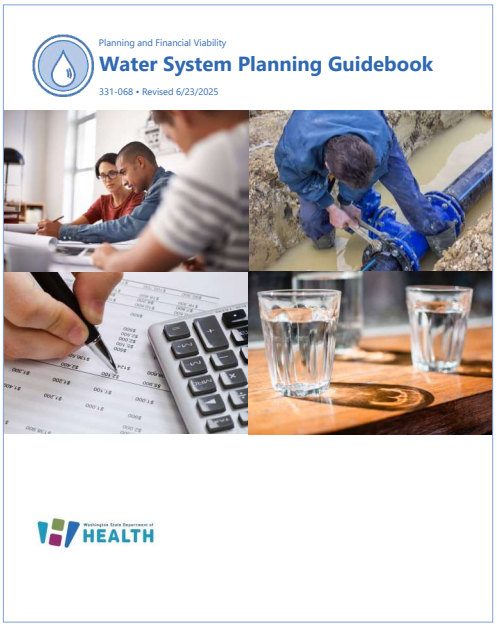
In 2024, the Department of Health adopted changes to the Water System Plan rule (WAC 246-290-100) to include a new climate resilience element. The rulemaking was in response to ES2HB 1181 (2023), which added the requirement to state statute (RCW 43.20.310). The new requirement impacts only those Group A community public water systems serving 1,000 or more connections. These water systems will need to include the new climate resilience element **in water system plans initiated after June 30, 2025**.

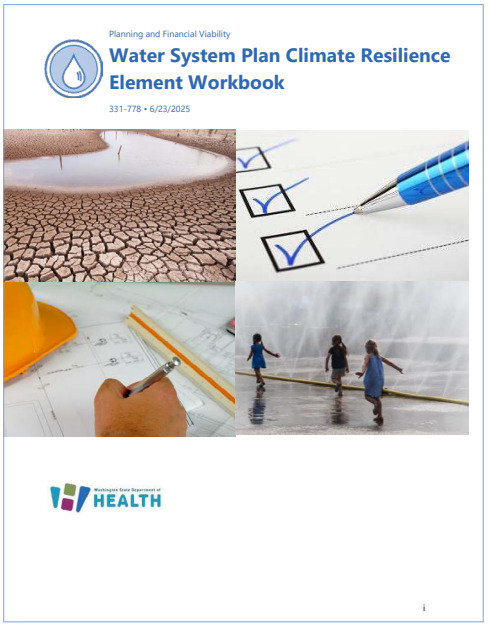
With the help of the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, we made changes in our *Water System Planning Guidebook* 331-068 (PDF) to align with the adopted rule. We added a new Climate Resilience Element section to Chapter 2. We also created a new publication, *Water System Plan Climate Resilience Element Workbook* 331-778 (PDF). The workbook helps water systems identify climate related issues specific to their area and helps them implement strategies.

If you would like more information about water system planning, visit our Water System Planning Requirements webpage. Or find staff contact information on our Drinking Water Offices and Staff webpage.

Please note this is separate and apart from guidance and requirements relating to:

- The climate change and resiliency element required in the local comprehensive plan under RCW 36.70A.070(9), per the same 2023 legislation (Ch. 228, Laws of 2023).
- Commerce Climate Planning webpage.





A Word from the Director

HOLLY MYERS

Staying Strong Through Change

Greetings to everyone during a very busy, ever changing and ever challenging time for Washington.

A few months ago, the state announced significant budget challenges that affect all agencies—including the potential for staffing and funding reductions. These changes are becoming more visible across government, but **they also highlighted something important: the strength and commitment of our team**.

As a result of these cuts, we are changing the structure of our management. **The work of our programs and services to our communities is not changing**. We are adapting to best serve counties and public water systems across the state with the same staff and reduced management workforce, by eliminating regional divisions and creating One ODW.

Our Program Services Remain Strong

While we are seeing changes in management structure, **our mission and core services remain the same**. We continue to support counties and public water systems statewide with the same dedicated teams.

As of July 1, 2025, some staff have new reporting lines and supervisors. We're grateful to the managers and supervisors who helped shape this transition and offered ideas to strengthen collaboration under the new structure. Here's a link to our new org chart.

Building One ODW: Integrated, Collaborative, Efficient

In some areas, staff now work more closely across teams to support the same systems—an approach already common in programs like Operator Certification (OpCert), Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), Source Water Protection (SWP), Engineering and Technical Services (ETS), and Policy and Planning team.

This unified approach—One ODW—helps us:

- Share workloads more effectively.
- Develop consistent processes and templates.
- Expand capacity to meet statewide needs.

Equity at the Core

Serving all 39 counties, 35 local health jurisdictions, and more than 4,000 public water systems is no small task. To continue supporting water systems equitably, we're committed to:

- Close coordination with local partners.
- Clear communication about technical assistance.
- Fair and consistent regulatory relationships.

Regardless of size, location, or history, every community deserves high-quality support. **We welcome your suggestions on how to strengthen this commitment**.

Supporting Staff and Sharing Priorities

Our new management structure supports:

- More standardized workflows.
- Clear statewide priorities.
- Balanced workloads and work-life harmony.

Managers are coordinating with their teams to ensure staff are informed, supported, and focused on core work. Our aim is to provide equitable service delivery while also sustaining the well-being of our teams.

Staying Focused During Uncertainty

Even as we navigate state budget reductions, potential federal funding changes, and staffing shifts among partner agencies, our teams continue to deliver critical services. We're thankful we've avoided large-scale staff reductions so far—and we remain committed to doing the best with what we have.

Passing Along Knowledge and Leadership

Although some valued team members have retired or are embarking on other professional journeys—we're grateful for their leadership and dedication. Their efforts to share institutional knowledge and onboard new staff help ensure continuity of service for our communities.

Looking Ahead: Rules and Legislation

We're preparing for significant work ahead as new rules and legislation take effect, including:

- PFAS regulations.
- WAC 246-290-990 for Water system evaluation and project review and approval fees.
- WAC 246-292-995 for Certified operator and public water system certification fees.
- WAC 246-294-070 for Operating permit fees.
- Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) updates.
- Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI).
- HB 1947 and HB 1615.

Our staff and managers will continue to share updates on implementation and impacts.

Our Unchanged Mission

No matter how our internal structure evolves, **we remain committed to our core mission: ensuring safe, reliable drinking water for the people of Washington**. We're proud to continue that work alongside our partners—now and in the future.

Be Prepared for Harmful Algal Blooms

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) are a potential source of contamination for all surface water sources in Washington. Toxins produced by cyanobacteria found in source water or released from cyanobacterial cells through treatment processes can harm people and animals. People and pets that play, wade, swim, or water ski in lakes with toxic blooms—or drink water containing cyanotoxins—may suffer adverse health effects. By damaging the liver, nervous system, skin, and gastrointestinal systems cyanotoxins can cause paralysis, organ damage, heart failure, and death.

In addition to potential public health risks of cyanobacteria, any source water algal bloom can cause increased filter loading resulting in shorter filter run times, reduced treatment plant capacity, taste, odor, and color problems in finished water, and loss of consumer confidence in the quality of drinking water. You can prepare for and mitigate these events by proactive planning and active source management. With the algae bloom season underway, it's time to make sure you are prepared. Available on our website, *Dealing with Algal Blooms: Time to Make a Plan* 331-654 (PDF).

Historically, public water systems experiencing algal blooms have typically been supplied by a lake or impoundment or were located downstream from a lake or impoundment with an active bloom. Systems with flowing sources (rivers or creeks) have not been considered at risk, but benthic (anything associated with or occurring at the bottom of a body of water) cyanobacteria have now been implicated in cyanotoxin detections in streams and rivers in New Zealand, Utah, Virginia, California, and here in Washington State.

Since 2021, benthic cyanobacteria have been implicated in toxins present in the Columbia River near the Tri-Cities and further downstream and have resulted in several dog illnesses and fatalities. Fortunately, routine monitoring at Pasco, Richland, and Kennewick have not shown any presence of toxins in the drinking water.

Based on the best available science, EPA developed guidelines for algal toxin levels in tap water that are protective of human health. Because young children are more sensitive to the short-term effects of these toxins, EPA developed two health advisory levels.

Microcystin

- 0.3 micrograms per liter: Infants and preschool-aged children should not drink the water.
- 1.6 micrograms per liter. No one should drink the water.

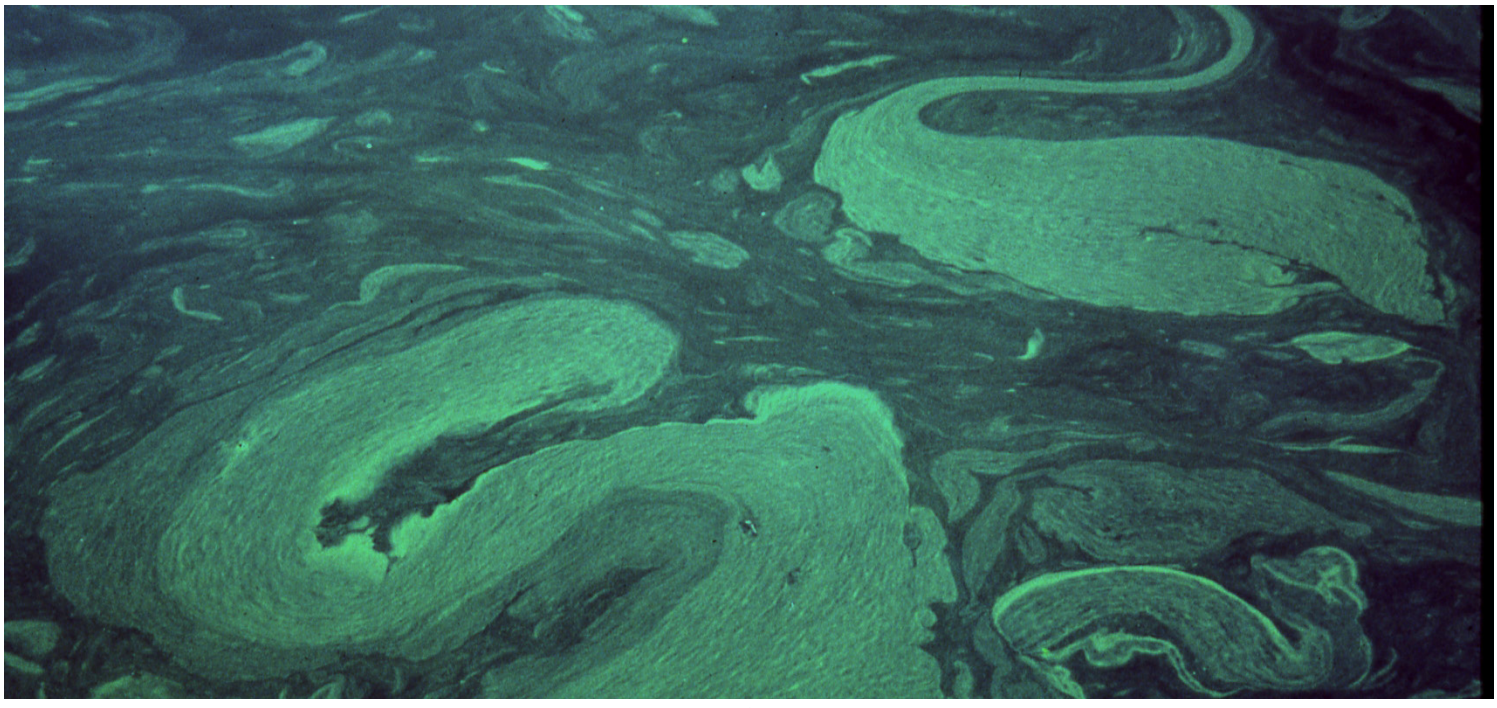
Cylindrospermopsin

- 0.7 micrograms per liter: Infants and preschool-aged children should not drink the water.
- 3.0 micrograms per liter: No one should drink the water.

Resources

- *Dealing with Cyanobacteria: Time to Make a Plan* 331-654 (PDF)
- Cyanobacteria and Cyanotoxins: Information for Drinking Water Systems (EPA, Sept. 2014)
- Cyanotoxin Guides for Water Utility Managers (AWWA and WRF, 2015)

If you have questions or concerns about harmful algal blooms, contact Cecilia Welch, Climate and Water Epidemiologist, 564-669-8851 or Jolyn Leslie, Water Treatment Engineer, 206-945-6927.



Avoiding Source Approval Pitfalls

Source approvals for groundwater wells are a very routine project for water systems. They are also one of the most involved and have the most pitfalls that can stop your project in its tracks. This article provides some tips to avoid some pitfalls, so your new source meets our approval rules.

Sanitary Control Areas and Protective Covenants are Essential

To ensure a properly sited well and appropriate sanitary control area, before the well is drilled, you must have a well site inspection. In most cases these are done by the local health jurisdiction (LHJ). If this step is skipped, and the well site is not ok, we cannot approve the source without mitigation measures, if possible.

The sanitary control area (SCA) is legally protected by filing protective covenants with the county that put limits on the property surrounding the well. If you own the 100-foot SCA this is simple to do. However, if your 100-foot SCA overlaps onto an adjacent property the other property owner will need to sign a restrictive covenant. It is not easy to convince people to sign a restrictive covenant because they are giving up the right to use their property as they want. Before you invest in drilling the well, we recommend you discuss the covenant with the other property owner and get an agreement in writing. If they won't or can't sign the covenant, then you should find an alternate well site that can be approved.

The mandatory 100-foot SCA is a standard protection required for all sources. No contaminant sources should be located within this radius. If there is an impairment in the SCA, sometimes it can be mitigated, but this is not a guaranteed outcome or possibility. Also, water systems should use the best source possible. We do not want to approve sources with potential contamination risks. Verify the SCA is free of contamination risk or confirm with your county-assigned field engineer that the risks can be reasonably mitigated.

Water Rights Can Make or Break a Project

Unlike physical infrastructure, water rights issues may not be possible to overcome. Before you do anything else for your new source project, we recommend you contact the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to verify that you have the water rights. If you don't have the required water rights we can't approve the source for use. It is not uncommon for a water system to drill a well that can never be used because they can't obtain water rights.

If you are going to install a source under the 5,000-gallon water rights exemption (an exempt well) make sure your project meets Ecology's exemption criteria, and you understand the limitations. For example, Ecology does not allow more than one exemption per development and the irrigation area is limited to ½ acre.

Some watershed Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA) in the state have established instream flow rules. These areas might have limitations on approval of exempt wells that may limit or prohibit approval of the source.

Pump Testing Requirements

Pump testing is critical for evaluating the sustained pumping rate that the aquifer can support. Our standard recommended duration is 72 hours for unconfined aquifers and 24 hours for confined.

We expect you to submit a pump test plan as outlined in Appendix E of the *Water System Design Manual* 331-123 (PDF). We don't want you to have to re-do the pump test because it wasn't long enough or you didn't collect the required data.

Water Quality Issues

Water quality from the well must meet drinking water standards for approval. Community and non-transient non-community systems must meet both primary and secondary standards. If the water quality results show the source needs treatment, you must complete this before the source is used. The treatment also needs to be approved by us.

The depth to the well's first open interval (screen, perforation, or open bottom) could impact whether the source is at risk of influence by surface water. If the source is within 200 feet to surface water (rivers, streams, ponds, drainage ditches) and the depth to open interval is shallow, we will require your source to be evaluated for surface water influence, or groundwater under the influence (GWI). The outcome of that evaluation could require installation treatment on the well.

New sources can introduce significant changes to distribution water quality that may cause corrosion issues. Water systems are required to evaluate the potential for corrosion impacts and changes to distribution water quality. It is not uncommon for a water system that changed their source type to have severe water quality issues in distribution.

For more information see *Well Source Approval Guidance* 331-674 (PDF). Also, please reach out to the engineer assigned to your county with any questions.

Backflow Assembly Tester Program Update

by Tiffany Miller, Program Manager, Washington State BAT Program, Washington Certification Services

What is a Backflow Assembly Tester?

A backflow assembly is a mechanical device designed to stop the reversal of flow in a pipe which could potentially contaminate a drinking water distribution system. Like all mechanical devices, backflow assemblies will fail and annual testing is required to ensure they continue to function as designed. Annual testing also has the advantage of exercising internal parts to extend the life device. Backflow Assembly Testers (BATs) ensure that these backflow assemblies are in working order. These testers are an essential and important part of the community that keeps our drinking water safe.

About the BAT Program

The BAT Program is administered by Washington Certification Services (WCS) for the ODW Waterworks Operator Certification program. The BAT program manages all exams, certifications, renewals and professional growth requirements. Backflow prevention assemblies are required to be installed and tested annually in accordance with WAC 246-290-490(7). BAT certification requirements are in WAC 246-292-034, Duties of a BAT.

Important Deadline, December 31, 2025

The end of this year marks a critical deadline for many certified BATs. Those with a **December 31, 2025**, professional growth (PG) deadline must fulfil their requirement by taking and passing a professional growth exam offered through Washington Certification Services (WCS).

- **Check your deadline** any time on the WCS BAT Certification Status webpage.
- **Schedule early** to avoid the year-end rush.

When to Take Your Exam

BATs can take their professional growth exam **any time during the three-year PG time frame**. We recommend that you complete the exam in the first or second year rather than waiting until the third and final year.

For example, if you have a 12/31/2025 deadline and complete your exam this year (2025), you can start testing again for your next cycle as early as **January 2026**. There are **no penalties** for testing early—only benefits!

Changes to Exam Availability

In previous years, WCS extended professional growth exams through the end of December to meet high demand. However, this is no longer the case. WCS will not offer any BAT practical exams after December 15th of any given year.

This year, the final practical exam will be offered on December 13, 2025. If you wait until December and do not pass on your first attempt, you may not have time to re-register before the application deadline.

Final Reminder

If your professional growth deadline is December 31, 2025, we encourage you to visit the Washington Certification Services website and **schedule your exam as soon as possible!**

Avoid the rush, schedule your exams as soon as possible.

Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) September 8 Meeting

We hold all our meetings through Microsoft Teams video, so you can join our meeting with your computer, laptop, tablet, or phone from wherever you are. **You can find the Teams links and meeting agenda on our DWAG Meeting webpage**. After the meeting we post any handouts or presentations and, within a month, we post the meeting notes.

Do you want to receive advance notice of meetings and their agendas? Join our advisory group email list.

Do you have questions or topics you want to discuss? Email Mike.Means@doh.wa.gov or DWInfo@doh.wa.gov with your ideas and questions.

DOH Updated the General PFAS Website—And it's Looking Good!

Our DOH PFAS team used input from communities affected by PFAS in their drinking water to inform the structure of our DOH PFAS website. The website is our central resource for general PFAS information and provides guidance and health recommendations, regulatory updates, DOH's health education materials, and external resources to broaden understanding and support healthy behaviors. We continually update the website to ensure that the latest PFAS information is available and easily accessible, supporting our community members and partners.

What You'll Find

We designed our animated PFAS Basics Video Series to provide understandable, accessible, and actionable recommendations to help people protect their health and lower their PFAS exposure. We continue to add new videos to the series based on feedback from local health departments, water systems, and our community partners. Current videos include basic information on PFAS, why they're a health concern, how to lower exposure to PFAS in drinking water, and more.

"TikToxicology" Reels for Social Media

Our DOH team developed these videos because of a request to make our communications "less government-y." Our TikToxicology reels provide basic information about PFAS in a short, simple, and shareable format. We also highlight work our partners are doing to help communities understand who their agencies are, and their role in PFAS. To view available reels, visit the TikToxicology playlist on DOH's YouTube channel.

Factsheets

You will also find a set of action-centered factsheets about PFAS on our PFAS website. We tested our factsheets with our team and community partners in real-world settings to ensure that they are clear and usable. Many of them include translations in Marshallese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. Some topics include:

- Home Water Treatment for PFAS.
- PFAS Point-of-Use Filter Options.
- Accredited PFAS drinking water lab lists.
- Private Wells and PFAS: Resource Guide for Common Questions.
- And more....

PFAS Timeline

We included timeline information so that you can get a sense of the larger PFAS story and what our state has already done to address PFAS in our communities.

ODW Supports Water Systems

Our PFAS in Drinking Water site provides resources that support Group A water systems. We are directly involved in PFAS rulemaking and regulations within our state. On our site we list various requirements for monitoring and sampling. We include information and resources on:

- State action levels.
- Public notification.
- Federal regulations.
- Reporting PFAS in your consumer confidence reports.
- PFAS mapping and dashboard.
- PFAS mitigation, and more.

Our Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program provides free technical assistance and makes funds available to drinking water systems to pay for infrastructure improvements. We help communities meet their regulatory obligations and develop the system plans and infrastructure projects necessary to ensure the provision of safe and reliable drinking water.

Do You Have a Water Shortage Response Plan?

We require all Group A water systems to have a Water Shortage Response Plan (WSRP). If you don't have one, it's time!

A WSRP's purpose is to prevent a drinking water emergency by reducing demand during times of limited supply. It's worked well for many water systems and their communities.

True Events at Fictional Water Systems

When its creek ran dry, Blue Lagoon Water System lost its main source of supply. When Taylor Valley Water System replaced its water treatment plant, it lost almost half of its supply for the summer. Both water systems and their customers endured by following their WSRP.

In the end, Blue Lagoon only needed voluntary use restrictions to weather the shortage without resorting to trucking water.

A mandatory outdoor water use ban allowed Taylor Valley to outlast a 40 percent supply deficit without any outages. By knowing the effect a water shortage will have on your community, you can be prepared for that event and prevent a drinking water emergency.

Of course, **to prevent an emergency, you must have the plan in place before the shortage occurs**. To develop your plan, see the resources and other assistance on our WSRP for Small Public Drinking Water Systems webpage.

Emergency Drinking Water Sources: Are They Ready?

More than 700 Group A public water systems in Washington have at least one emergency water source in case they need additional supply. An emergency source is:

- Approved by us for emergency purposes only.
- Not used for routine or seasonal water demands.
- Physically disconnected from the system.
- Identified in the water system's emergency response plan.

During a drought, **water systems and their customers should first conserve as much water as possible**. Water systems should use emergency sources only when conservation efforts are unable to balance demand with dwindling supplies. If you anticipate possibly using an emergency source, we recommend that you act in advance, before the shortage, to ensure water from the source will provide a safe and reliable level of production.

The primary health concern associated with a well not recently used or tested is acute microbiological and chemical contamination. Bacteria and other microorganisms can cause immediate and severe illness. Unfiltered or inadequately treated surface water, shallow hand-dug wells, wells directly influenced by surface water, unsealed wells, and poorly constructed or protected springs are examples of sources with a high risk of microbiological contamination.

Additionally, nitrate levels above the drinking water standard pose an immediate risk to unborn babies and children under 12 months of age.

If you are considering the possibility of bringing an emergency water source online as a response to drought conditions, please take the following actions.

- **Contact your closest drinking water office**. Contact us to discuss the construction of the source, potential sources of microbiological contaminants in the wellhead area or watershed, and the pumping and pump-control system. The source may need physical improvements before you use it, even if you only plan to use it for just a short time.
- **Disinfect wells**. If your emergency source is a well, plan to disinfect it before placing it into service.
- **Sample sources and treat accordingly**. Collect at least two coliform samples and one nitrate sample from each emergency source before bringing it online. If the samples are coliform-present or exceed the nitrate standard, you must appropriately treat the source. Continuous chlorination with sufficient contact time before the first point of service will be required for wells with detected coliform. Your regional office can advise you about disinfection treatment.
- **Notify your customers**. If you plan to use an unfiltered surface water source, you **must** issue a health advisory to all customers before and during the period the source is in service. Using an unfiltered surface source, or an inadequately treated groundwater source under the direct influence of surface water, requires close coordination with your closest Drinking Water office.

Finally, if for any reason you bring an emergency source online without any advanced planning or sampling, **you must immediately issue a Boil Water Advisory to your customers**. Consult with your closest Drinking Water office about appropriate tools and language for a health advisory and public notification. You can also find resources and information on our Drought 2025 webpage. You can also check out our Summer 2019 H_2Ops newsletter.

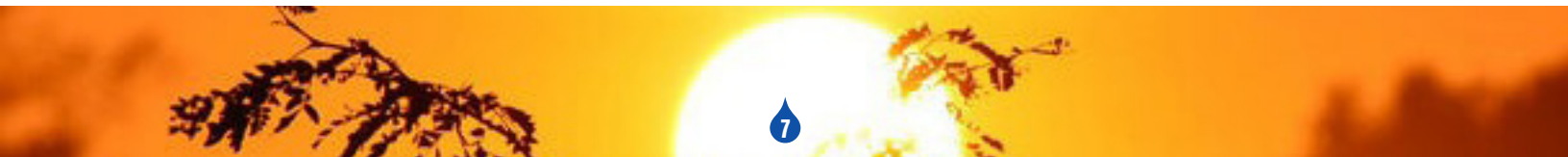
Help Your Customers Conserve Water

During a drought, your best allies are your customers who use water wisely. If your water shortage response plan depends on customers reducing demand, make sure your governing body adopts water reduction measures and ways to enforce them before a shortage occurs, before you need to use them.

Ways Customers Can Help

- Don't water your lawn between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sun evaporates water quickly, so if you water during the day, you're watering the sky. Instead, water in the early morning, evening, or night.
- Keep a container of water in the refrigerator. You won't waste water waiting for the tap to get cold.
- Fix dripping taps. Leaky faucets can waste 1,400 gallons of water per year.
- Taller grass uses less water. Set the blade on your mower slightly higher and save watering time.
- Take shorter showers. Showers can use 1.5 to 11 gallons per minute. Consider getting an aerated showerhead, or inserting a regulator, which puts a limit on flow rates.
- Always run full loads in your washing machine and dishwasher.

Whether it is a good water year or a bad one, water wise consumers can help. Find links and other resources and information on our Drought 2025 webpage.



DWSRF Statewide Roadshow Events

WE'LL BE IN YOUR AREA SOON!

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) staff members and our partners cordially invite you to attend one of our one-day workshops near you, either in person or virtually, and **earn 0.7 CEUs**. See letter of assignment (PDF).

Topics include funding and program updates, registration and navigation with Washington Loan Tracking, eligibility and review process, Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities, Environmental Justice, Technical Assistance and Engineering help. We will also have time for a Q&A listening session, so that we understand your concerns and issues.

We will provide refreshments.

PICK AN EVENT CLOSE TO YOU TO ATTEND IN PERSON OR ONLINE THROUGH MS TEAMS

ALL EVENTS ARE 8:30 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.

July 17

In Person
Yakima Ecology
1250 W. Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 284 244 514 488 9
Passcode: MV6th3Jj

July 31

In Person
Coupeville Recreation Hall
901 Alexander St,
Coupeville, WA 98239
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 233 442 823 510 1
Passcode: xb6Y23gf

August 4

In Person
Tumwater Dept. of Health, Town Center #1
101 Israel Rd. S.E.
Tumwater, WA 98501
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 291 141 700 116 5
Passcode: Fb2qc9Yw

August 19

In Person
Tacoma Water, conference room ABS-B1
3628 S. 35th Street
Tacoma, 98409
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 215 366 224 089 2
Passcode: 27sM6h3m

August 25

In Person
Ridgefield Administrative & Civic Center, Columbia
Assembly Board Room
510 Pioneer St, Suite B
Ridgefield, WA 98642
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 225 135 268 948 2
Passcode: 8GB27xa3

September 15

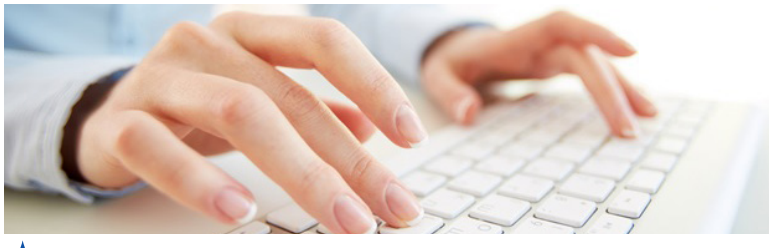
In Person
Spokane Central Library (Room TBD)
906 W. Main Ave,
Spokane WA, 99201
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 229 799 246 003 6
Passcode: VU9CC78o

September 23

In Person
Chelan PUD—Leavenworth
222 Chumstick Highway
Leavenworth, WA 98812
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 228 133 633 440 3
Passcode: VP6ks6Nu

For more information or any questions you may have, please contact DWSRF@doh.wa.gov, or call 360-867-3991. Visit our Drinking Water State Revolving Fund website.

We look forward to seeing you!



Same Farm Exemption Policy

We develop and implement policies for the state, which has 39 counties. Each county has processes and procedures for approving water adequacy for their constituents. Local building and zoning codes can be more stringent than state or federal regulations. Language included in our policy specifically states that, "These water systems may meet the criteria outlined in this document for the Same Farm Exemption (SFE). However, other federal, state, or local permitting agencies may require these water systems to be served by an approved public water system. WAC 246-291-010(62) lists several potential water systems that must be approved as a public water system."

Below are excerpts from the SFE Policy for further clarification.

Eligibility for Exemption

If a water system requests the SFE from the Group B water system regulations, the owner must sign and return the attached policy and affidavit stating:

- The water system has four or fewer connections, all of which serve a single-family residence, as defined in WAC 246-291-010(62);
- The residences served by the water system are all part of the "same farm" as defined under RCW 70A.125.010(12), and WAC 246-291-010(56); and,
- The water system provides drinking water for fewer than 25 people per day for less than 60 days per year.

A water system is not considered exempt until we, or an authorized designee, review the exemption criteria documents and issue a formal letter confirming the exemption.

Maintaining Same Farm Exemption

Every five years, the water system owner must reaffirm the system's status by resubmitting a signed affidavit provided by us or our designee, as well as an updated Water Facilities Inventory (WFI) form indicating the number of residents. We will collect this data and send reminders as our staffing capacity allows.

Losing Same Farm Exemption

If at any point, the water system no longer meets the criteria for "same farm" exemption, the exemption no longer applies, and the water system will be reclassified.

Our staff members will contact reclassified or newly identified public water systems with instructions on how to obtain approval for the appropriate public water system to meet ongoing system requirements.

Coordinated Planning

Even if a farm's water system is exempt from Group B regulations, it is a public water system under RCW 70A.100.030(3) for the purposes of the Coordination Act if the system was created after September 21, 1977.

Farms with Employees

According to WAC 296-307-09512, an employer must provide potable water for their employees. To protect worker health, employers must prevent their employees from drinking water out of irrigation ditches, creeks, or rivers. Potable water must meet the quality standards for drinking purposes of the state or local authority or must meet quality standards of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Interim—Primary Drinking Water Regulations, published in 40 C.F.R. Part 141 and 40 C.F.R. 147.2400.

Requirements for Temporary Worker Housing (TWH)

If the farm has temporary farm workers living on site, chapter 246-358 WAC and WAC 296-307-16130 establishes potable water requirements for their housing.

The same farm exemption does not apply to public water systems providing drinking water for TWH, as defined in chapter 70.114A RCW. WAC 246-358-055 requires TWH operators to "provide a safe and reliable supply of drinking water from an approved Group A or Group B public water system."

Lead and Copper Monitoring Reminder

For water systems **monitoring annually or every three years** for lead and copper, the required monitoring period is limited to the warmest time of the year; specifically, between **June 1 and September 30**. If you collect your samples outside of this timeframe you will not get credit for collecting your required samples.

You must identify sample sites that are most vulnerable to lead and copper corrosion. Generally, these are homes with lead service lines or homes built between 1982 and 1986 with copper pipes joined by lead/tin solder. To select homes at highest risk for lead and copper corrosion, you should survey records documenting the materials used to construct and repair your distribution system and buildings connected to your distribution system. Sources of information include historical plumbing codes and permit records, meter installation records, community surveys, county assessor websites, your lead service line inventory (LSLI), and distribution system records.

If your system has enough homes with lead service lines (LSL), 50 percent of your sample sites must come from homes served by LSL, otherwise, you must collect a sample from each available site that is served by an LSL.

Sample Sites and Collecting

When a sufficient number of Tier 1 sites do not exist or are inaccessible (e.g., homeowner denies permission for you to collect a sample), complete your sampling pool with Tier 2 sites. When a sufficient number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 sites do not exist or are inaccessible, complete your sampling pool with Tier 3 sites. Any water system without enough available sample sites that meet the tiering criteria may complete sampling at representative sites throughout the distribution system.

When collecting a reduced monitoring set of lead and copper samples, select from the highest tier sites available in your sampling pool.

Ensure you provide sampling instructions (331-227, PDF) to homeowners (also available in Spanish). Samples must be collected after at least six hours of stagnation from regularly used cold water kitchen or bathroom taps. Do not collect samples or submit samples to your lab collected from vacant homes, after extended stagnation time (over 18 hours), or from outside hose bibs.

More information can be found in our publication, *Lead and Copper Monitoring* 331-111 (PDF).

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