



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, October 2024

Welcome to Water on Whidbey October 2024!

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association publishes this monthly newsletter to keep the community up to date with water news. 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.

News from Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

September Quarterly Member Meeting Recap

Our most recent Member Meeting was held last month with 35 participants attending by Zoom. **The meeting featured a session on best practices for Water Systems planning and operations involving ADUs with representatives of the Office of Drinking Water and Island County** along with an update on the Lead Service Line Inventory submission which is required this month from each Group A system.

The presenters for the ADU discussion included Emily Neff, Island County Long Range Planning; Aneta Hupfauer, Island County Public Health; Derek Pell, Northwest Regional Manager, State Department of Health; and Crystal Nuño, Northwest Regional Planner for Island County, State Department of Health. Some of the key points made:

- Urban Growth Areas – Freeland, Langley, Coupeville, Oak Harbor: 2 ADU's/lot allowance, with goal to provide infill housing.
- Rural Areas: Per the 1998 Comp Plan, 35 detached ADU's/year limit, unlimited attached ADU's. An increase from 35 is currently being considered by the Island County Commissioners in conjunction with the 2025 Comp Plan. The goal is to increase housing availability.
- Group B Water Systems: A detached ADU is treated as a separate connection. The roof line determines if ADU is attached or detached, and a detached ADU must have independent exterior walls. The water users agreement may state whether or not ADU's are allowed.
- Group A Water Systems: Is more complicated, involving capacity limitations and number of ERU's (Equivalent Residential Units) as defined by the building code. Island County Health Department does not keep track of detached ADU connections.
- DOH has no formal definition for ADU's. When they receive a water systems plan for review, they are starting to look at ADU's, but policy is not established yet. They are looking at number of connections and method of tracking these over time. DOH's role is to have the water system provide a management plan.
- DOH wants to be accommodating, but wants the water system to define in their plan the number of ERU's per ADU, water availability and capacity for connections, and to verify it is consistent with their water system agreement. The key issue is water availability.

A discussion on the Lead Service Line inventory submission followed. Among the attendees, most reported that they were working on the inventory and none had reported finding any lead materials at this time. Representatives from DOH updated the group on technical support options ([link](#)) and the submission portal ([link](#)) along with what happens after submission:

- After submitting inventory, DOH will post it online, and either place a check mark that the criteria have been met, or issue a response if not.
- If deadline is not met, the water system will receive a letter from DOH.

The meeting minutes include more details on these topics as well as other discussion during the meeting. You can find the minutes on the WIWSA website along with the full recording [here](#).

[NEXT WEEK: Group B Meetup](#)

We will be holding our next **Group B Meetup on October 16, 2024 from 5 pm to 7 pm on Zoom**. We plan to have a discussion on **water rates** followed by a general forum for Q&A and discussion of issues. To facilitate the water rate discussion we are asking your help to collect some data on water rates within the Group B community through a short anonymous survey. Go to the [Meetup webpage](#) for more information and links for the survey or to register for the Meetup. Hope to see you there!

[SAVE THE DATE: December Quarterly Meeting \(2024 Annual Meeting\)](#)

Our next Member Meeting will be on Thursday December 12, 2024 5 pm - 7 pm on ZOOM. All subscribers to this newsletter will receive the Zoom invitation to the meeting around the end of November. If someone forwarded this newsletter to you, consider subscribing [here](#) in order to receive the invitation.

December is our Annual Meeting which includes board elections, budget review and other association business before our **feature panel discussion of recent SMA rate increases and checking in on member's service quality concerns with SMA representatives**. Mark it on your calendar.

[Open Board Position!](#)

- WIWSA has one board position open for election in December. **Have you considered applying to be a board member?** For 3 to 4 hours a month you can help promote quality water services within the Whidbey Island community. WIWSA is a focal point for information and training within the community and provides a forum that brings together water systems members with local and state agencies, and industry partners to work on issues together. Please get in touch by [email](#) if you would be interested or just would like to know more.

[Welcome New Members!](#)

- No new members this month

[FINAL REMINDER: Lead Service Line Inventory is due October 16, 2024—NEXT WEEK!](#)

- This is the final week for Group A systems to submit their information. There's technical assistance and support available for Group A systems working on compliance with the new Lead Service rules [here](#), as well as links for submitting your inventory [here](#).
- Lead & Copper inventory was a topic at **September's Quarterly Meeting** which included some good reminder information and tips. If you didn't attend or want to refresh your memory, you can view the [September Q3 Meeting Video](#). The Lead and Copper presentation starts at about 1 hour and 10 minutes (01:10:00) into the meeting.
- The September **ODW newsletter** includes some additional options for technical assistance with the inventory and related communications and includes some information on the penalties for failing to meet the deadline.
- You can find more details on the [DOH website](#) which includes links to the technical and compliance requirements along with information about grants and other funding options.

Local Contractors and Services

Just a reminder that you can find **links to local contractors and service providers on the WIWSA website [here](#)**, under the Resources menu item. The list includes pump repair and installation, Satellite Management Agencies (SMAs), water service contractors and legal services. We'll attempt to keep the list updated; if you have suggestions or corrections please pass them along.

Scholarship/Apprenticeship Program

Evergreen Rural Water offers a one-year QUEST program in addition to the full [Apprenticeship](#) program. **Through QUEST you can receive the training for Level 1 certification in Water Treatment and Water Distribution Management and you'd be eligible to apply for the WIWSA scholarship.** We are actively recruiting applicants for the 2025 Apprenticeship or QUEST program. The deadline to apply in May 31, 2025.

We are also looking for help with outreach to employers and educational programs to recruit potential applicants. **If you're interested in assisting the board with this program please contact us by email.**

Billing—Unpaid Annual WIWSA Dues are Overdue

If you haven't paid the annual membership dues for this year, they are overdue. Please contact us by email at treasurer@whidbeywatersystems.org at your earliest convenience. Thanks for your support!

PFAS News

- [East Selah residents eligible for free livestock PFAS testing](#)
- [Spokane International Airport releases first PFAs report](#)
- [DOH Releases additional episodes: PFAS Basics Series – YouTube](#)
- [A lasting legacy: DuPont, C8 contamination and the community of Parkersburg](#)

News from our Partners

Island County

- Later this month, **Island County will be hosting three stakeholder workshops to discuss the Climate Resiliency Sub Element for the Comprehensive Plan.** Stakeholders from a variety of organizations including WIWSA have been invited to participate in the workshops. **The public is invited to listen in and observe the workshops;** there will be a chance for the public to provide written comments to inform the process.
 - Sea-level Rise: October 21, 2024, 1 – 3:30 PM
 - Groundwater: October 29, 2024, 1 – 3:30 PM
 - Heat: November 1, 2024, 10 AM – 12:30 PM**The workshops will be held in-person at the Coupeville Rec Hall, located at 901 NW Alexander St, Coupeville, WA 98239.** For questions, please email compplan@islandcountywa.gov.
- The county issued a [request](#) to all water systems to **check the [Island County Hydrogeology Dashboard](#) for your water system's seawater intrusion risk.** When a water system is connected to more than 2 homes and the well is in an area considered to be at **medium, high, or very high risk of seawater intrusion then monitoring is required.** In addition Group B systems are required to perform water quality tests for coliform annually and nitrates once every 3 years, and may be required to measure their static water level. See the full notice [here](#).

Department of Ecology

- The Department of Health and the Department of Ecology have updated their **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Joint Review Procedures** for coordinating and reviewing water system planning and engineering documents. The MOU and Joint Review Procedures outline the roles and responsibilities the agencies have in this process. [Read the full press release.](#)

- Department of Health administers the water system planning program and makes the determination on the status of a submitted water system plan.
- Department of Ecology reviews water rights associated with the water system during the planning process. Ecology provides assistance to all water right holders.
- Water Year in Review—The water year begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30. Three months before the calendar year changes, hydrologists and other water scientists mark the start of the new water year. Starting the water year in October ensures annual precipitation measurements reflect winter snow accumulation and summer rainfall. DOE reports on the year just concluded, and you can register for the Oregon-Washington Water Year 2024 Recap and 2025 Outlook Meeting.

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- The latest **ODW Newsletter** includes information on the Lead Service Line inventory, CyberSecurity, SWAP Map updates and more.
- The **Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meetings** are a good way to keep in touch with current programs and status with Office of Drinking Water (ODW) activities. The most recent meeting was held just last month. You can view the September agenda here with the notes and some of the presentations on the DWAG Webpage along with minutes and presentations from previous meetings. The next Advisory Group meeting will be held on December 2, 2024. You can sign up for email notifications for all DWAG notices here.
- Water Impact Survey—We Need Your Input

AWWA Webinars & PNW Training

<https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Webinars>

<https://www.pnws-awwa.org/training/training-opportunities/>

NRWA Webinars

<https://www.gotostage.com/channel/nrwawebinars>

RCAC Workshops

<https://www.events.rcac.org/rcac/Calendar.asp>

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.