



Water on Whidbey

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association

Newsletter, February 2025

Welcome to Water on Whidbey February 2025!

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.

Whidbey Island Water Systems Association News

SAVE THE DATE: March Quarterly Meeting

Our next Member Meeting will be on March 20, 2025, 5 pm to 7 pm. The agenda tentatively includes Chris Kelley, Island County Hydrogeologist, on the Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP) update; Ernie Klimek, Evergreen Rural Water of Washington, on the ERWoW Career and Technical Education (CTE) program; and presentations on Group A and Group B insurance topics.

All subscribers to this newsletter will receive invitations and Zoom information for the meeting in about a week with a detailed agenda. If you are not currently on the email list, you can sign up [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE: April 2025 Group B Meetup

We are planning another Meetup of our Group B members and anyone serving on the board or otherwise supporting a Group B water system in Island County. **The specific date/time hasn't been set, but it is expected to be in late April on Zoom.** The agenda will include a presentation on **how the Coordinated Water System Plan revision may affect Group B water system management**, along with a general Q&A and issues discussion.

Welcome New Members!

- Faranda Community Water Assn (Group A)
- Twin View Estates (Group A)

Break-in at Beverly Beach Improvement Club (BBIC)

We received a note just this morning (February 28, 2025): *"Someone Broke into the Well Pumphouse at Beverly Beach, just off East Harbor in Freeland and stole approximately \$10,000 worth of chemicals and some miscellaneous pump parts. We serve 130 Homes. They cut locks to our driveway gate and Pumphouse Door. If you see or hear anything in regard to this please call the Island County Sheriff."*

Please help if you have any information. It is also a reminder to secure your water system.

Billing and Contact Information

It is annual dues time again! **You should be seeing invoices in your email inbox by March 1st for 2025 dues.** If there has been a change to the main contact for your water system, please help us stay current by forwarding the email to the appropriate individual. Or, feel free to pass on the new contact information to us at treasurer@whidbeywatersystems.org and we will update the account and redirect the invoice. Thanks for your support!

Home Owner Association (HOA) Registrations

Once again a reminder to HOAs to keep your state registration up to date each year. All HOAs are required keep current registrations with the secretary of state to maintain their legal authority to manage their water systems. **Visit the SOS page [here](#) to use the *Corporation Search* function if you want to check the status of your HOA's registration.**

Scholarship/Apprenticeship Program

The shortage of trained technical professionals is having more of an impact every day. See a [recent Seattle Time article](#) to read about this national problem. **To help with this locally, WIWSA has teamed with Evergreen Rural Water (ERWOW) to offer a scholarship to an applicant to Evergreen's one-year [QUEST](#) program or to the full two-year [Apprenticeship](#) program.**

Through QUEST applicants will receive training for Level 1 certification in Water Treatment and Water Distribution Management and would be eligible to apply for the WIWSA scholarship. Local municipal and SMA employers are invited to sponsor applicants from their organizations, along with Group A water systems looking to certify back up operators. The full Apprenticeship program takes the applicant through to Level 2 certification and is intended for those working in the field to enable on-the-job apprenticeship as well as classroom time.

We are actively recruiting scholarship applicants for the 2025 Apprenticeship or QUEST program, and are looking for help with outreach to employers and educational programs to recruit potential applicants. **If you're interested in this program please contact us by [email](#).**

The deadline for the scholarship application is May 31, 2025. Visit the [Scholarship page](#) on the website for more information or to apply for the program.

More News in February

- [Wildfires Are Revealing the Limits of Our Hydrant Systems](#)
- [States Move to Secure PFAS Protections Amid Rollback Fears](#)

News from our Partners

Island County

- Earlier this month it was announced the good news that Shawn Morris was returning to his position as department head for Island County Public Health. You can read the [South Whidbey Record article here](#).
- For nearly 60 years, [Opportunity Council](#) **has worked through the Island County Community Resource Center to provide assistance to people and communities in need**, including assistance with utility bills and services. They offer a variety of direct services and can connect people to other service providers as appropriate. Check out the services on their website to see if you qualify or click [here](#) to apply for assistance.
- As mentioned last month, if you haven't looked over the [Drinking Water](#) webpage please check it out, and **sign up for the Drinking Water Newsletter**. There are new tabs for FAQ (water quality, wells, and building permits), ICGeoMap tab (find water system, well, and seawater intrusion info), and links to other data sources. You can email DrinkingWater@islandcountywa.gov if you have any questions or suggestions.

- Chris Kelley spoke to the Board of Health including the three commissioners on the state of Water Availability in Island County. You can watch the video recording (about 20 minutes plus almost 45 minutes of discussion) [here](#) and can review his presentation [here](#). The presentation includes an updated count of water systems in the county through 2024 (shown below), and at the end Shawn Morris offered a followup discussion at a later date addressing aquifer recharge and the monitoring wells program.

Drinking Water Systems Type	Number of Systems*
Group A – Approved	251
Group A –Unapproved	44
Group B – Approved	443
Group B –Unapproved	144
2-Party – Approved	493
2-Party –Unapproved	78
Individual Well	7,615

***Best available information through 2024**

Department of Ecology

- Casey Sixkiller was appointed by Governor Bob Ferguson as the 14th Director of the Washington State Department of Ecology. Follow the links to read more about Casey [here](#) and Ecology's 2025-2030 [strategic plan](#).
- By the end of the last Water Supply Availability Committee meeting on February 13, snow was falling! According to experts, it's still too early to tell if the snowpack accumulated is enough to lift the drought declaration by spring. Read more in the [New Year, Same Drought](#) and [Washington Water Supply Update](#).
- [Bad Actors Spoofing SecureAccessWa \(SAW\)](#)

Department of Health/Office of Drinking Water

- The next **Quarterly Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) meeting will be held on March 3, 2025**. The meeting included updates on many topics including Lead and Copper Rule and information on Climate Resilience and Same Farm Policy. See the [DWAG Agenda](#) for more information and the [Meeting Invite](#) to attend the meeting. You can sign up for email notifications for all DWAG notices [here](#).
- The Washington State Board of Health (Board), working with the Department of Health, adopted an emergency update to chapter 246-290 WAC. This change ensures that federal maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) replace state action levels (SALs) when the MCLs are effective, not when they are adopted. This is necessary because the effective date for new federal MCLs is not until 2029, but the adoption date is June 25, 2024. The rule change ensures current protections for the public stay in place until the effective date. See the formal [Press Release](#) for all the details.
- DOH/ODW provides a deep library of documents, along with online tools and technical support to help you manage your water system. Check it out, especially if you're new to this world of water: [Where to Find Drinking Water Information](#) to see it all in one place.

- See the [January ODW Newsletter](#) for information on the New Emerging Contaminant Grant Funding, Free PFAS testing, an Update on ODW Compliance activities and more.

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.