



WATER TAP

WASHINGTON'S DRINKING WATER NEWSLETTER

A newsletter just for operators coming your way!

We're creating a new newsletter designed especially for water system operators.

We will print the new publication in full color and mail it to certified operators throughout the state.

We expect to publish the first issue of the yet-to-be named newsletter in the fall.

"Operators are the number one audience for the *Water Tap* newsletter. As great as that publication is, it has been aimed at a more general audience," said Office of Drinking Water Director Clark Halvorson. "Our goal is to fill this new publication with articles on subjects our operators care about."

We will continue to publish *Water Tap*, but less frequently.

"We're also developing targeted communications for local health jurisdictions and other stakeholder groups," Halvorson said. "I hope you'll give us [feedback](#) on the new publications, and if you have ideas for topics you'd like to see covered, share them with us."



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Department of Health
Office of Drinking Water
PO Box 47822
Olympia, WA 98504-7822
800-521-0323

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/drinkingwater>

State taps 6 drinking water pros

Washington has some of the safest, best-tasting tap water in the world, and that's due in large part to the drinking water professionals who have the training, vigilance, and wherewithal to take extraordinary efforts to keep it that way.



from taps throughout Washington.

Every year, the first full week of May is time to celebrate National Drinking Water Week. It's also when we honor the round-the-clock hard work and dedication of water system operators and others who keep safe, reliable drinking water flowing

from taps throughout Washington. Operating a water system is a demanding job involving planning, engineering, construction, maintenance, water quality monitoring, budget management, and excellent customer service. This year, we honored six individuals' efforts, ranging from emergency response to long, stellar careers within the drinking water industry. See award winners on page 8.

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THE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

BY CLARK HALVORSON



The Safe Drinking Water Act turns 40!

Signed into law in 1974, the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) set national regulations to limit drinking water contaminants and established monitoring, reporting, public notification, and source water assessment requirements for thousands of water systems across the nation.

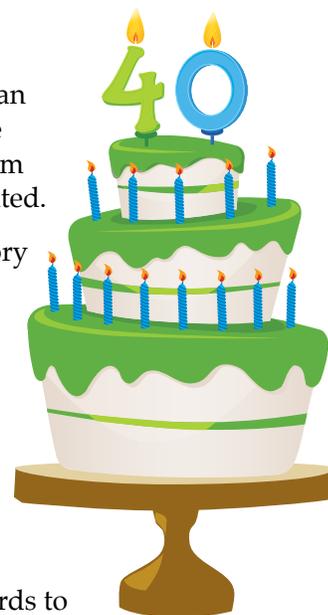
Perhaps the best testimony to the success of the SDWA is that you can drink from virtually any Group A water system with an extraordinarily high degree of confidence that the water is safe. In a world where more than 1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water and thousands die each day from waterborne diseases, this is a public health achievement we should never take for granted.

We plan to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the SDWA in September by telling the story of the extraordinary efforts you make to keep our drinking water safe. If your utility is planning a celebration, please let us know so we can coordinate and help publicize your event.

Safe drinking water does not just happen. At the Office of Drinking Water, we have an incredible team of passionate, talented professionals who put an emphasis on building and maintaining strong, trusting relationships with water systems and our many partners across the state. We do this because we know the challenges all water systems face.

I had the honor to travel across the state in May to present Drinking Water Week Awards to a few of our partners who individually made an incredibly positive impact on their water systems and in their communities. It was inspirational to hear their stories and see their communities come together to celebrate their accomplishments.

We don't know what the next 40 years will bring, but we do know the SDWA will continue to adapt to new challenges. As the regulations become more complex, our continued success will depend on the ability of the entire water community to work together toward our common goal of safe and reliable drinking water.



WQMS or WUE troubles or concerns?

Trying to access your Water Quality Monitoring Schedule (WQMS) or Water Use Efficiency Report in our "Sentry Internet" database? You can get both reports at <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/portal/odw/si/Intro.aspx>. After the two introductory pages, on the "Find Water System" page, **enter only the first 5 digits** of your water system ID and no other information. If you enter more than just the first 5 digits of your water system ID, these reports may not display.

We are still working on some issues with the WQMS, including monitoring requirements for radionuclides and non-waived inorganic analytes. The WQMS online has features you won't see in a printed copy. If you are still having trouble accessing the document, please contact the source monitoring staff at our [regional office](#). We'd be happy to help you.

For Group A community systems only: If you collected gross alpha samples between June 2000 and December 2003, and you are now scheduled for two samples in 2014, please contact your regional office.

A new communications tool for drinking water alerts

Two words you never want to see on your coliform monitoring lab results are “*E. coli*.”

They’re especially scary to your customers when the bacterium is in food or water. So it’s understandable that people affected by a drinking water health alert involving *E. coli* are upset and often hungry for information.

To feed that hunger, we developed a [Drinking Water Alerts webpage](#) that provides people under a drinking water alert some of the information they’re looking for. The page shows every alert issued within a two-week period, the status of the alert, actions people should take to protect their health, and other details.

The new webpage fills a gap in our ability to communicate with the public about drinking water alerts. We typically issue news releases about alerts for water systems with 100 or more connections when an alert begins and when it’s over. There are no interim news releases, and usually we don’t publicize alerts for smaller water systems.

The webpage captures new alerts, no matter the size of a water system, within 24 hours—usually much faster. We can instantly update alerts with significant milestones so the public and news media can follow developments.

The concept for the page grew out of a large-scale boil-water alert in King County last September. Calls from customers wanting details and updates deluged the utility and our offices. They were looking to our website to provide those details, but the site was not equipped to do that.

An analysis of visitors to our website during the alert’s five-day span, compared to the same time period the month before, showed a nearly 75 percent increase in visits. The highest percentage of visitors was from the Puget Sound region.

We launched the new webpage in March. We also launched a companion page that lists every active drinking water alert in the state.

The screenshot shows the Washington State Department of Health website. The main navigation bar includes links for Home, Newsroom, Publications, and About Us. Below this is a search bar and a 'Topics A-Z' button. A secondary navigation bar lists various categories: You and Your Family, Community and Environment, Licenses, Permits and Certificates, Data and Statistical Reports, Emergencies, and For Public Health and Healthcare Providers. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home > Community and Environment > Drinking Water > Alerts > Recent Alerts. A left-hand sidebar menu lists various topics, with 'Drinking Water' expanded to show 'Alerts', 'Active Alerts', and 'Recent Alerts'. The main content area is titled 'Recent Drinking Water Alerts' and contains the following text:

This page contains a list of alerts issued within the last two weeks.
 For information on active alerts older than two weeks from today, please visit [Active Drinking Water Alerts](#).
 Sort by clicking on each heading. For example, clicking "System Name" will sort the list alphabetically by system name. Change from ascending (A-Z) to descending (Z-A) by clicking the header again.

Alerts Issued Within the Last Two Weeks

Date Issued	Date Lifted	System Name	County	Action	Status
6/4/2014		Newaukum Valley Golf Course	Lewis	Boil Water	Active
Comments: E. coli and Total Coliform bacteria were detected during routine monitoring tests. Boil tap water until further notice.					
6/3/2014		USACE Illia Residential Area, 509-397-6414	Garfield	Boil Water	Active
Comments: The system experienced a water outage after a distribution line was accidentally cut. The operator issued a boil-water notice as a precaution in case contaminants got into the water lines. The system is adjacent to Lower Granite Dam.					
5/30/2014		Riverview Bible Camp, 509-445-1195	Pend Oreille	Boil Water	Active
Comments: The camp is under a boil/bottled water advisory because potentially					

Leaving a legacy

A small water system's journey to protect its watershed

By Lorelei Walker and Jennifer Kropack

As leaders at the Clinton Water District worked to maintain, safeguard, and improve the quality and quantity of their source water, they faced a daunting challenge: How do we protect our drinking water source when we don't own the land around it and we can't afford to buy it?

The water district leaders are forward thinking, strategic, and collaborative. They began leasing 5 acres of a 40-acre parcel of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) trust land that surrounds their wells and filter plant in 1977.

In the late '90s, as they considered expensive system upgrades, they became concerned about investing in assets on land they didn't own. So, Mike Helland, water district manager, reached out for help. One person he contacted was Pat Powell, a former DNR employee who became executive director of the Whidbey Camano Land Trust in 2003.

Powell's strategic approach and communication savvy met with the water district's values, commitment, and perseverance. She reached back to Helland with the vision and expertise needed to help the water district navigate a path to land ownership through DNR's Trust Land Transfer (TLT) Program. The Legislature funds the TLT program, which allows government-owned entities to acquire land with public value and benefit.

At first, the 40 acres the water district wanted didn't qualify for the TLT Program because the timber value was too low. Therefore, Powell and the water district teamed up with Island County Commissioner Mike Shelton.

Because Shelton understood the value of protecting the land, the ecosystem, and the underlying aquifer, he advocated their cause to the Legislature.

They didn't make the TLT list in the 2005-07 biennium, so they rallied the community to write letters of support. The land made it onto the list in the 2007-09 biennium. The district acquired it in 2010, for \$47,000, which was the difference between the leasehold value and the appraised value.

Together, the water district commissioners, Helland, and Powell created a legacy for their community and future generations. For information about the TLT Program, visit [DNR online](#).



"We remember, first and foremost, that our job is to serve our community's needs." This commitment unites (from left) Commissioner Maury Hood, Operator Adam Lehman, Water District Manager Mike Helland, Commissioner Roy Simmons, Camano Whidbey Land Trust Executive Director Pat Powell, Commissioner Kitty Adams, and Commissioner Joan Nelson, retired.

Clinton Water District's ingredients for success

- Understand your long-term goals. Make decisions for future generations, not just current customers, and help your community understand why this is important.
- Know who owns the land around your source. Reach out to see where you have common ground and how you can help each other reach mutual goals.
- Make source water protection a priority in your water system plan and budget.
- Be curious, ask questions, and look for solutions until you find partners that who help you pursue your goals. The Office of Drinking Water can help. Contact your [regional planner](#) or the [Source Water Protection Program](#).
- Practice collaborative decision-making. Entertaining others' viewpoints and making compromises will move you forward.
- Build your community's understanding about the importance of protecting your drinking water source.

Small Water Systems Workshops

More than 160 water system owners, managers, board members, and operators attended the Small Water Systems Workshops this spring. The workshops were designed to help water systems with fewer than 500 connections learn how to manage their system like a business.

Decision-makers were the target audience for this workshop. We were happy that close to half of the participants at the three statewide workshops were those exact people. "This would be a good place for new board members to come as it answered a lot of my questions," commented one decision-maker. Another participant described the workshop as, "Overall, the best, most informative class ever!"

The morning session started with information sharing and questions around:

- Why is it worth my time to be here today?
- What do I need to know about today's regulatory environment?
- What kind of help is available to me and my water system?
- What are some of my options for doing business differently?

After lunch, an "information marketplace" gave participants an opportunity to ask subject experts their most pressing questions. "It was wonderful having all these folks available in one room," said one participant. Each workshop included local presenters and experts.

Also in the afternoon, a mock board meeting was an interactive way to find out, "What do I need to know to avoid legal hot water?" One participant says it was a "very fun way to find out how not to run a water district meeting," and another decision-maker said it was a "great presentation with real life scenarios."

In the final part of the workshop, participants broke into small groups to discuss and report on two topics:

- What struck a chord for you today; and what action might you take as a result?
- How can you get people in your community engaged in your issues?

Sharing information with other water systems helped the participants realize others have the same problems they do. Many established relationships with neighboring systems and local experts.

Stay tuned for more workshop dates.



It was a full house! About half the people at workshops designed to help small water systems run like a business were our target audience—decision makers.

Collaborative workshops sponsors:

- Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
- Washington Public Utility Districts Association
- Washington State Office of Drinking Water
- Evergreen Rural Water of Washington
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation
- Washington State Auditor's Office
- Washington State Department of Commerce

Spokane Aquifer Joint Board Wins AWWA Source Water Protection Award

Proactive, sustainable, and collaborative are the key ingredients for source water protection success, according to Ty Wick, president of the Spokane Aquifer Joint Board (SAJB). The American Water Works Association (AWWA) will recognize SAJB's long-term success with an Exemplary Source Water Protection Award at its national conference in Boston on June 9. The award recognizes organizations in North America that develop and implement exemplary source water protection programs. SAJB won in the category for Very Large/Mixed Systems because its 21 members include irrigation, water and sewer districts, large and small cities, and private industries.

Ty Wick has been president of the SAJB, the oldest and largest collaborative source water protection group in Washington State, for 19 years. He fulfills his presidential duties in addition to his "day job" as general manager of Spokane County Water District No. 3. He's worked there since 1994, when he returned to Spokane after serving 10 years as the Water/Irrigation Superintendent for the City of Yakima.



A key element of SAJB's program is educating children about drinking water protection so, as they grow up, they make good choices. The mascot, Aqua Duck, appears at schools and public events, and graces the SAJB's education brochures.

doesn't work, the group tries another strategy. This flexible, proactive approach enables them to make progress and succeed over the long term.

When asked what other water utilities can learn from their efforts, SAJB's Program Manager, Tonilee Hanson, said a key element of success is a partnership between the Office of Drinking Water and a water system. She also cited dedicated water system collaboration, which enables sharing resources and developing one common message. Shared resources early on allowed development of a hydrogeologic model that the agencies and utilities use today as one tool to help make land and water use decisions.

AWWA started giving annual Exemplary Source Water Protection Awards after developing its Source Water Protection Standard G300 in 2007. AWWA's source water protection standard recognizes that every drinking water source faces unique issues, threats, and stressors; but at the same time, successful programs share several fundamental elements. SAJB's award application detailed its progress and success in each of the six elements: vision, characterization, goals, action plan, implementation, and periodic program evaluation and revision.

Since 1995, the SAJB has collaborated with agencies and organizations across the region to protect drinking water in Spokane County. The focus of their work is on preventing contamination of the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie aquifer, a sole-source aquifer that provides drinking water to more than 600,000 people in Washington and Idaho.

In the 1980s, Wick witnessed the power of collaboration during the battle for water resources in the Yakima River watershed. The water entities on the Yakima got together to talk, brainstorm, and share expenses when water rights went to adjudication. "I saw the power of water systems working together on issues," says Ty, "and I wanted something sustainable and ongoing for Spokane."

SAJB has always been proactive and preventive. Spokane County Water District No. 3 experienced the loss of a primary drinking water well and had to replace it back in the 1980s. It cost several hundred thousand dollars. Wick wanted Spokane drinking water utilities to join forces to make sure that never happened again, especially because the aquifer can't be replaced.

The SAJB focuses on four core goals: education and awareness, household hazardous waste removal or disposal, business chemical reduction, and continuous identification of potential contamination threats. According to Wick, while the SAJB concentrates on these core efforts, when something

Monitoring and turbidity meter guidelines for rapid-rate filtration plants

In rapid-rate water filtration plants treating surface water, turbidity measurements are the single most important parameter used to verify that the filtration process is working correctly and removing potential pathogenic organisms from the source water.

A surprising number of factors can affect the accuracy of the turbidity data generated, recorded, and reported to utilities and health departments, including instrument settings, physical locations, electronic data manipulation, operational practices, and human actions.

In 2013, we studied 25 rapid-rate filter plants in Washington State and found deficiencies in all 25 plants that could or did affect the accuracy of the turbidity data reported to us. A whopping 92 percent of the surveyed plants lacked written standard operating procedures (SOP) for instrument settings and reporting.

We developed the following information to help these systems.

Combined filter effluent (CFE) monitoring Reporting 4-hour CFE measurements

You must report turbidity readings to us each month (WAC 246-290-666). You should take the combined filter effluent (CFE) turbidity readings within 15 minutes after the initial plant start-up (filtered water being sent to the clear well or distribution) and then at exactly four-hour intervals for as long as the plant continues to run. Record these values on your monthly report.

Reporting the daily CFE maximum

The maximum CFE turbidity measurement is the highest turbidity of water your plant produces and sends to consumers during the calendar day. It is not the maximum of the four-hour readings.

Special situations that affect CFE reporting

If your plant does not operate continuously throughout the day, record a new initial turbidity reading within 15 minutes of restarting the filter, and then every four hours.

We encourage systems with only two filters that have a poor CFE sampling situation to use the highest individual filter effluent (IFE) reading as the CFE value on the monthly reports they complete to meet reporting requirements. If a two-filter system operates only one filter during low-demand periods, the IFE of the operating filter is the CFE value for low-demand operating periods.

Larger systems with multiple filters that discharge directly into a common clear well should use a pumped sample from an appropriate location in the clear well. The location should receive completely mixed water from all filters and be as close as possible to filter discharges into the clearwell.

Check your turbidity settings and procedures against the recommendations in this chart.
Click to Open.

Turbidimeter Setting or Activity	
Written SOPs for turbidimeter settings	Required
Sample Flowrate	Measure at least monthly. Meet the manufacturer's specifications.
Error Hold Mode	Transfer to 0.0 NTU
Averaging	30 sec
Verification Check *	Required. Record numbers. Can use ice pick method.
Blowdown	At least annually or as the manufacturer recommends
Instrument Maintenance log	Required
Instrument Location	At least quarterly.
Instrument Range	0 to 5 NTU for finished water.
Instrument Calibration	Required. Must be calibrated to sensor output.
Instrument Recorder	On
Instrument Recorder	1 or 5 minutes (1 minute preferred unless data storage or processing limitations exist)

2014 Drinking Water Week Award Winners

Nominated by their peers and Office of Drinking Water staff

“It takes an incredible amount of knowledge, dedication and hard work to keep water systems running well,” said Clark Halvorson, Office of Drinking Water director. “I couldn’t be prouder of the thousands of men and women who work in the drinking water sector in Washington. Narrowing the list of nominees wasn’t easy.”

Steve Coke, Thurston County, for “Ongoing Excellence”

Steve Coke, right, received his award from Office of Drinking Water Director Clark Halvorson on May 27. His ongoing efforts to improve the City of Olympia’s cross-connection control program prevents harmful contaminants from entering the drinking water supply. He targeted the city’s most hazardous unprotected connections and achieved a nearly perfect compliance rate for annual backflow prevention testing.



Albert Darrow, Thurston County, for “Grace under Pressure”

Albert Darrow, who operates the Clearwood Community Association water system near Yelm, was recognized May 14 for his hard work and diligence during a long-running boil-water advisory last fall. He went over every inch of the water system and made improvements to restore safe drinking water to the 2,800 customers

he serves. Helping him celebrate, from left, were Casey

Catale, Matt Whitten, Clark Halvorson, Darrow, Sandy Brentlinger, Carolyn Cox, Arlene Hyatt, John Craig, and Bill Henderson.

Bill Evans, Whatcom County, for “Lifetime Achievement”

Bill Evans has been chief operator for the City of Bellingham’s Water Filtration Plant for more than 25 years. He championed maximizing the plant’s operation and initiated improvements to increase its performance. The filtration plant is one of only 12 in the nation to receive the 15-year Director’s Award from the Partnership for Safe Water. He’s a leader in professional associations as well.

Recognizing him on May 5 were, from left, Northwest Regional Office Manager Bob James, Chief Operator Bill Evans, Office of Drinking Water Director Clark Halvorson, and Northwest Regional Office Assistant Derek Pell.



[\(Continued on Page 9\)](#)



Dan Katsel, Walla Walla County, for “Lifetime Achievement”

Clark Halvorson, left, recognized Dan Katsel on May 29. Katsel served the City of Waitsburg for 39 years. He started as a laborer in 1975, and worked up to public works director. He’s been involved in every aspect of the city’s Public Works Department and oversees several unique features of the water system, most of which was designed in the 1930s.

Kirk Lally and Randy Russell, Spokane County, for “Grace under Pressure”

Clark Halvorson, right, recognized Freeman School District Superintendent Randy Russell, center, and water system Operator Kirk Lally on May 8 for their response to elevated levels of carbon tetrachloride, a chemical found in pesticides and solvents, in the school district’s well. Thanks to their hard work, the district has a new treatment system that ensures safe drinking water for the district’s 900 students and staff.



Celebrate YOUR successes

Use the 40th anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act to celebrate safe drinking water. It’s a great way to connect with your community and promote employee morale.

Educate customers about drinking water, where it comes from, how they get it, and what they can do to help you ensure a safe and reliable supply for the future.

- Publicize your Consumer Confidence Report.
- Set up a display at community events or the library.
- Send bill stuffers.
- Invite your community to an open house.
- Celebrate an anniversary or dedicate a landmark.
- Host your own employee recognition program.
- Hold a company picnic.
- Organize a children’s coloring or essay-writing contest.
- Do a presentation at your local school.

You can get a CD full of free, downloadable tools, artwork and ideas to help promote tap water.

Visit our website to order [Tap into Goodness \(331-374\)](#).



New & Revised Publications



Emergency Water Supply Guidelines for Food Service Establishments (331-182). Revised April 2014. A one-page fact sheet on procedures that restaurants, food stores, schools, institutions, and convenience stores should take to protect public health during boil water advisories. Also available in [Spanish](#).

Responding to a Backflow Incident (331-494). New! June 2014. Two pages of questions and answers define backflow, conditions that cause it, how to detect it, and what to do if it occurs. To accompany the Q&A is **Drinking Water Warning: Backflow Incident** (331-495). New! June 2014, a public notification template that informs customers about the situation.

Responding to a pressure-loss event (331-338). New! June 2014. Two pages of questions and answers define pressure-loss events, what causes them, and what operators should do if one occurs. To accompany the Q&A is **Drinking Water Warning: Loss of pressure** (331-493). New! June 2014, a public notification template that advises customers to use only boiled or purchased drinking water and informs them about the situation.

Our publications are online at <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/dw/publications/publications.cfm>

Briefs

Congratulations to the City of Bremerton

For the second year in a row, the City of Bremerton took first place in the National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation in the category "cities with populations between 30,000 and 99,000." Seattle ranked sixth for cities with populations of 600,000 and over. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Wyland Foundation sponsor the National Mayor's Challenge. Cities compete by having residents commit to conserving water, energy, and other natural resources on behalf of their city through a series of informative, easy-to-use online pledges. Cities with the highest percentage of residents who take the challenge in their population category win.

Consumer Confidence Report due July 1, 2014

It is time to prepare your 2013 Consumer Confidence Report (CCR).

Drinking water rules require all Group A community water systems to provide a CCR to their customers and the Office of Drinking Water by July 1 each year. If you would like to use the EPA CCRiWriter to prepare your water system's CCR, visit <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/ccr/index.cfm> and click Tools for Systems.

H2Otel Challenge Webinar Series

EPA launched the WaterSense H2Otel Challenge to encourage hotels to:

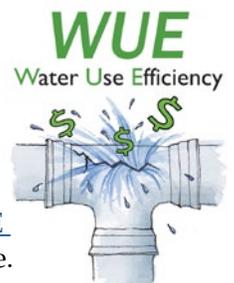


- Assess water use and savings opportunities.
- Change products or processes to incorporate best management practices.
- Track their water-saving progress and achievements.

For information, visit [EPA online](#).

WUE reports due by July 1

The deadline to submit your annual [Water Use Efficiency \(WUE\) report](#) to us and your customers is almost here. You will find tips and information to help you prepare to submit your report to us on our [WUE Reporting Resources](#) webpage.



Tips for Operators

Your professional growth clock is ticking



Half of the time most certified waterworks operators have to meet the professional growth requirement is already over. Still, out of almost 3,500 operators in this reporting period, fewer than 700 have met the requirement so far. If you are one of the 20 percent who already completed the requirement, congratulations! If you are one of the 80 percent who hasn't, the clock is ticking!

Operators certified before January 1, 2013, have to meet the requirement by December 31, 2015, to be eligible to renew their certificates. Those certified after January 1, 2013, still have plenty of time to meet the requirement – until December 31, 2018.

Don't be one of those operators we hear from at the end of every professional-growth reporting period, who waited until the last minute, missed the deadline, and lost their certification. Make a plan now. Decide what training you need to help you do your important job better and start enrolling in classes soon!

Check your status online

Washington Certification Services has everything you need to know about the professional growth requirement for waterworks operators online at <http://www.wacertservices.org>.

- Review options for meeting the requirement.
- Check your professional growth transcript and status.
- View and search a list of approved training courses in Washington.

Questions? Call Washington Certification Services staff at 253-288-3357 or toll-free 877-780-2444.

If Your Original Certification Date Is	Then You Must Meet The Professional Growth Requirement Between:
Before 1/1/2010	1/1/2013 and 12/31/2015
Between 1/1/2010 and 12/31/2012	Your original certification date and 12/31/2015
After 1/1/13	Your original certification date and 12/31/2018

Moved recently? Changed employers?

Drinking water rules require operators to report changes in status to the Waterworks Operator Certification Program. Operators must submit changes of home address, home phone number, and employer information.

If you are the certified operator in responsible charge of a water system, the rule requires you to notify us in writing within 30 days of starting or ending operations with the water system.

It is also important that you provide or update your email address. We now have email addresses for about 70 percent of nearly 4,000 operators. Your email allows us to contact you quickly and keep you informed.

There are several ways to update your information. Be sure to include your operator certification number on all correspondence.

Write us: Waterworks Operator Certification Program
PO Box 47822
Olympia WA 98504-7822

Use the online form: <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/opinio/s?s=6929>

Email: larry.granish@doh.wa.gov or dwopcert@doh.wa.gov

Fax: Larry Granish at 360-236-2252



Questions? Call Larry Granish at 360-236-3141 or 800-525-2536, Ext. 1.

Protecting your water system

Is your utility safe from cyber attacks?

You probably have plans or procedures for managing financial, safety, and operational risks as well as other hazards. However, have you thought about how you'll protect your utility from cyber attacks?

No? You're in luck because there are resources out there to help you develop your plan.

Cybersecurity Framework

The National Institute of Standards and Technology, in partnership with private and governmental agencies, developed the [Cybersecurity Framework](#) to provide guidance on managing cybersecurity risk.

It relies on existing standards, guidance, and best practices to provide a common method for organizations to assess their vulnerabilities, set goals for improvement, and assess their progress.

The American Water Works Association has just issued [Process Control System Security Guidance for the Water Sector](#), which can help water and wastewater utilities implement the Cybersecurity Framework.

Homeland Security Voluntary Program

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established a public-private partnership to increase awareness and use of the Cybersecurity Framework. [The Critical Infrastructure Cyber Community \(C3\) Voluntary Program](#) will connect companies, as well as federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, to DHS and other federal government programs and resources that will help them manage cyber threats. Those who sign up can get help, share lessons learned, and learn about free tools and resources.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency encourages water and wastewater utilities to use the Cybersecurity Framework and participate in the DHS Voluntary Program.

All of this work stems from an [executive order](#) President Obama issued in 2013, which called for developing a voluntary cybersecurity framework to provide flexible, performance-based and cost-effective approaches to help owners and operators of critical infrastructure assess and manage cyber threats.



Washington Water finds even the smallest reservoir leaks



What's large, important, and always out in the rain?

Storage tanks!

Storage tanks or reservoirs hold water that will eventually flow to our drinking water taps. We need to keep storage tank lids free of even the smallest opening. Any openings can allow contaminants into the tank where they can threaten water quality.

After you perform a visual inspection of tanks for openings, and fix those openings, can you do more to confirm tank integrity?

Washington Water, a full-service water company with offices in Western Washington, figured out a way to find nearly "invisible" openings in concrete storage tanks. The basic operation is this: After covering all constructed openings, such as the tank hatch, technicians use a shop blower to send air into the tank.

When the tank is under a low but persistent internal air pressure, personnel spray soapy water at all external joints, valve edges, vents, and spouts in the tank lid. Any foaming bubbles mean that air is escaping the tank. Wherever air can escape, contaminants can enter.

That's a clever technique for folks who care about their storage tank—and water quality. You can get a video, showing this simple, low-cost, and effective way to check tank integrity by contacting Washington Water.



‘Water’s Worth It’ campaign offers free tools

You want your customers to value the safe, reliable drinking water that you provide them. The [Water Environment Federation](#) (WEF) shares your concerns, so they developed a campaign called “Water’s Worth It.” It sounds like a match made in heaven.

WEF is offering a free [Water’s Worth It](#) tool kit full of information, graphics, and other tools to help you communicate with your customers about the value of water. There’s even a bill stuffer.

“It’s time that water takes its rightful place in the national conversation. It’s an issue that demands attention, understanding, and support,” said WEF Executive Director Jeff Eger. “Water’s Worth It was created to address that compelling need and to raise the profile of the water professionals who are on the front lines every day protecting public health and the environment.”

According to WEF, the campaign’s goals are to:

- Demystify water and wastewater treatment by showing the direct connections between what water sector professionals do and what the public values — create jobs, protect health, protect the environment, and provide clean water.
- Expand and deepen the awareness of water’s value.
- Explain that water is a precious and limited resource that needs to be recycled and reused.
- Elevate the profile of water sector professionals by building respect and appreciation for the services they provide.
- Create a foundation of public awareness to support needed infrastructure investments.
- Support cutting-edge practices to deliver, recover, and reuse water resources.

Founded in 1928, the Water Environment Federation is a nonprofit technical and educational organization of 36,000 individual members and 75 affiliated member associations representing water quality professionals around the world. WEF’s mission is to provide bold leadership, champion innovation, connect water professionals, and leverage knowledge to support clean and safe water worldwide.

In This Issue

The following people contributed to the production of this issue of *Water Tap*:

Ally Chess, Carolyn Cox, Clark Halvorson, Donna Lynch, Ingrid Salmon, Jennifer Kropack, Kitty Weisman, Larry Granish, Linda Waring, Lorelei Walker, Nancy Feagin, Peggy Barton, Steve Deem, and Willa Lawton.

The Department of Health Office of Drinking Water publishes *Water Tap* to provide information to water system owners, waterworks operators and others interested in drinking water.

John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH, Secretary of Health

Maryanne Guichard, Assistant Secretary of Health, Environmental Public Health Division

Clark Halvorson, Director, Office of Drinking Water

Comments, questions, story ideas, articles and photographs submitted for publication are welcome. Please address correspondence to Linda Waring, Editor, *Water Tap*, Office of Drinking Water, P.O. Box 47822, Olympia, WA 98504-7822, or email linda.waring@doh.wa.gov. Past issues are online at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/watertap.aspx>