We work with others to protect the health of the people of Washington State by ensuring safe and reliable drinking water.

Wildfire Planning and Response

Washington State Department of Health, Office of Drinking Water
Carlton Complex Wildfire
168,000 acres in four days
Pateros Reservoirs
Before
Pateros Reservoirs
After
Carlton Complex Wildfire

- Burned more than 400 square miles.
- More than 300 homes lost.
- Widespread power outages.
- Forty-five water systems in affected area.
Public Water System Responsibilities

1. Emergency response planning.

2. Address abnormal operating conditions using measures consistent with applicable regulations and industry standards.

3. Notify consumers if the water is not safe to drink.
Public Water System Responsibilities (Continued)

1. Emergency response planning.
2. Address abnormal operating conditions using measures consistent with applicable regulations and industry standards.
3. Notify consumers if the water is not safe to drink.
4. Provide alternate water supplies.
5. Return to normal operating conditions.
Office of Drinking Water Priorities

1. Assess the condition of water systems during an emergency event.

2. Ensure that health-related information is provided to all customers during an emergency event.

3. Provide assistance and oversight to water systems that are
   a. Addressing abnormal events; and,
   b. Returning to normal operations.
Power and Communication Outages
Local Health to the Rescue!

Okanogan County Public Health

- Sends staff into the field to assisting water systems.
- Attends county EOC meetings.
- Agrees to keep us posted on progress in assessing the condition of water systems and issuing boil water advisories.
Recovery

ODW’s third role during an emergency is to:

1. Assess the condition of water systems during an emergency event.

2. Ensure that health-related information is issued to all customers during an emergency event (Tier 1 public notification).

3. Provide assistance and oversight to water systems returning to normal operations.
Evergreen Rural Water of Washington

- ERWOW provided assistance to water systems.
  - In this case, it was all about generators.
Many Water Systems were Affected

- Sixteen Boil Water Advisories issued.
- 590 notices printed for distribution.
- Ten residential and six non-residential systems.
- 982 residents affected, based on WFI estimates.
- Four systems with substantial infrastructure damage.
Lessons Learned

- Water Systems should be prepared!
  - WFI up-to-date
  - Understand requirements
    - Notify ODW
    - Boil Water Advisories
    - Sampling Requirements
  - Back-up Power
  - Plan for communication challenges
Discussion

- Have you had to respond to a wild fire emergency?
- What steps have you taken to prepare for wild fires?
- What advice would you give to other water systems about planning for wild fire emergencies?
- How can DOH help water systems plan for wild fire emergency response?
Contact Information

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Safe, reliable drinking water isn't free. Clean and consistent drinking water requires commitment, hard work, and investment. We want everyone to know how water systems provide safe, reliable drinking water to their customers. Investing in infrastructure today ensures safe and reliable drinking water for our future generations.