



# DW Now

MAY 2024



## Highlights

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- OpCert Professional Growth ▶p4
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- Sanitary Survey Season ▶p5
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## Notable Dates

- Next [DWAG meeting](#) 6/3
- CCRs Due to Customers & DOH 7/1
- WUE Reports Due 7/1
- Lead Service Line Inventory Due 10/16



## Connections

- [The Office of Drinking Water Newsletter](#)
- [SIGN UP](#) to get this in your inbox!
- [Find Your Regional Offices and Staff](#)
- [Drinking Water Home Page](#)

## Lead Service Line Inventory Submittal Process

We launched a website portal for water systems to submit their Lead Service Line Inventories (LSLI). All Group A Community and non-transient non-community (NTNC) water systems are required to submit Lead Service Line Inventories (LSLI) to us through the new [LSLI Portal](#) by October 16, 2024.

You can find the LSLI portal and [LSLI Guidance 331-711 \(PDF\)](#) on our [Lead Service Line Inventory webpage](#). **Submitting an inventory through the LSLI Portal is a two-step process.**

1. Complete and submit a brief form with system identification information and your LSLI results.
2. Reply to the response email sent to you by the system. Attach your LSLI document to your reply email.

These two steps complete your LSLI submittal.

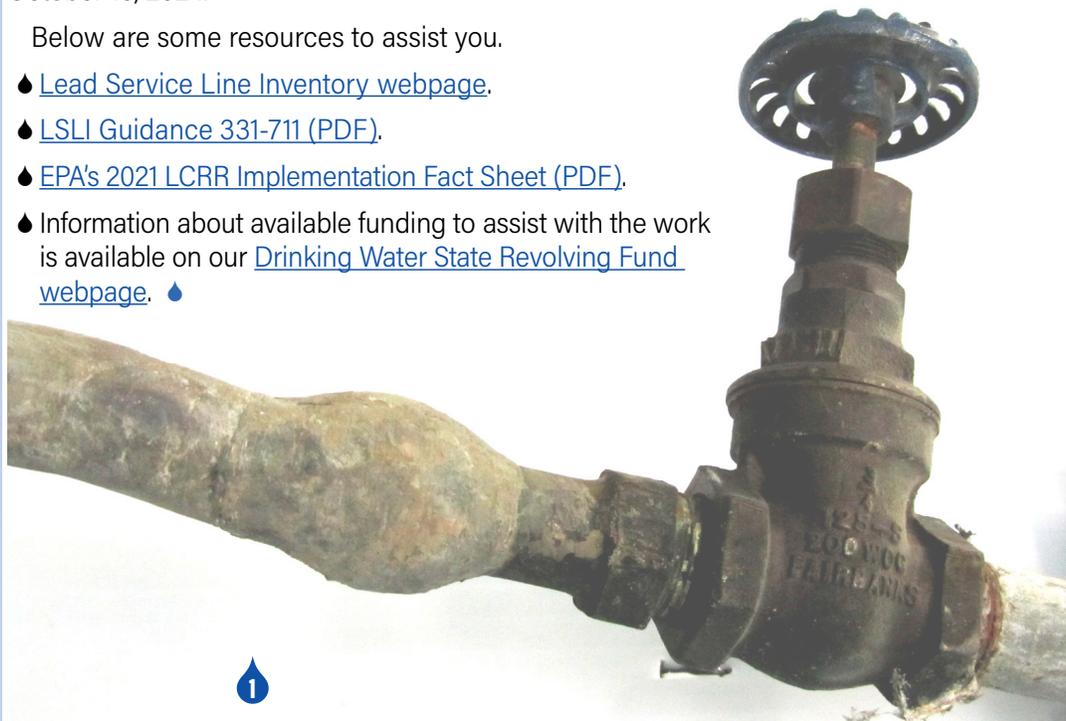
For water systems with inventory results that are not 100 percent “non-lead,” there is a public notification requirement. These systems must notify customers within 30 days of submitting the inventory that their service line is “lead,” “galvanized requiring replacement,” or “unknown.” EPA created template notification forms that we posted on our [Lead Service Line Inventory webpage](#).

Please [email any questions](#) about submitting an LSLI since not meeting this requirement is a violation of EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule Revisions. If an initial inventory is not completed, it is a Treatment Technique Violation with a Tier 2 public notice. If there is no submission of inventory to the state, it is a Reporting Violation with a Tier 3 public notice.

Thank you for your efforts to create and submit your LSLI to our Office by October 16, 2024.

Below are some resources to assist you.

- ◆ [Lead Service Line Inventory webpage](#).
- ◆ [LSLI Guidance 331-711 \(PDF\)](#).
- ◆ [EPA’s 2021 LCRR Implementation Fact Sheet \(PDF\)](#).
- ◆ Information about available funding to assist with the work is available on our [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund webpage](#). ◆



# Congratulations 2024 Drinking Water Week Winners!

If you didn't tell us their stories, we wouldn't know about the amazing efforts by these skilled, competent professionals. We're grateful to all those who were nominated and wish that we could give awards to each and every one. Learn more on our [Drinking Water Week webpage](#).

## Commitment to Excellence

**Bob Bell**, Construction Superintendent, Washington Water Service. With thirty years of commitment to safe drinking water, Bob's customers enjoy the highest standards in facility maintenance and upgrades, along with outstanding records of monitoring and sampling compliance. Bob is a mentor and shares his knowledge and expertise freely. His calm example in emergency situations gives coworkers the confidence they need to respond efficiently and restore safe drinking water quickly.



*Sam Camp*

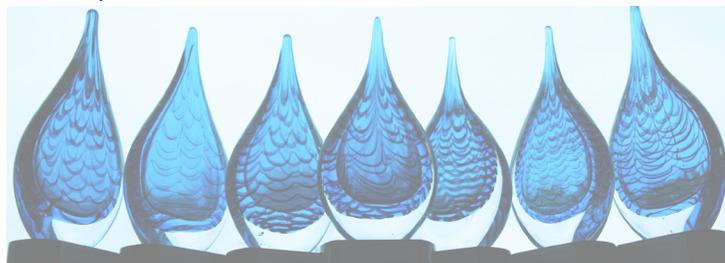
**Sam Camp**, Senior Technical Advisor for Water Reliability Projects, Hanford Mission Integration Solutions. Sam began his career at the Hanford site in May 1977 starting as a drinking water operator. He was quickly promoted to field work supervisor. He has filled many roles for the Hanford Site over the years, including the water and sewer utilities group. He has navigated

challenges with expertise and knowledge, handling water system outages, demands from multiple nuclear facilities, and an ever-changing political climate.

**Jim Campbell**, Director of Field Operations, Thurston PUD No. 1. The Thurston PUD Board of Commissioners passed Resolution 24-07 on February 13, 2024, endorsing Jim's nomination for this award. Jim joined the PUD in 2017, eventually being promoted to his present position. He is an excellent leader and mentor for his staff, coworkers, and other drinking water professionals. Jim promotes conservation programs and green energy, working to reduce leaks in the system and using solar technology. He is a tireless public servant.



*Jim Campbell*



*Dylan Bailey*

**Dylan Bailey**, Field Superintendent, King County Water District 125, Tukwila. Dylan's dedication to ensuring delivery of safe and reliable drinking water to the community of Tukwila and surrounding cities is commendable. He is proactive and goes beyond minimal requirements, which shows his dedication to excellence. He coaches and mentors his staff and shares his knowledge and expertise. Through his influence, his team trained to respond to nearly every water-related emergency and now handles those tasks in-house.

## Grace Under Pressure

**Damon Stevens**, Operator, Lewis County Water Sewer District 6. Damon operates multiple water and sewer systems and has upgraded problem areas throughout the systems. He developed risk analysis that will guide future capital investment and process development. Damon remains calm under duress and works diligently until water is restored. He uses these challenges as opportunities to expand his knowledge and skill. He is a natural mentor, using teaching moments to educate and inform interns, coworkers, commissioners, and residents understand the complex process of operating a drinking water system and providing safe and reliable water.

## Lifetime Achievement

**Randy Black**, Consulting Manager; Lakewood Water District. Randy has worked at the district for nearly forty years, including twenty-nine years as general manager. He oversaw the implementation of chlorination and cross-connection control. He was instrumental in the district becoming a water provider to multiple systems in Pierce County. He advocated for regional planning and cooperation and has been a significant leader with the Regional Water Cooperative of Pierce County. He is a leader with the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the South Sound Subsection of PNWS-AWWA. He was a faithful, effective, and consistent leader in the drinking water industry.



*Randy Black*



*Tonilee Hanson*

**Tonilee Hanson**, Spokane Aquifer Joint Board (SAJB) Program Manager. Tonilee was program manager for the SAJB since 2011. The SAJB is comprised of 21 water purveyors throughout the Spokane area. She also provided administrative support for the Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative (IWAC) since 2013. She was instrumental in developing, implementing, managing and organizing education

and awareness campaigns, grant applications and funding, special reports and services, and multimedia presentations and marketing. She received the Ty Wick Defend of the Aquifer Award in 2022. Her colleagues describe her as irreplaceable with a heart and drive for going above and beyond the call of duty.

### Director's Award, Friend to Drinking Water

**Steve Hulsman**, ODW Source (Chemical) Monitoring Program Manager, Northwest Regional Office. Many of you worked directly with Steve over the past 38 years and his sudden loss last December hit hard with many of us. He had deep passion for his work and was eager to share his enthusiasm, expertise, and commitment to good science. Steve appreciated his colleagues, and when differing opinions arose, he expressed gratitude for the chance to engage in discussions. Steve always said, "there is never a dull day" in public health, and he appreciated the "job security" of ongoing challenges. When National Drinking Water Week rolled around this year, we wanted to honor Steve's legacy of customer service and professionalism. We are all committed to keeping the torch of his memory alive every day through excellent service to the drinking water community. 💧



*Steve Hulsman*



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## Drinking Water Advisory Group (DWAG) Next Meeting June 3

**We look forward to an informative and interesting meeting June 3, 2024. We would love to see you all there, virtually!**

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. We post 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](#).

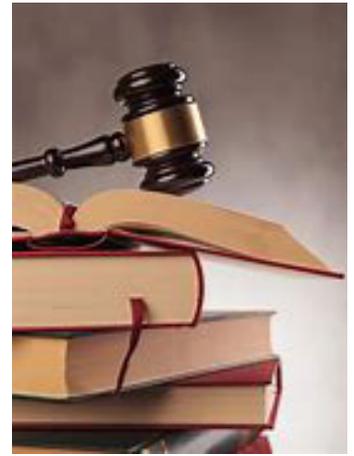
Do you have questions about the advisory group or topics you'd like to discuss? Email [Brad Burnham](#) with your ideas. 💧

# ODW Fee Rulemaking

On April 1, 2024, the Department of Health filed a [CR-101 Proposal Statement of Inquiry](#) regarding WAC 246-290-990, Water System Evaluation and Project Review and Approval Fees. We are considering amending public water system fees to cover operating costs, these fees were last updated in 2012. This may include updating or restructuring existing fees or creating new fees.

For more information, visit our [Public Water System Fees rulemaking webpage](#).

For questions about this rulemaking, contact [Brad.Burnham@doh.wa.gov](mailto:Brad.Burnham@doh.wa.gov). 💧



## SWRO New Engineering and Planning Staff Contacts

We have lots of new employees in the Southwest Regional Office. We recently assigned county assignments. Do you know your current regional engineering and planning contacts? If not, go to our [Southwest Regional Office Staff webpage](#) for updated contact information and please reach out and introduce yourself. Our new staff looks forward to getting into the field and working with our partners. 💧

## Certified Operators and Professional Growth

Waterworks certifications are becoming more valuable every year and operators should review their CEU status, update their contact information, and look for approved training at the [Washington Certification Services \(WCS\) webpage](#). Operators can also apply for new certifications and renew their existing certifications (at the end of the year) at the same webpage.

Two-hundred-twenty-five certified operators did not renew their certifications for 2024. This continues a negative trend with the loss of over 1,000 operators in the last three years. To make things worse; this is the third year in our professional growth cycle. Most certified operators need to earn 3.0 CEU by December 31, 2024, to be eligible to renew their certifications for 2025. We expect to lose another 600 operators at the end of this year due to retirements and operators leaving the industry.

The demand for certified operators is higher than ever and most utilities lack the ability to prepare for this predicted workforce gap. The biggest challenge is a lack of entry level jobs. Utilities are looking for certified operators; but a candidate can't get certified unless they have water system operating experience; but they can't get operating experience unless they get hired by a utility—this cycle created the void we're currently seeing.

Utilities must create career pathways for a new workforce and give candidates the operating experience needed to be eligible for certification. These entry level positions are vital to the transfer of knowledge and retention of new staff.

Many utilities are raising salaries for their certified operators in response to the limited supply. Even if your utility does a good job with succession planning, a neighboring system may raise their salaries and attract your operators to better opportunities. However, succession planning takes more than just salary adjustments. Studies show that Millennials and GenZers look for different things than are traditionally offered by utility work. We must meet the next generation of workers where they are and consider:

- ◆ Flexible schedules;
- ◆ Advancement opportunities;
- ◆ Changing jobs every four to five years; and
- ◆ Bringing professionalism to the industry

We must find ways to become competitive in a challenging workforce market. The world is changing and much of the drinking water industry is slow to react. We have some catching-up to do to ensure safe and reliable drinking water now and into the future. 💧

# Preparing A Water Shortage Response Plan

Early snowmelt, a lack of spring rain, and low stream flows prompted Ecology to declare a drought emergency for twelve watersheds in parts of twelve counties. The drought emergency areas include regions where communities are facing low surface and groundwater availability. At least two water systems in Clallam and Whatcom counties are trucking in water to meet their needs.

Thinking ahead and developing a plan helps tremendously when problems arise. A key step is to prepare a water shortage response plan. The purpose is to prevent a drinking water emergency by temporarily reducing demand during times of limited supply, such as during a drought or natural disaster.

All Group A water systems must have a water shortage response plan. Below is a summary of steps to consider when developing your plan. You can find detailed guidance and templates on our [Water Shortage Response Plan webpage](#).

- ◆ **Identify shortage events.** Develop a list of events that could cause a water shortage. Create an action plan for each and assign specific duties to each employee. At a minimum, evaluate the potential for drought, earthquake, high winds, ice storm, flood, equipment failure, construction accident, unusual high customer usage, and low source production.
- ◆ **Evaluate supply and demand.** Source and service meters are the best way to get supply and demand information. Meters can show seasonal changes and may identify problems such as declining source production or increasing summer demand due to changing use patterns. This information helps you understand the magnitude of different water shortage events.

- ◆ **Set stages and criteria.** Response requirements vary by event type and severity. Consider the number of response stages appropriate for the size and complexity of your water system. For example, a voluntary restriction may be enough to reduce demand by 5 percent, but if 10 percent or more is needed, mandatory restrictions may be necessary.
- ◆ **Identify other sources.** Identify alternate water supply options and what events would need to occur to use each alternative. Examples: sample and connect an emergency well, construct a short intertie with a neighboring system, connect to a system one mile away, truck water in, or provide bottled water.
- ◆ **Determine requirements** for supplying each alternate source to your customers, including public notice.
- ◆ **Communications.** What do customers need to know and how will you tell them? Explain response stages, what they mean, and why they are developed. Your customers' actions help to make the event less severe, so tell them!
- ◆ **Set demand reduction measures.** Consider the kinds of measures you can use to reduce demand. How will you educate your consumers about their responsibilities? Will use outdoor water use restrictions? Increased use monitoring and enforcement? Will different customer classes have different restrictions than others? Rate surcharges?
- ◆ **Put it all together.** Your response plan requires your customers to reduce demand—make sure the governing body formally adopts the plan. Don't wait until the shortage occurs—get everything ready before you need to use it. ◆

## It's Sanitary Survey Season!

When the weather starts to warm, drinking water professionals think about needed maintenance, improvements, and repairs for their drinking water facilities before the weather turns cold. Every three to five years all Group A public drinking water systems must have a routine sanitary survey inspection of water system facilities, operations, and records. This inspection identifies conditions that may present a public health risk.

A state or local surveyor will contact you when it's time for your survey. The surveyor will want to see recent photos, taken within the last twelve months, of your system's reservoir hatches (open and closed), vents, screen condition, top of tanks, overflow and drain outlet lines. You can prepare for a sanitary survey every spring, even if it's not scheduled that year, to help plan those summer facility improvements.

You can find many resources on our [Sanitary Surveys of Drinking Water Systems webpage](#) to get started. You can also reach out to our offices with any questions or challenges.



- ◆ Southwest Regional Office—[Denise Miles](#), 360-584-7425.
- ◆ Northwest Regional Office—[Bethany Brunny](#), 564-233-8721.
- ◆ Eastern Regional Office—[Mark Steward](#), 509-329-2136.

Preparing for a sanitary survey every year makes it easy when it's time for your actual survey. You'll know exactly what to expect from your surveyor, you'll be comfortable with the process, and proud of the great work you've done. ◆

# ERWOW's QUEST, Apprenticeship, and Capacity Development Programs



When we talk about capacity development, we usually think about volume. We think about a water treatment plant's capacity to treat water or wastewater safely now and into the future. We look at a source and its capacity to sustain our communities with drinking water. If we are unable to do so, we look to develop new sources. But what about the other capacity development? Capacity also means the ability or power to do, experience, or understand. In those terms, capacity development most critical to our operations is operator capacity development.

Operator capacity development plans for the future and develops those expected operators. It looks ahead and brings staff on now, providing for the utility's future and the community's future. It's about looking ahead to match the system's pending requirements with the operators needed to sustain it. Doing this is part of good asset management and sustainability. Just like asset management, it requires planning, buy-in at all levels, and a commitment to succeed.

At [Evergreen Rural Water of Washington](#) (ERWOW) we offer our Quality Utility Education Specialized Training (QUEST) and apprenticeship programs, designed to help you succeed at operator capacity development. QUEST is our one-year program for smaller systems that leads to a Level 1 certification. Apprenticeship is our Labor and

Industries registered two-year program requiring a Level 2 mentor or journeyman worker and an employer as the apprentice works toward their Level 2 certification. These programs provide the foundational training your system and community need to sustain itself now and into the future. Besides traditional water and wastewater coursework, these programs include training in utility management, asset management, administration, and sustainability. It's all about operator capacity development and preparing them, your utility, and your community for a sustainable future.

If you do not plan to succeed, then you plan to fail. If you have not planned your future, then you will react to events around you instead of responding proactively and leading.

ERWOW works with ODW to partner with your utility and community and help develop your operator capacity through our QUEST or apprenticeship programs. We can help you find the program that meets your needs. [Go to our Apprenticeship webpage for program information.](#) **Plan now for the future that you want!** 💧

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