H201eg010 Fall 2021 Vol. 43, No. 4

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OAWU's mission is to provide service, support and solutions for Oregon water & wastewater utilities to meet the challenges of today & tomorrow.

Association Membership

by Jason Green, Executive Director

What is membership? The Oregon Association of Water Utilities, as defined by the Bylaws, has three primary types of membership: A Regular Member—any water or wastewater utility, public or private, engaged in the production, distribution or reclamation of water. An Associate Member—any organization, individual or corporation, supplying services or equipment to water and wastewater utilities and an Individual Member—who is involved in the water or wastewater industry or a user of such utilities. Simply put, membership is the very core, the lifeblood of the Association. Its about people first!

What is the value and importance? There are often many benefits in joining and becoming a part of an association. Membership provides information, cost savings, services, a belonging and representation are generally several noted items. OAWU does provide these and many opportunities to become a part of the Association and a place to also grow professionally and connect with other members. Specifically, the Association membership brochure lists many of the benefits from equipment rental or having OAWU staff consult and train with, rate studies, water management and conservation plan writing, emergency response and DRC services, but the most sought after are the conferences and formal training, onsite assistance and the legislative representation with the Association Lobbyist, Mark Landauer. Membership also includes representation at the national level back in Washington DC through the National Rural Water Association. OAWU also provides onsite field services through Circuit Riders, Wastewater Technicians, Source Water Specialist and Training Specialist without any charge or fees—these services are free and do not require any membership. Simply call the Association office to make a request.

How does OAWU attract and retain membership? My early years working as a water and wastewater operator had me sitting on a hard chair seat in an OAWU class, then a conference and later, on the board of directors and finally as an employee. That was thirty five years ago. My interests were much the same as it is today for OAWU members. Its about relationships and service which includes people helping and teaching and working to make each other better equipped for their jobs and serving in their home communities. In our training and conversations with sister associations in other states, membership and retention is a common topic as is the how and what of it. It seems to always circle back around to the membership are real people, treat them as such and do your very best to be honest, maintain your integrity, hard work and build those real friendships... they will last a lifetime and you will retain members. I still believe this and also know its true. Thank you for your continued support and trust in OAWU and above all, your friendship! It is your Association! •



OAWU's Summer Classic 2021

The weather this year was fantastic, and the activities were great. Monday's pre-conference provided great classes and a few extra CEUs to those who attended. The conference was kicked off by an opening session given by OAWU's Deputy Director, Mike Collier, and a legislative update by Mark Landauer. Tuesday held the evening barbecue with exhibitor time and prize give-away. Wednesday continued with a full day of classes; some took the afternoon off to participate in the annual OAWU Golf Scramble at Seaside Golf Club. Thursday concluded the conference at noon with some final words and the highly anticipated raffle drawings and cash prizes.

- Thank you to this year's Gold Sponsors, Core & Main and Lakeside Industries; Silver Sponsor H.D. Fowler; and to our Bronze Sponsors EJ and PACE Engineering.
- The annual golf scramble at Seaside Golf Club hosted 11 teams.
- At closing session on Thursday, OAWU gave away over \$2,500 in merchandise and \$500 in cash prizes.
- Congratulations to his year's raffle winners!
- The winner of a full registration to the OAWU Sunriver Conference in March 2022 was won by Chuck Mumm, City of Nehalem.
- Congratulations to Deschutes Valley Water District for winning the best Ground Water in Oregon.
- Congratulations to the City of Sheridan for winning the Best Surface Water and the Overall Best water in Oregon this year. They will go on to compete at the National contest in February 2022.

Mark your calendar for next year's OAWU Summer Classic in Seaside, Oregon August 23-25th 2022. See you there! ◆











OAWU's Annual Golf Scramble

Seaside, Oregon - Seaside Golf Club - August 25, 2021

The day started off with a chill and a afternoon breeze. As the day progressed it became pleasantly warm; it was a perfect day to hit the links for this year's scramble. The staff at the Seaside Golf Club were accommodating, friendly, and professional helping to make the day even more enjoyable.

Eleven teams challenged the course this year, making for a great competition. No one was safe from the errant drive, misjudged chip shot, or the mocking one received when their shot landed two fairways over; we must also admit that there were many great players and many awesome shots on the course again this year. The banter helped build camaraderie throughout the scramble.

Special thanks to Adkins Engineering and Trade Tool for being this year's hole sponsors and for their support of the attendees and the Association.

Congratulations to all the teams who played this year, but especially to the teams that placed.

- 1st place Pettett, Elford, Motsinger, and Miller
- 2nd place Hart, Mapes, Hanna, and Waller
- 3rd place Hartsock, Mitchell, Mitchell, and Barrett

The winners of the golfing competition games were:

- Longest Putt #1 Olson
- Longest Putt #2 Waller
- KP #1 Hart
- Longest Drive #1 Motsinger
- Longest Drive #2 Elford
- Longest Women's Beatz

Special thanks to Bob Waller (Circuit Rider) and Shawna Crowther (Office Manager) who helped make sure the scramble went off without a hitch.

Mark your calendar for OAWU's next Summer Classic at Seaside August 23-25th, 2022. It is a great location to enjoy while you earn CEUs and network with the Associate Members and your peers.







Sewer Collection

by Keith Bedell, Wastewater Technician

What are the options for collecting and treating the sanitary waste from residential homes for conveyance to a treatment facility? Options have increased since the beginning of wastewater treatment systems gravity flow. Now we have gravity flow with lift stations, STEP (septic tank effluent pump), STEG (septic tank effluent gravity), or grinder pump (GP) systems.

With the gravity system the objective is to allow the sewage to flow as far as it can without installing a lift station, which is basically a wet well with duplex pumps and controls. Sometimes this means having the lift station 20 feet or more deep. With the gravity system, treatment of the waste is achieved at a centralized treatment plant. This will include screening of solids and grit removal as the influent comes into the wastewater treatment facility (WWTF), removal and disposal of the solids/biosolids is also required at the WWTF.

With the STEP system, the need for a deep pipe is not required since it is pressurized by an onsite pump; the average depth is about 3 feet. There are many options for this type of system with just a holding tank and pump or complete treatment with filters and disinfection. Also depending on the type of tanks and treatment with the STEP system, the pumps installed can be a submersible pump, or turbine type pump for cleaner effluent. Use of the STEP system requires pumping of the solids retained every 5-10 years like a standard septic tank. There are also filters that need to be checked and maintained for optimum performance. The possibility of buildup of hydrogen sulfides in the pressure main is also something to consider with a STEP system.

The STEG system is a gravity sewer with the same tank options of treatment as the STEP system, but with the effluent from the tank flowing by gravity into a gravity collection system.

A GP system will have a smaller holding tank where the house/residence sewage flows into where a grinder pump sends it into a force main or to a gravity system, depending on the location. A GP acts like a garbage disposal in the home by chopping and grinding everything into small particles that are easier to pump. Depending on the length of the pressure main, there can also be a buildup of hydrogen sulfides and deposits of grease and solids on the interior surface of the pipes.

These are not all of the options available at this time, just examples of information and questions that should be asked if looking at upgrading an existing system, have a development wanting to connect to a system or installing a new sewer system. Don't rely on one source, contact more than one company that has installed or uses the system you are wanting to know about. There are no two entities that operate the same, even if the systems that are installed have the same equipment there can be different outcomes with operation, location, and maintenance.

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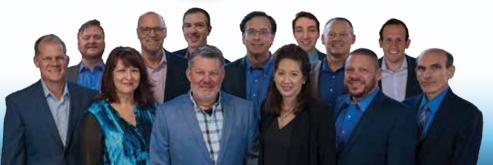




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Water Loss Control

by Tim Tice, Projects Manager

We often ask or discuss to see if the water industry is over regulated, under regulated, or just right, the Goldie Locks theory. One question to consider: are the navigable waters throughout Oregon cleaner today, than fifty years ago? We are so fortunate that wherever we travel in Oregon (or the USA for that matter) we know the water we drink will be safe. Kudos to those who maintain the highest quality drinking water.

Let's focus on the other side of the coin, and that is quantity. How much water is enough for an individual on a daily basis? According to the website www.usgs.gov, on average each person uses approximately 80-100 gallons of water per day. Simple math tells us that an average household family of four will use between 9,600 and 12,000 gallons per month. That seems to be a high estimate, but data from various websites confirm the figures.

Regardless of the individual consumption by the people you serve, ensuring the water arrives without waste is being regulated at higher levels than any other time. An all-encompassing annual water audit and the tools to conduct the audit are developing every day. What level of an audit is right for the water system you operate?

The audit can be made through many different approaches and as an operator, what time and resources does someone have to perform the tasks? One aspect discovered in working with our members is the realization that the task of a water audit cannot be accomplished only through operations

but must be accompanied with good financial backing and support from decision makers. As regulations increase with time, it is evident that each of three areas managerial, financial, and technical, must meld in order to stay in compliance. Regulators have a goal of no more than fifteen percent unaccounted for water. Once you arrive at fifteen percent, now get to ten percent.

If an operator is only looking to scratch the surface to discover the percentage of water not being billed, then the approach is straightforward. Water in versus water out!

The American Water Works
Association (AWWA) and the
International Water Association (IWA)
created a matrix to soundly follow the
equation to define where to initiate
a program to reduce water loss. A
simple format that allows an operator
to follow a defined path best suited
for the water system. It is actually
looking at water in versus water out
but provides specific ideas in finding
actual water loss.

To dig a bit deeper, the first rule is to make sure the data is accurate. If the data seems skewed, one has to go even deeper. There are various reasons for errors in accuracy, but wonky findings do not show well, unless they are proven.

Water audits and loss control programs will be the wave of the future and how involved you wish your system to be will likely be dictated by regulations. It is not if an audit will be completed, but

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when (annually) it will be completed will become the standard.

The approach will involve all three areas of system operations. Operationally focuses on the equipment that records the data. Managerially will dissect the data to ensure billing practices and software glitches are not of concern. Financially, some of the findings will require monies for replacement of equipment.

Procedures will be developed to retain a higher level of data accuracy. The initial information found will provide the right approach, even acceptable to Goldilocks. If you're scratching your head in wonderment about a water audit or water loss control program, give us a call for assistance. Conservation of the source will become a higher and higher priority combined with limiting the amount of water wasted.

Climate is what we expect, weather is what we get. If the weather has been

hot and the conditions dry, the impact on the source can be substantial. If a good percentage of the water we pump is lost back into the environment we could think it as a moot point. Will all the water that is lost return directly to the source? Is there a cost associated with delivery of water? The look of the landscape for water system operations is changing. How we manage the landscape will certainly require more effort. From a regulatory perspective to maintaining good supply source the importance of water remains the same.

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1) https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/weather_climate.html



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Plan Carefully

by Scott Berry, Operations Manager

Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) have been a requirement for all water and wastewater utilities for many years now. Americas Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018 requires community water systems serving populations greater than 3,300 to develop or update an ERP that incorporates findings of their risk and resilience assessment. Also, OAR 333-061-0064 requires all water systems (this includes even the smallest water systems) to have a written ERP.

An ERP describes strategies, resources, plans, and procedures utilities can use to prepare for and respond to an incident, natural or man-made, that threatens life, property, or the environment. Incidents can range from small main breaks or localized flooding to large scale hurricanes, earthquakes or system contamination, among other examples.

The following information can be found in greater detail at the EPA website at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-07/documents/190712-awia_erp_template_instructions_kab_508c_v6.pdf

Before beginning or revising your ERP, save the ERP template to your computer, delete the EPA cover page from the template, and follow the steps below to gather the key information you'll need to develop or update the ERP:

Conduct a risk and resilience assessment (RA): the findings and countermeasures identified in the RA, which is required under AWIA for community water systems serving greater than 3,300 persons, will enhance the effectiveness of the ERP and must be incorporated. For example, the RA may identify hurricanes as a significant risk for the utility and outline cost-effective countermeasures to lower the risk. The ERP, grounded in the results of the RA, then describes the processes and procedures that can be implemented to mitigate hurricane impacts (e.g., flooding) to the utility. See EPA's online Vulnerability Self-Assessment Tool for more information on conducting the RA.

Identify state regulatory requirements: many states have specific regulatory requirements for ERP content and provide their own ERP templates. However, the utility is responsible for checking with the state to be sure that any state-provided templates also meet the AWIA ERP requirements, as outlined in this template.

Identify and integrate local plans: the ERP should dovetail with other emergency plans in the community as much as possible. These may include county emergency operations plans, hazardous materials (Hazmat) response plans, or local hazard mitigation plans.

Coordinate with Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) and response partners: AWIA Section 2013(a)(c) requires that community water systems, to the extent possible, coordinate with their existing LEPC when preparing or revising their ERP. EPA's LEPCs website can help identify your LEPC. Partnering with stakeholders like LEPCs allows all parties to understand response processes and procedures used during a drinking water incident.

Plan for resources: the resources (i.e., personnel, equipment, supplies, and facilities) our utility owns or has access to will influence how we develop our ERP procedures. Resource typing, defined as categorizing by capability the resources requested,

deployed, and used in incidents, is a key activity in identifying resource gaps. We will need to partner with our local emergency management agency and regional mutual aid partners to develop strategies to obtain needed equipment and resources that we do not own, or that are not readily available. See the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water Sector Resource Typing document for more information.

To meet AWIA certification requirements, we must maintain a copy of our ERP for five years after the certification date. Since our ERP may contain sensitive information, it should be stored safely and securely. Consider storing one copy on site and one copy off-site in case we are unable to access our offices or facilities during an incident. We may also store an electronic copy on a shared drive or other digital platform (protected by a firewall) easily accessible by utility personnel. Similarly, up-to-date plans and schematics of our treatment and distribution systems, as well as, current operations manuals, could be maintained and kept in at least two secure locations.

The ERP should be viewed as a living and evolving document with established maintenance guidelines for routine and non-routine updates, the circumstances under which the updates will occur, and the personnel or departments responsible for the updates. AWIA requires that utilities serving a population of 3,300 persons or more review and, if necessary, update their ERP at least once every five years, within six months of the utility reviewing and, if necessary, updating its RA. Utilities must submit new certification statements to EPA after each required ERP update.

Lastly, once the ERP is complete, consider training utility personnel and response partners on its contents and their individual roles and responsibilities. Conducting periodic trainings for both senior and new personnel helps ensure that the ERP procedures will be effectively implemented during actual response. Tabletop exercises are an effective means to practice and test the response procedures.





The Longest Day

Heath Cokeley, Programs Manager/Circuit Rider

In my last article I mentioned some things to do before a disaster. This article will focus more on the things to do during and immediately after a disaster. I will highlight some key points and admit that many of these points I have learned the hard way. Hopefully, mistakes that I have made can be learned from and not repeated when the chips are down and you're right in the middle of an event.

Communication

This will be likely the first thing to break down when a disaster happens, and I will say, the bigger the disaster, the quicker this will fall apart. In the last article I suggested having an alternative plan to communicate set in place at the beginning of the disaster or a few days before, if you have warning like an ice storm, or flood possibility is the time to implement that alternative form of communication. If cell phones are still working then great, but if not, having at minimum of some radios available so you can stay in communication with the rest of your team when they are close in proximity will make a huge difference. Communicate clearly with teammates during the event on where we are going, what we are planning to accomplish, when we get there, and especially when we will be back if we will be out of cell phone or radio signal range.

Information

Information is good until it's bad. What I mean by this is especially in a large-scale event there will be misinformation and we need to use our best judgment to evaluate what is factual and what is not. I remember the week of the fires last year, Jeff Crowther with OAWU and myself were in a city that we would later find out lost about 40 percent of the homes in

town. At the time, honestly, we thought more homes had been lost than that as the smoke was very thick making it hard to tell for sure, but it appeared as though most everything had burned. The cell phone grid had been down for some time and suddenly all of our phones started to work because they had deployed, what I would find out later is called a COW or cell on wheels. Yes, that is a real acronym. The Public Works Director that Ieff and I were working with got a message from his mayor saying we all needed to get out of there as the fire had turned and was headed back to us. I remember looking around and saying to Jeff, "how can it come back to us, there is nothing left to burn." Luckily, we had just finished what we had set out to do and were about to head down the hill, because in that situation, even if we didn't quite believe the information, we needed to take it seriously.

Later we would find out that it was misinformation that had spread quickly through a social media platform that will remain unnamed. I don't blame the mayor at all, in fact I very much appreciate him relaying the information he had, but during the fires we would get so much misinformation that ultimately, we at OAWU wouldn't fully trust information until we could talk to an Operator who had boots on the ground at a system or an OAWU staff member that was onsite.

Cover and Move

Cover and move is an old military term and a common theme in a book I would highly recommend reading called "Extreme Ownership." What I mean by cover and move is simply teamwork. Have your coworkers back and accept the fact that they have yours during these events. I am sure there are some

Oregon Association of Water Utilities

of you reading this that can relate to me when I say that frequently I will view something that is considered challenging to do as an obstacle that I can get through with just determination and shear bullheadedness. While I still may believe that I will admit that it is not possible to do it all alone, and we must rely on others if we are going to make it through a large-scale event with our sanity and safety intact.

By the time this article is published the fires that did so much damage to some of the communities in our state in 2020 will have happened a year ago. I can personally tell you, looking back, I can find several things I would have done differently, and I am OK with that



because I believe that a mistake is only truly a mistake if you don't learn from it, and I have tried to learn from mine. The one thing I would not change is the team that we had in place at OAWU during that time. A group of good solid people who just wanted to help and had each other's backs. I saw that same type of teamwork play out in other municipalities either hit by the fire, or

neighboring communities helping their fellow water and wastewater operators that were hit by the fires. People helping people is what gets us through these events in Oregon and will be what is needed to get through a much larger event like the Cascadia earthquake if and when it happens. Thanks for reading and with that I'll see you down the road. •





Boil Water Advisory!!!

by Bob Waller, Water Circuit Rider

With the recent potential shortage of chlorine, we at OAWU wanted to make sure that if you need boil water notice template, we have one you can use that is up-to-date. In this article I thought I would write about developing a template for a boil water notice that your system could use if you don't have one. I wanted a template simple to use, that you can print on your letterhead, along with information on the current problem.

When a system has an issue like a water main break, loss of pressure, or a contaminated water supply things will be very hectic. It's nice to have an up-to-date boil water notice in place, ready to go, so we can fix the problem.

What is a boil water advisory?

The city public works or utility will issue a boil water advisory, or boil water notice for certain situations. Sometimes a precautionary advisory is issued if there is a possibility the water has been contaminated, but the contamination hasn't been confirmed, such as loss of pressure event.

How does this contamination happen? Most often, it happens in one of the following situations:

- 1. When a water pipe bursts
- 2. A repair where the main must be shut down leading to a loss of pressure
- 3. If water treatment facilities run into problems
- 4. During severe weather or natural disasters such as flooding

These events can allow sewage or other sources of dangerous bacteria to enter the supply of drinking water. If someone drinks the contaminated water, they could get very sick. Tainted water can cause diarrhea, cholera, Giardia, Salmonella infection, and E. coli infection.

If a boil water advisory is issued in the area, be extra careful that water is clean before anyone drinks it or uses it. Typically, this means purchasing bottled water or boiling the tap water.

Do not drink the water without boiling it first. Customers should bring water to a rolling boil for 1 full minute, allow the water to cool before using, and store the cooled water in a clean container with a cover. Customers should use boiled water that has cooled or bottled water for:

- Drinking
- Brushing teeth
- Washing fruits and vegetables
- · Preparing food and baby formula
- Making ice
- Cleaning food contact surfaces

Here is an example of a notice you could implement for use in the event of a boil water notice. Please make this your own and add to your list of templates. I hope this helps and please call OAWU for more assistance.

DRINKING WATER WARNING **Boil Your Water Before Using**

location caused a loss of water pressure in the distribution system on potentially introducing harmful bacteria into the water supply. If these bacteria are present, they could make you sick, and are of particular concern for people with weakened immune systems. This boil water notice is isolated to only the customers who have received this notice. Those outside of the isolated area are not affected by this notice.

Do not drink the water without boiling it first.

Customers should bring water to a rolling boil for 1 full minute, allow the water to cool before using, and store the cooled water in a clean container with a cover. Customers should use boiled water that has cooled or bottled water for:

- Drinking
- Brushing teeth
- Washing fruits and vegetables

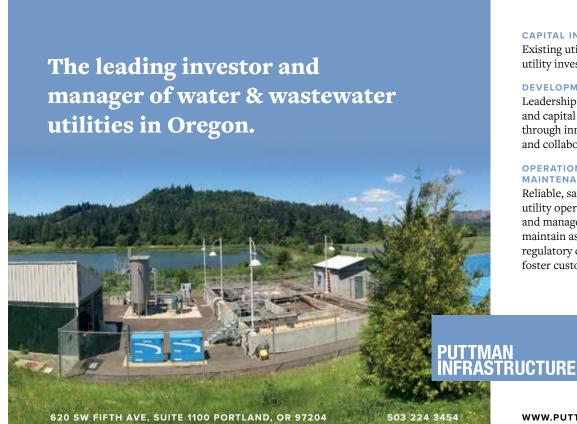
- Preparing food and baby formula
- Making ice
- Cleaning food contact surfaces

Public Works staff are repairing the leak, will flush the system, and collect precautionary bacteriological samples. We will inform you when tests show no bacteria are present and you no longer need to boil your water. We should have the bacteriological results within the next hours.

This boil water advisory is a precaution. To limit risk to health, customers should follow the instructions contained in this advisory.

For more information, contact organization/public works at phone number or by email at email address

General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by contaminants in drinking water are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or the Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Services at 971-673-0405.



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Recruitment, Training, ar

by Mike Collier, Deputy Director, Source Water Specialist

For many of us, employee issues are the difficult and most challenging aspects to being a manager and dealing with them can seem overwhelming at times.

First of all, try to start with a good team, that involves hiring the right people to join the team (of course some may already be there, and we won't have control over that). I know this is easier said than done and we can all be fooled into hiring the wrong candidate for our team during an interview. One way to help is to have multiple interviewers from within the current staff, we want the new employee to be able to fit into our current team. It is important to get the interviewee talking, if they are not expanding on the answers to our questions, it is hard to find out about their strengths, weaknesses, experience, and if they will work in the team. Sometimes the person with the most experience is not going to fit.

Compensation and other benefits are important to getting people interested in working for us—this helps to get the cream of the crop willing to interview for the position and will be a good way to keep long term employees. The manager needs to make decisions, even bad ones, and provide direction. This doesn't mean that the decisions are made in a bubble, encourage input from the staff, and really listen to them. Hopefully we show good decision making, as the manager has the last word. It is important to not rush into making decisions. Usually, it is necessary to take time to make impartial decisions—this involves removing emotions and conflicts of yourself and the staff from final decision.

Part of having a good crew is to have them onboard and agree with the mission. Working together toward a known greater goal that everyone agrees with and wants to help accomplish will help provide direction for the team.

One of the most difficult things is to resolve conflicts among team members. It may become necessary to mediate conflicts that arise in the "team." Be sure to address conflicts, you can either talk to all the staff generally or you may need to be a mediator and talk directly to the staff involved, don't let things fester, early and often as soon as things pop up. Team building is important. This will help them to work together toward the common goal and outsiders will see that your team works well together. This can improve reputation, production, and service—they aren't talking trash about each other to others, and they will have each other's backs.

I think it is important to communicate well, be transparent, set objectives—what is expected of all the employees—what are the targets. Even if it seems to be over communicated, we want to be effective and clear to lead without confusion.

Training and development of the team improves each aspect of the team. Developing employees' confidence to take on new tasks and potentially being promoted can be an added benefit that a manager can provide to the employees (some may not be interested, but others might see it as a carrot). Get to know the employees, each person may need different things for development, they are all unique. Try to be consistent with what we say and do between employees and with our attitude, we are steering the ship. I understand that trying to do both at the same time seems basically impossible. we are trying to cater to each employee's needs for their growth but are also trying to be consistent among the staff.

nd Management of Employees

Give them the ability to come up with new business opportunities or ways of doing things for the company/city. This helps them feel that they are part of improving the utility and they will be more vested in different efforts. It is expensive to train new staff, if we have a good employee give them opportunities to continue to improve and get better. In my opinion this is good even if they end up moving on to other opportunities, it can improve the industry as a whole.

Look for help—don't take on everything yourself—be good at giving others some of your tasks, they will feal that they are really helping, that you trust them, and you can take some things off your plate to become a better boss or cover additional priority items.

If you have a large team, you can try to build mentoring relationships, to advance their ability and careers. Also, by doing this when it comes to retirements the position might already have someone that has the ability to fill it from within the team, at least temporarily.

Be flexible and empathetic; your employees are not you. A way to give another benefit besides compensation is to allow flexibility for the employees as long as they aren't taking advantage of you. Be friendly, make yourself approachable, and give your staff time—even if you have work to do or are behind on what you are trying to do. The employees will always look to you, so lead by example, how you deal with conflict, your attitude and behavior in certain issues, how you treat other staff, are you early, on-time, or late.

Take time to celebrate, celebrate your staff, celebrate wins, give promotions—or financial, or other awards for good work. People work better if they enjoy the workplace and work environment. Give them ways to love their job, sometimes we can't always give more money, so give other ways that they will have enjoyment—team lunches, freedom, not looking over their shoulder, get-togethers, or maybe a few hours off/ possibly with pay. •

References

 $20 \ Rules for Effectively Managing People: https://www.deputy.com/blog/20-rules-for-effectively-managing-people 7/22/2021$



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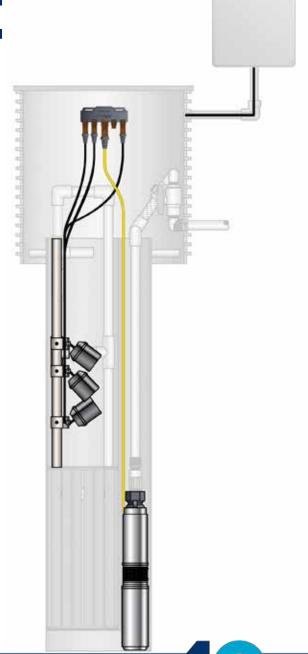
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I've Decided to Give My Notice

by Hans Schroeder, Circuit Rider

Words none of us want to hear from a long-standing employee. A lot of times, especially with smaller systems, the employee wants to move up in the industry and will take with them all the knowledge you have trained them in to improve their career. If they move up, they can get better pay and benefits at a larger system. What the employee doesn't always realize is all the time and costs that are associated with training them and that can be very taxing on a system.

It took years to train them in the knowledge of the system. If we're not prepared to find a replacement for a position on the team then an investment in time and training needs to be a priority. The cost in replacing an employee is stressful to the budget, especially to a system of just 2 or 3 public works employees. Not only training a new employee is costly, but also finding the right personality to fit into the tight network of employees can be exhausting. If the fit isn't correct, it can make the job seem unbearable. Working as a team is essential in this line of work and if someone doesn't have the right mindset to stick with the job it will take a toll on the other longstanding employees. There are the weekend chores that need to be altered and everyone must take their turn. Not everyone will get the same week off for hunting, fishing, Christmas, or summer vacations so everyone has to be willing to work with one another and sometimes seniority doesn't always factor in. It takes a year or more to obtain enough hours to get to the point of certification for a new operations specialist. Not to mention the cost to the city for benefits, extra training to obtain the certifications and the other employees covering while the new employee reaches to obtain his/her certifications.

We need to always be thinking how we could improve the way we do things so that the employees want to stay with us. There should be incentives added maybe after one year or after obtaining certifications then every five years they stay they get a little extra something. Some other thoughts are another few days of vacation time, or extra percentage added to their retirement at certain milestones of their career.

Understanding the day-to-day operations takes time. As we start getting an employee trained at understanding the system there are always issues that pop up along the way. Remember the new employee hasn't experienced a lot of these things and getting insight from the other employees can be very helpful to make them understand how to handle certain situations. We can sometimes get in a rut and say oh that's just the way it has always been done or we don't want to rock the boat and change anything. The new employee might give a fresh perspective on things so please take the time to at least listen to them. Monthly or quarterly brainstorming sessions can not only benefit the new employee, but also get the older employees excited about trying something. Involve all the city employees even the city recorders and assistant city recorders as they often are on the front line with the customers.

In this day and age where it is hard to find someone who is even willing to work, remember to strive to keep the employees we have, it will benefit everyone in the long run. •





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Source Water Protection for Utilities by Sarah Liljefelt

Source water protection is important for all Oregon water utilities when complying with standards under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Oregon's Drinking Water Quality Act while also potentially reducing treatment costs. Water treatment is expensive, and sometimes even cost prohibitive for small utilities. Recent legislative efforts highlight the importance of source water protection, though, as explained below, such efforts fell short during the 2021 Legislative Session.

In Oregon, water entities, such as private utilities, districts, and municipalities, have several options to protect source water. Of course, voluntary transactions are always an option, in which the entity purchases property or conservation easements to protect source water. These voluntary transactions are rare, as private landowners oftentimes do not want to voluntarily sell or encumber their properties.

Absent a voluntary transaction, Oregon law provides water entities authority to condemn private property as necessary for water development and use. Under Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) Chapter 35, public entities may generally condemn private property for public use under the power of "eminent domain." Similarly, ORS Chapter 772 provides the power of condemnation to private corporations organized for construction of any "sewer or canal or of any ditch or flume for the conducting of water for irrigation or domestic purposes, or for the purpose of selling water to the public for general purposes for public use, or for conducting potable or wastewater by means of pipe laid upon or under the surface of the ground." ORS 772.010(1). However, such condemnation is limited in ORS Chapter 772 to: "so much land as may be necessary for the ... sewer, canal, ditch, flume or pipeline, not exceeding 100 feet in width, besides a sufficient quantity of land for toolhouses, workshops, materials for construction, timber excepted, and a right through such adjacent land to enable such corporation to construct and repair its lines, poles, towers, wires, underground wires, supports and necessary equipment, railway, sewer, canal, ditch, flume or other pipeline, and to make proper drains." ORS 772.015. As such, the scope of private utility condemnation may not always be adequate for source water protection.

The Oregon Health Authority manages the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, awarding grants to delineate and assess areas of source water protection. Loans are also available to implement source water protection activities, such as land acquisition. However, as testimony in support of recently proposed legislation brought to light, oftentimes

the recipients of such funds face difficulty when attempting to implement source water protection activities due to the need to negotiate with private landowners, and the inability to engage such landowners in those discussions and negotiations. Additionally, utilities with surface source water located in timber lands bemoaned the standards under the Oregon Forest Practices Act that allowed tree harvesting near their sources of domestic water.

Oregon House Bill ("HB") 2594 was proposed as a means of bringing private landowners to the table to negotiate property sales or conservation easements. The original text of the bill would have required that private landowners respond to private utility offers to purchase property or conservation easements. If the landowner declined, the Oregon Health Authority would be able to acquire the property or conservation easement by eminent domain. However, amendments to HB 2594 shifted gears and instead proposed changes to how the Board of Forestry manages logging activities. The amendments would have required the Board of Forestry to reassess its designation of streams that support domestic use in coordination with the Environmental Quality Commission and Oregon Health Authority. Such efforts did not translate into law though, as HB 2594 died in the House Water Committee at the time of adjournment.

Source water protection can raise many challenges, often pitting the interests of domestic water consumers against those of private property owners whose activities may affect water quality. As such, over time, many domestic water providers have sought out groundwater supplies in addition to, or in substitution of, traditional surface water supplies. Such increased reliance on groundwater is also spurred by surface water quantity fluctuations and drought conditions. However, as time goes on, new groundwater rights are more difficult to obtain, and development of new water sources is also expensive. Water entities must carefully assess their water quality risks, their options to protect their sources of water, and the options available through voluntary purchases and agreements, eminent domain or condemnation, and alternative or backup water supplies.

Schroeder Law Offices, P.C., was founded by Laura A. Schroeder and represents water-rights clients in six western states and consults internationally. This article was drafted with the assistance of Caitlin Skulan. Caitlin is an Associate Attorney with Schroder Law Offices and is licensed in Nevada and Idaho. You can read more about this topic and other water rights issues at Schroeder Law Offices' Water Law Blog, http://water-law.com/home/blog/.



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QUIZ CORNER

1. What rank for volume is the Willamette River among the nation's rivers?

A. 7th

C. 31st

B. 19th

D. 50th

2. The Willamette River is one of how many rivers in the entire U.S. that flows south to north?

A. 20

B. 7

C. 3

- D. It doesn't run south to north
- 3. Which of the following element(s) are required in a cross-connection control program?
 - A. DVCA at every service connection
 - B. Public education
 - C. Hazard assessment /surveys
 - D. Both B and C are correct

4. What is the specific gravity for a solution that weighs 10.27 lb/gal at 4* Celsius?

A. 1.23

C. 1.39

B. 1.31

- D. 1.42
- 5. A fluid with a specific gravity of 1.05 weighs ____ lb/gal.

A. 8.4

C. 7.2

B. 8.8

D. 8.5

6. A liquid has a specific gravity of 1.16. how much would 300 gallons of this fluid weigh?

A. 2901 lbs

C. 2603 lbs

B. 348 lbs

D. 2156 lbs

7. An apple is _____% water.

A. 25

C. 65

B. 40

D. 80

8. A banana is _____% water.

A. 40

C. 60

B. 50

D. 70

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A. 30 minutes

C. 45 minutes

B. 15 minutes

D. 1 hour

- 10. While exercising, most people should break for water every:
 - A. 10 minutes
 - B. 20 minutes
 - C. 30 minutes
 - D. 45 minutes

VASMERS: 1-B, 2-A, 3-D, 4-A, 5-B, 6-A, 7-C, 8-D, 9-A, 10-B



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UPCOMING TRAINING & EVENTS

Date	Class Title		Location (CEU Information	ESAC#	, Fee/Free
	20	21 –				
December 6	Effective Utility Management		Hood River	0.6 Water/Wastewater	TBA	FREE
December 6-9	23 rd Annual End of Year Operators Conference		Hood River	2.7 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
	20	22 –				
January 11-12	Wastewater Treatment/Certification Review		Hermiston	1.7 Wastewater/ 0.7 Water	4227	Fee
Feb. 28-Mar. 4	43rd Annual Management & Technical Conference		Sunriver	2.4 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
Мау	OAWU Annual Expo		Polk Cty. Fairground	s 0.4 Water/Wastewater	TBA	FREE
August 22-25	28th Annual Summer Classic Conference		Seaside	2.0 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
September	2022 Fall Operator's Conference		Florence	2.0 Water or Wastewater	TBA	Fee
November	OAWU Annual Spirit Mountain Casino Operator's Confe	rence	Grand Ronde	2.0 Water/Wastewater	TBA	Fee
December 5-8	OAWU Annual End of Year Operator's Conference		Hood River	2.0 Water or Wastewater	TBA	Fee

Levels 1-4 Water Operator Exams

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For additional information, please visit http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/OperatorCertification/Levels1-4/Pages/exams.aspx

Drinking Water Data Online

https://yourwater.oregon.gov

Drinking Water Services

https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/DRINKINGWATER/Pages/index.aspx

Training class dates, class topic and/or locations may be subject to change as needed.

For more information on any class by OAWU, please contact the office at 503-837-1212, office@oawu.net or visit www.oawu.net.



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City/State:				
County: ZIP:		Annual Dues: See Regular Member Dues Schedule		
Email:		Associate Member		
Phone:		An Associate Member shall be any organization, individual or corporation, supplying services or equipment to water and wastewater utilities. An Associate Member shall have one vote. Annual Dues \$500.00 per year		
Contact Person:				
Number of Hook-ups:		Individual Member		
Were you referred? By whom		An Individual Member shall be an individual involved in the water/wastewater industry or a user of such utilities. The membership is informational in nature and shall be non-voting. Annual Dues \$100.00 per year Benefits of Membership On-site technical assistance		
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Dry Creek Airpark HOA, Inc.

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Eastmont Water Company

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Fernridge Mobile Estates

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Netarts-Oceanside Sanitary Dist.

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