



ODW STAFF ATTEND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING CONFERENCE

In mid-October, several ODW staff attended and presented at the Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) three-day meeting in Wenatchee. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) infuses many existing programs with historical levels of funding, such as the Drinking Water State and Clean Water revolving funds. Under the theme, Building Back Together, the conference gathered funding agencies, city and county government, and water and wastewater staff, utilities, project managers, and consultants to provide funding program requirements and understand infrastructure needs.



During the pre-conference round table “Tech Team” meetings, utilities presented their infrastructure projects. They worked directly with interdisciplinary funding agencies to outline a functional funding strategy with a goal of meeting everyone’s needs, timelines, and requirements.

Since 1986, the conference aims to connect local governments with governmental funding programs for infrastructure needs available in Washington state. At the IACC conference, ODW staff spoke about capacity development, cultural and environmental review, the bi-partisan infrastructure law funding, and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program.

COLUMBIA RIVER CYANOTOXIN RESPONSE AND MONITORING PROJECT 2022

September 2021, new cyanotoxin were detected in raw and finished water in Washington state public water systems. In response, ODW staff led a combined response and monitoring program for the Tri-Cities area of the Columbia River. We used source water protection funding to buy ELISA* cyanotoxin laboratory equipment for Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD). We also bought a remote water quality monitoring probe to track water quality at the Richland intake. We partnered with King County Environmental Lab (KCEL) for extra laboratory capacity. We worked with BFHD, the four cities of Richland, Pasco, Kennewick, and West Richland, along with staff from DOH’s Office of Climate and Health. Working together, we started a baseline cyanotoxin monitoring program. We also developed a response plan for detected cyanotoxin.

Cooler temperatures helped finish the 2022 cyanotoxin study period. Some significant accomplishments include the establishment and successful operation of the BFHD ELISA laboratory. BFHD collects and analyzes samples in local water systems and recreational waters. If cyanotoxin detections are identified in screening samples, additional samples are collected and sent to KCEL for analysis at an accredited laboratory. Working with BFHD and ODW, the four cities developed a joint Cyanobacteria and Cyanotoxin Monitoring and Response Plan. KCEL worked directly with utilities on required follow-up sampling and provided timely results. We continue to gather and evaluate cyanotoxin and general water quality results from the Columbia River.

**Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) test kits, a cyanotoxin testing method.*

STATE MONITORING REQUIREMENTS FOR PFAS

Group A Community and non-transient non-community (NTNC) water systems are required to monitor for PFAS beginning January 2023. See our webpage,

Our next DWAG meeting is December 5, from 9 a.m. to noon. Find the Teams meeting link and agenda on our [DWAG webpage](#).

[PFAS in Drinking Water—Monitoring and Analysis](#). Systems must collect samples at the entry point to the distribution system and have them analyzed by EPA Method 537.1 or 533 by a lab accredited for these analytes in Washington state.

Each water system's Water Quality Monitoring Schedule lists the PFAS monitoring requirement starting in 2023. [PFAS Monitoring and Follow Up Actions 331-668](#) outlines the monitoring requirements in the revised rule.

Transient non-community (TNCs) systems *may* be required to monitor if their source of supply is near a known PFAS contaminated site. We will notify affected TNCs when more information is known.

DOH still has a free PFAS sample program for Community and NTNC systems, continuing through early 2023. Results count toward state-required monitoring.

Water systems not currently signed up for this sampling program, can still sign up by email. Let us know about your interest in the program and include the required information (listed below). Funding is limited. We may prioritize systems based on risk if volunteer systems exceed available funding.

Please include your water system name and ID, contact person (including name, phone and email), and shipping address. Email odw.wqcompliance@doh.wa.gov.

Systems with detections must collect follow-up samples and comply with rule requirements.

The federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law made additional funding available in grants and loans to public water systems for PFAS treatment, new source, or another preferred option for mitigating PFAS contamination. To be eligible for this funding you must meet Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) eligibility requirements. Complete your sampling early and ensure the mitigation project is in your approved water system plan or small water system management program.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: HOW WATER SYSTEM PLANNING RELATES TO CONSTRUCTION LOANS

The [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund](#) (DWSRF) construction loan program accepts applications each October and November. Loan eligibility requirements are identified in WAC 246-296-100. To be eligible for a DWSRF loan, you must:

- ◆ Document that your system has capacity to stay in compliance with federal, state, and local drinking water regulations, unless the funding will bring the system into compliance.
- ◆ Comply with federal, state, and local drinking water regulations, unless the funding brings the system into compliance.
- ◆ Have a current ODW-approved water system plan (WSP) or small water system management program (SWSMP) that includes the proposed project and addresses any difficulties with system capacity.
- ◆ Comply with any department or EPA orders.
- ◆ Install source or service meters on all sources and services connections if meters are not already installed.
- ◆ Have no outstanding fees or penalties owed to ODW.
- ◆ Provide documentation that the project has sufficient water rights.

We find that many water systems don't realize there is a planning requirement for DWSRF eligibility. Your plan must show that you have sufficient technical, managerial, and financial capacity to operate the water system. Not only do you need an approved WSP or SWSMP to be eligible, but you must also include proposed projects in your plan before you can apply. Please keep the DWSRF cycle and eligibility requirements in mind—start now, not when the application period opens. Contact your regional planner to discuss your plan update or to learn how to start.



Approved planning documents include capital improvements such as storage tank replacement. Identify critical infrastructure needs in your planning document. Even public utilities, which must maintain capital facilities or improvement programs to meet other requirements, might have these capital projects listed elsewhere in their adopted documents but may not have incorporated the projects into their WSPs. For example, a city-owned system's comprehensive plan under the state Growth Management Act (GMA) must include a capital facilities element. While the six-year capital program meets the GMA requirement, they must also include the capital project in the city's approved WSP to qualify for DWSRF funding.

With some exceptions, WSPs can be approved for a period of up to ten years. Even if the project is listed in the plan, if your plan's approval has lapsed, you must submit an updated plan for approval prior to applying for a loan. While SWSMP approvals do not expire, you may need to update the SWSMP to include a necessary project or update an old budget.

If a critical issue emerges that you do not have sufficient funds to fix, you might need a loan, but your project might not be listed in the approved plan. This is typically an issue when a system finds contamination above an MCL and needs to add treatment to comply with federal or state regulations.

Each year, we receive numerous inquiries about quickly amending plans to facilitate DWSRF applications. Unfortunately, the two months leading up to the DWSRF application deadline isn't enough time for you to prepare and for us to review and approve a plan update.

We urge you to plan ahead for capital projects. Even if your plan update isn't due yet, it's to your advantage to make certain the capital improvements included in your plan are current. It can make the difference of whether you're able to qualify for a DWSRF construction loan.

Want to get started? Water system plan amendments, SWSMP, preliminary engineering, and other preparatory work are eligible under the DWSRF preconstruction loan program. This enables you to work on your plan update for a following year's DWSRF construction loan cycle while still advancing project work.

WATERWORKS CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

The holiday season means three things for every certified waterworks operator:

1. Pay your annual renewal fee and get a new validation card.
2. Verify and update your contact information.
3. Check your professional growth report.

Fortunately, you can do all three tasks quickly and easily on the [Washington Certification Services webpage!](#)

Every year operators lose their certification because they forgot to pay or thought someone else paid for them. It only takes a few minutes to check, and there is no reason to take chances. Please don't wait! Keep protecting public health and our infrastructure investments.

IT'S THE HAPPIEST TIME OF THE YEAR!

No, not THAT time of year; it's Drinking Water Week Nomination time!

Next year's annual National Drinking Water Week is May 7-13, 2023.

Anyone can nominate someone in the drinking water industry for excellent service, overcoming challenges, or going above and beyond their normal duties. Fill out a [nomination form](#) today!

Some award categories are Grace Under Pressure, Most Improved, and Lifetime Achievement for those who are retiring. There are more categories and we adjust titles to fit circumstances.

Find more details on our [Drinking Water Week webpage](#).

Please share this newsletter with anyone who might be interested. [Sign up for future issues.](#)

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