



# the Pipeline

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Oregon Drinking Water News

## Program update

by Dave Leland

Many of you already know this is my final program update before retiring at the end of 2016. I greatly appreciate the opportunity over the past 34 years to work together on safe drinking water with very dedicated current and former Drinking Water Services staff, local health departments, state agency partners, water supplier organizations, laboratories and those who have so ably served on the Drinking Water Advisory Committee. I especially appreciate the efforts of Oregon public water system managers and operators who were and are on the front line of supplying safe drinking water statewide.

As I pondered this final update, I came across a 2014 reflection I wrote for the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators as part of the national celebration of 40 years of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, and I offer that reflection below in its original form. Keep up the good work!

*Continued on page 2*

## Operator Certification Corner

### 2016 renewal and audit: Lessons learned

by Dottie Reynolds

The 2016 renewal and audit is behind us and I wanted to convey my appreciation to all of you for your patience! The change in the renewal process this year made it a large success! This year's renewal cycle was for those individuals whose last name initial started between L-Z.

Approximately 890 renewals were mailed (or 1,160 certifications) in November 2015. This is approximately half of all certified operators in Oregon.

The changes this year included:

1. The new online renewal website was launched. The online portal has a different look.  
(Please note: Even though you may renew using the online portal, you must mail the renewal packet to the department.)

*Continued on page 3*

### What's in the Pipeline

Program update .....	1
2016 renewal and audit: Lessons learned .....	1
Are you ready for a water emergency? .....	2
Low-cost funding for drinking water facility improvements .....	4
Congratulations to our Outstanding Performers! .....	6
Dave Leland retires! .....	7
New DWS section manager .....	7
Meeting calendar .....	8
Training calendar .....	8

**Forty Years of the Safe Drinking Water Act in Oregon** – Oregon experienced 15 confirmed community waterborne disease outbreaks in the 1970s, including events of regional and national note at Crater Lake National Park in Southern Oregon and Government Camp on Mt. Hood. These helped illustrate the need for rigorous national drinking water standards. Although Oregon initially declined Primacy for the then-new Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, the state did re-establish a state program in the early 1980s. The state program operated in tandem with the EPA Region X direct implementation effort until Oregon assumed Primacy in 1986, just as the 1986 SDWA Amendments were passed into law.

Oregon's initial Primacy effort focused on the continuing community waterborne disease problem, whose root cause was primarily the prevalent use of unfiltered surface water sources from forested mountain watersheds serving a substantial part of the state population. Although crystal clear and apparently pristine, these sources contained environmental pathogens, especially *Giardia*. Fifty-five communities with unfiltered surface water sources installed treatment, connected to others, or drilled wells because of the 1975 EPA turbidity standard. An additional 48 communities and 113 noncommunity water systems with unfiltered surface water sources, and others whose groundwater sources proved subject to surface water influence, made improvements later on because of the Surface Water Treatment Rule established under the 1986 amendments. Only four unfiltered communities qualified for filtration exceptions, and three of those are now making improvements to meet the Long-term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule established under the 1996 amendments. Additional critical financial assistance was made available from the Revolving Loan Fund, also established under the 1996 amendments, that has to date provided almost \$300M to nearly 150 Oregon communities.

Oregon water systems also experienced difficulties with coliform bacteria, lead and copper, volatile organic chemicals, and disinfection by-products along the way. But the Safe Drinking Water Act, state Primacy program and partners, EPA assistance and oversight, and the efforts of public water suppliers to improve their systems have resulted in demonstrably safer drinking water. No more articles like "Is Oregon's Water Hazardous to Your Health?" (Oregon Magazine-April 1981)!

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*Dave Leland was manager of Drinking Water Services*

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## Are you ready for a water emergency?

At a recent EPA Water Security Division workshop, a presenter shared 10 questions that every water system should ask itself about preparedness for water emergencies. These questions are based on experience and lessons learned from four separate water emergencies at his medium-sized city of 22,000 people. How does your water system measure up?

<https://securitynotes.asdwa.org/2016/08/25/are-you-ready-for-a-water-emergency/>

2. CEU submittals. You do **NOT** need to submit your CEU training certificate. The new Self-Certification Affidavit, a one-page form, is the new requirement in lieu of submitting the individual CEU training certificate. Complete the affidavit by writing the title of the training, the OESAC number (if provided) and the amount of training hours (CEUs earned). Both the renewal packet and the Self-Certification Affidavit must be signed and dated.
3. While OESAC-approved training is preferred, training that does not meet the "Need-to-Know" criteria may be granted approval, not to exceed four hours per certification period (also known as discretionary training).
4. The \$50 late fee is accrued starting February 1.
5. During the new audit period, March 15 through April 15, approximately 25% are selected for the annual audit. Training certificates must be mailed to the department during this period.

#### Renewal lessons learned:

1. During the renewal period, I found the fastest communication was by email. From November 10 through the end of January, I received more than 290 renewal-related emails. With this in mind, please make sure Operator Certification has your email address!
2. As suggested from a number of you, the renewal application next year will include the mailing address to mail your renewal directly to Operator Certification if you make payment online.
3. Do not count more than 0.4 CEUs for discretionary training or you may not have the correct amount of CEUs for renewal.
4. I do not need to see your payment receipt. Please keep that for your records.

5. Take extra care in paying the correct fee. The fee is \$80 if you hold one certification (new fee is \$140) and \$120 (new fee is \$210) if you hold both D&T certifications. (The filtration endorsement does not need to be renewed.)
6. And as always, please be sure to let Operator Certification know when you have a change of address! Changing your address and phone number online is no longer an option. There is a new address change form on the opcert website. (<http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/OperatorCertification/Documents/address-change.pdf>)
7. Lastly, make sure everyone handling renewals in your office is aware of the changes!

#### Audit

There were approximately 25% (218) audit postcards mailed for the first annual audit in March. The audit period is a total of 30 days. You need to submit both a copy of your self-certification form and the training certificates within the 30-day audit period.

#### Audit lessons learned:

1. The section on the self-certification form under discretionary allows only four hours. Do not count more than four hours (0.4 CEUs) or you may find you do not have the correct amount of CEUs for renewal.
2. I need only ONE copy of the training certificate.
3. You need only to submit a total of 20 hours of professional development training for renewal. If you took additional classes you do not need to submit them.
4. You do not need to submit or mail the audit postcard back to me.

*Continued on page 4*

5. I received more than 200 audit-related emails since March 17. Again, make sure I have your email address.
6. All training must be accrued during the current renewal cycle. (Do not send old training certificates.)

Keep in mind we will accept CEUs by either letter or certificate. The letter must be on the sponsor's header paper, may be signed by the training sponsor (or instructor) and must include the same information as on the training certificates: the date, title of the class (as submitted to OESAC), OESAC number and the amount of CEUs. OESAC training is preferred, but any technical training that meets the ABC "Need-to-Know" criteria is acceptable and will be assigned a CEU value by OHA.

Training that does not meet the Need-to-Know criteria may be granted approval, not to exceed four hours per certification period.

If you would like to know the results of your audit please add your email address directly to your training certification. (No need for additional paper.) Sixty operators had requested results of the audit. If you do not hear back from me, "No news is good news!" I will only get in touch with you if there are questions with your training certification or the self-certification affidavit (or lack thereof). Thank you for a great renewal season!

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*Dottie Reynolds is the operator certification coordinator for Drinking Water Services / 971-673-0426 or [dottie.e.reynolds@state.or.us](mailto:dottie.e.reynolds@state.or.us)*

## Low-cost funding for drinking water facility improvements

*by Adam DeSempfle*

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The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) provides low-cost loans to community and nonprofit non-community water systems for planning, design and construction of drinking water infrastructure improvements. In Oregon, the DWSRF is managed jointly by Business Oregon's Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and is often called the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (SDWRLF).

### What we offer:

- Low cost loans
- Interest rates based on 60–80% of the prior quarter's 20 Bond Index
- Repayment terms up to 20 years
- Disadvantaged community loan interest rates as low as 1% with terms up to 30 years
- Potential to receive part of the loan as principal forgiveness for:
  - Disadvantaged communities
  - Projects that resolve current health and/or compliance issues
  - Projects that resolve issues through consolidation
  - Project management services and/or administering Labor Standards Compliance
- Free onsite loan application help for community water systems serving populations under 10,000 and nonprofit non-community water systems

*Continued on page 5*

For more detailed information, visit the DWSRF web page at <http://healthoregon.org/srf>.

### **Infrastructure projects we can fund:**

- Water sources, treatment, finished water reservoirs, pumping and transmission, and distribution mains
- Aquifer, storage and recovery projects
- Instrumentation, telemetry, water meter, AMR/AMI, backflow device and pressure reducing valve projects
- Safety, seismic and security improvements
- Projects that increase redundancy and reliability of critical assets
- Water system restructuring and/or consolidation to resolve noncompliance or technical, managerial and financial problems
- Planning and design in support of an eligible project – feasibility studies, master plans, design and environmental documents

### **Sustainable infrastructure planning projects we can fund:**

- Feasibility studies
- Asset management plans
- System partnership studies
- Resilience plans
- Water rate analysis
- Leak detection studies
- Water system master plans for systems with <300 connections

Projects can receive 100% forgivable loan funding up to a maximum of \$20,000 per project.

### **What to do?**

You can submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) for your water system at any time. There is **no deadline date** to submit the LOI. Here's how:

Go to the DWSRF web page at <http://healthoregon.org/srf> and visit the LOI section for details; located on the Infrastructure Projects and Sustainable Infrastructure Planning Projects web pages.

### **Drinking water source protection projects**

Loan and grant funds are also available for drinking water source protection efforts. For more information, please visit the DWSRF web page at <http://healthoregon.org/srf> and select the Drinking Water Source Protection Projects section.

### **Business Oregon tops \$300 million in support for Oregon water systems.**

See the following link from our DWSRF Resources web page: <http://tinyurl.com/DWSRFResources>.

### **Need more information?**

It's easy! Contact:

- Adam DeSemples, DWSRF coordinator, at 971-673-0422 or by email at [adesemples@state.or.us](mailto:adesemples@state.or.us)
- Jeremy McVeety, IFA's safe drinking water program and policy coordinator, at 503-507-7107 or by email at [jeremy.mcveety@state.or.us](mailto:jeremy.mcveety@state.or.us)
- An IFA regional coordinator near you at [www.orinfrastructure.org/map.php](http://www.orinfrastructure.org/map.php)

## Congratulations to our Outstanding Performers!

Jobs well done by the operators of these systems:

<b>Water system name</b>	<b>County served</b>
Agate Water System	Deschutes
Arch Cape Water District	Clatsop
Ashdown Wood Water Company	Clackamas
Beaver Water District	Tillamook
Beaverton, City of	Washington
Bentwood Estates Water System	Deschutes
Blue Moon Mobile Home Park	Josephine
Central Point, City of	Jackson
Chenoweth PUD	Wasco
Cloverdale Water District	Tillamook
Country View MHP	Josephine
Crescent Wtr Supply & Impr Dist	Klamath
Crown Mobile Home Park	Washington
Dry Creek Airpark	Crook
Eagle Point, City of	Jackson
Fairview, City of	Multnomah
Glenmorrie Cooperative Assn	Clackamas
Glenwood Acres Homeowners	Deschutes
Goble Water Association	Columbia
Hidden Meadows Water Assn Inc	Yamhill
Horizon Village Community Water System	Josephine
Joint Water Commission	Washington
Juno Non-Profit Water Co	Tillamook
Kingswood Heights Water Co-Op	Clackamas
Knappa Water Association	Clatsop
Kountry Village	Lane
Lakeshore Mobile Estates	Linn

Mclain Village Water Dept	Marion
Merrill Water Department	Klamath
Mount Angel, City of	Marion
Oakvilla Mobile Home Park	Linn
Pine Grove Water District	Klamath
Redwood Terrace Assisted Living	Josephine
River Meadows Improvement Dist	Deschutes
Riverfront Trailer Park	Jackson
Rivergrove Water District	Clackamas
Roats Water System	Deschutes
Rufus Public Works	Sherman
Sacajawea Mobile Home Park	Union
Salem Mobile Estates/Shady Acres	Marion
Shadow Hills Park Water Co-Op	Lane
Sky Crest Heights Homeowners	Josephine
Skylands Water Company	Clackamas
Suburban East Salem WD	Marion
Tollgate Water Company	Deschutes
Tumalo West Water System	Deschutes
Turner, City of	Marion
Warren Water Association	Columbia
West Slope Water District	Washington

These public water systems have most recently met the established criteria for outstanding performance (Jan. 12 – Nov. 17, 2016). Outstanding performers are systems with no significant deficiencies identified, as well as no unresolved violations. All systems are evaluated during their routine Water System Survey, and those that meet the outstanding performer criteria have their survey frequency (and fee) reduced from every three years to every five years. To find out how to qualify, visit <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/Operations/Pages/osp.aspx>.



## **Dave Leland retires!**

Dave Leland, a one of a kind individual, retired at the end of 2016 from the Oregon Drinking Water Program.

He started his extremely long public service career after graduating from Michigan State University with a B.S. in civil engineering and M.S. in sanitary engineering. He was quickly hired by the state of Michigan as one of the first inspectors in the state drinking water program. After a few years he took a job out west at the Springfield (Oregon) Utility Board where he served as a staff engineer in the water department. He eventually accepted a job with the state Drinking Water Program in 1982 and soon became the section manager.

Those of you who have met Dave know he is a devoted public health pioneer in Oregon, whose long-lasting dedication and passion for safe drinking water has helped make Oregon's drinking water some of the best in the world. Dave's unique talents will surely be missed; his uncanny humor, always entertaining presentations and his ability to get along with anybody make Dave a very special person.

**Cheers to Dave!**



## **Welcome, David Emme!**

David Emme will be the Drinking Water Services Section Manager effective Feb 6, 2017.

He is coming from the State of Nevada and comes with some unique skills. He has over a 30 year career in environmental protection, technical and management positions. Most recently, he was the administrator for the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, which included leading a staff of 265 employees and overseeing the Drinking Water Program there. He has a Master's degree in Hydrology/Hydrogeology from the University of Nevada and a Bachelor's degree in geology from University of Montana.

**We welcome David to the Public Health Division's Center for Health Protection!**



**PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION**

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***Upcoming meetings and drinking water trainings***

**Meeting calendar**

**Drinking Water Advisory Committee**

▶ Go to: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/Pages/members.aspx>

**Cross Connection Advisory Board**

▶ Go to: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/CrossConnection/Pages/advisoryboard.aspx>

**Training calendar**

▶ Go to: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/OperatorCertification/Pages/training.aspx>