



Drinking Water Program Updates 2021 First Quarter

OHA-Drinking Water Services

February 4, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine priorities

OHA and the Vaccine Advisory Committee have been working to set priorities for distributing COVID-19 vaccines. The framework is posted on the [OHA Vaccine webpage](#). Health care workers are the top priority in Group 1A. Group 1B prioritizes teachers, then the elderly. Subsequent priorities are yet to be determined though the Vaccine Advisory Committee has recommended that people age 16-64 with underlying conditions and critical frontline workers be prioritized. Water and wastewater utility workers are recognized as essential/critical workers and are likely to be prioritized. [Check the OHA Vaccine webpage](#) for further details. We are all urged to continue to wear face coverings and practice social distancing to keep all safe.

Operator certification updates

Small water system test. A [rule change](#) was finalized to require Small Water System (<150 connections) operators to pass a test to obtain certification, beginning on August 1, 2022. This change was required by EPA to be consistent with federal guidelines. Drinking Water Services (DWS) will be working to develop an online test to implement this rule and will continue to make training available for this group.

Small water system training. OAWU will be hosting a webinar-based Small Water System Operator Training Class on February 18, 2021. Please visit <https://oawu.net/training-events/swotc-certification/> for additional class information and links to register for training.

Other Free Training. Check out the [DWS training opportunities webpage](#) for a complete listing of free training classes and training providers.

Plan review--electronic submittal

DWS is going paperless and prefers plans and payments to be submitted electronically. The review fee can be paid on the plan review website <https://healthoregon.org/pwsplanreview>. You'll need to know your water system name and water system ID number (PWS ID), both of which are available at Data Online: <https://yourwater.oregon.gov/namelook.php>. Please provide a project name (e.g., Well #2). The payment amount is located on the plan review website listed above. You can submit the plans electronically to the plan review email at: DWS.PlanReview@dhsosha.state.or.us. Contact your DWS plan review engineer if you need assistance.

Source Water Protection grants

DWS is accepting Letter of Interest applications for Drinking Water Source Protection grants and loans now through **Wednesday, March 24th**. Information and Letter of Interest Form are available on the Drinking Water Services [SRF webpage](#). Funding is available for Community water systems and Nonprofit Non-Community water systems with a completed Source Water Assessment and/or Assessment Update. Project funding includes low interest loans up to a maximum of \$100,000 and/or grants up to \$30,000 per water system per year. Eligible projects include those that lead to risk reduction within the delineated source water area or would contribute to a reduction in contaminant concentration within the drinking water source. This year's grant cycle is expected to be very competitive due to the extent of wildfire recovery needs. Please reach out if you need any assistance such as discussing project ideas, eligibility, or contacting potential partners.

Assistance for Groundwater systems/projects: Tom Pattee, OHA-DWS Groundwater Coordinator, 541-726-2588 ext. 24

Assistance for Surface water systems/projects: Julie Harvey, DEQ Drinking Water Program Coordinator, 503-229-5664

Wildfire Recovery continues

New Task Force. Many communities and water systems are continuing to recover from the September 2020 wildfires. The State OEM has transitioned from coordinating emergency operations to coordinating recovery functions. To increase the focus on drinking water, a "Potable Water Resources Task Force" has been formed within the State Recovery framework. The task force will consider all drinking water supplies, not just regulated public water systems. OHA, DEQ and Business Oregon will participate along with OEM staff. Water system representatives and other stakeholders will be consulted. Casey Lyon will represent DWS. Contact Casey at 503-569-5889 for more information or visit the state [Wildfire Recovery webpage](#).

Post-wildfire VOC testing. Water systems that both lost pressure during the wildfire and had structures burn within their service area are required to sample for VOCs (benzene) at the service connection prior to restoring service to a customer at a property that burned. 13 water systems have monitored for VOCs so far and we've seen detections above the MCL in two systems. Post-wildfire VOC sampling results received to date are available on [Data Online](#). DWS is continuing to support post-wildfire VOC analyses by small systems through the DEQ lab. Contact Russ Kazmierczak for more information at 971-599-0121.

Contact Drinking Water Services
info.drinkingwater@dhsosha.state.or.us or 971-673-0405

Manage Account
[Preferences](#)
[Remove All Subscriptions](#)
[Contact](#)

Let's be friends!

