

Spring 2018 News

# Winner of the Exemplary Source Water Protection Award!

## American Water Works Association Awards Us!

The Clackamas River Water Providers has been selected as the recipient of the 2018 Exemplary Source Water Protection Award for Large Source Water Systems serving 50,001-500,000 people by the American Water Works Association (AWWA).

The American Water Works Association is an international, nonprofit, scientific and educational society dedicated to providing total water solutions assuring the effective management of water. Founded in 1881, the Association is the largest organization of water supply professionals in the world and includes over 3,900 utilities that supply roughly 80 percent of the nation's drinking water and treat almost half of the nation's wastewater.

This award recognizes organizations in North America who have developed and are implementing exemplary source water protection programs. The award will be presented to the CRWP at the AWWA Annual Conference & Exposition in June. We here at the CRWP are very honored by this recognition and want to thank all of our watershed stakeholders for helping making our source water protection efforts so successful!



## What's Inside:

Award Winner!	P1
Spring Check-up	P1
Spring Check-up (cont)	P2
Spring Quiz	P2
Water Awareness	P3
Infrastructure Week	P3
Cross Connection and Backflow	P4
'Faces' Interview	P5
Water Audit	P6
Congratulations	P7

# Save Water This Summer Give Your Irrigation System a Spring Check-up



Spring is the time to give your irrigation system a check-up to ensure peak summer performance. It's one of the most important things you can do to keep your sprinkler system operating efficiently all summer.

Because automatic sprinkler systems often come on in the early morning hours unobserved leaks and other problems can go unnoticed for long periods of time, wasting water and damaging the landscape. By taking the time to check, repair, and adjust the

irrigation system at the beginning of the watering season (and making periodic checks throughout the summer) you can be sure your landscape is being watered properly, without wasting water.

### Spring Checklist:

- 1. Close all manual drains.** The drain valves were opened last fall when the system was winterized; make sure all of the manual drain valves are closed.
- 2. Slowly open the main valve** and allow the piping from the main valve to the backflow preventer to fill with water.
- 3. Have the backflow prevention assembly tested** by a state certified backflow tester. Contact your local water provider for more information.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Spring Check-up (Continued from page 1)

**4. Pressurize the mainline** from the backflow prevention assembly to the control valves. Have one of the control valves open while you do this so that air trapped in the piping can escape through the sprinkler heads as the pipes fill with water.

**5. Run the entire sprinkler system**, one zone at a time. As you do this, check for signs of leakage caused by damaged sprinkler heads or piping during the winter months. Repair as needed.

By following these simple guidelines, you can conserve water and have a healthy lawn and garden all summer long!

For more information about free landscape water audit and outdoor water efficient landscaping, please visit our website at [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org) or email [chrisitne@clackamasproviders.org](mailto:chrisitne@clackamasproviders.org).

**6. Spray pattern of the sprinklers** can be inefficient. Sometimes nozzles get clogged and need to be cleaned.

**7. Nozzles and sprinklers** may need adjustments to reduce overspray onto walks, driveways, etc.

**8. Interference of the spray pattern** can occur if plants have been moved, play equipment has been installed, or if plants are over grown. Adjusting the sprinklers to accommodate the changing landscape will eliminate dry spots and puddling caused by blocked spray.

**9. Overgrown grass** can impede spray heads. Make sure to keep the grass trimmed away from the spray heads.

**10. Schedule a free landscape water audit** from the Clackamas River Water Providers. The CRWP are providing free landscape water audits during the spring and summer months only (during the watering season). The audits are available on a first come first serve basis.



## Spring Quiz:

Answers - Can be found on page 6

**1. Every Public Water System in Oregon is required to have a Cross Connection/Backflow Program?**

- A. False. It is not important.
- B. True. To prevent contamination.
- C. False. Only in other States.
- D. True. It is hooked into the telephone line service.

**2. 'Drinking Water Week' has been in existence for how long?**

- A. Since 1988.
- B. Established this year.
- C. Since 2001.
- D. It has not been established yet.

**3. The CRWP provides landscape water audits, and include which features?**

- A. Available during the Spring and Summer only.
- B. Are 'first come first serve'.
- C. They take about 1.5 hours
- D. All of the above.

**4. Oak Lodge Water Services just won an award for what?**

- A. The most attractive office.
- B. The cleanest fire hydrants.
- C. The best tasting water.
- D. No. They did not win an award at all.



# Be More Water-Aware with These Events in May

With both **National Drinking Water Week** and the **National Infrastructure Week** in May, efforts are being made to highlight the importance of drinking water and water infrastructure nationwide. Read the articles below to learn more about what is happening both nationally and in our own back yard.

Drinking Water Week | May 6-12, 2018



In 1988, a joint congressional resolution and signed by then President Ronald Reagan established National Drinking Water Week and for more than 40 years since its creation water providers have celebrated Drinking Water Week. Too often in our industry water utilities only receive publicity when something bad happens - a water main breaks in the middle of rush hour or we have to raise water rates, again.

This week provides us with a unique opportunity as water professionals and the communities we serve to join together in recognizing the vital role water plays in our daily lives. This year the theme is "Protect the Source" which is apt since that is what the Clackamas River Water Providers are all about.

For over ten year the Clackamas River Water Providers has been implementing a Source Water Protection Program for its member organizations looking for ways to engage our basin stakeholders and implementing programs to conserve and protect the Clackamas River as a high quality drinking water source, so we can help minimize future drinking water treatment costs, while being good stewards of the river.

Want to know more about how we are working to protect our drinking water source? Visit our website at [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org) or call us to find out more. We can also give presentations, can add you to our annual watershed tour mailing list, or schedule a tour for you of one of our drinking water treatment plants.



**Infrastructure Week**   
6th Annual - May 14-21, 2018

The purpose of National Infrastructure Week is to challenge policy-makers and the public to address the challenges facing U.S. infrastructure, to move beyond short-term fixes and deferred maintenance, and to envision the innovative solutions, technologies, policies and investments that will improve America's infrastructure future. Unfortunately our infrastructure problems are not going away and every day we wait the more expensive maintenance and construction costs get. The key message this year is *The future won't wait. Neither can we. It's #TimeToBuild.*

With this national focus on infrastructure it gives us the opportunity to talk about our own local water infrastructure issues. Here in Washington and Clackamas Counties we have all been beneficiaries of our magnificent network of treatment plants, pump stations, pipes and water reservoirs that were handed down to us by generations before. Because this kind of water infrastructure last a long time, we haven't had to worry about the expense of replacing it. However, many of these pipes, pumps, and reservoirs are in need of upgrades or replacement now or in the near future.

Deferral of utility infrastructure investment is now a major financial challenge facing our water utilities. Therefore, the choice we face is to either adopt strategies to renew our water infrastructure, or accept the erosion over time of reliable water service. If we slowly begin to move toward rate structures and financing plans that reflect the full cost of public drinking water service, we will avoid rate shock in the years ahead.

In Clackamas and Washington County water remains relatively inexpensive, delivered to you at under a penny per gallon. When you consider the critical needs addressed by water service (public health, quality of life, fire protection, and economic development) public drinking water will always be a tremendous value and an investment worth making.

# How Water Systems Work

## The Cross Connection Control & Backflow Program

Every Public Water system in the State of Oregon is required by State law to have a Cross Connection Control and Backflow Program. This program is designed to protect the public drinking water from contamination and/or pollution.

**Backflow** is the unintended backward movement of water from your house back into the public water supply caused by hydraulic conditions such as loss of water system pressure in the street or an increase in pressure after point of delivery (the water meter).

**A Cross Connection** is the unintended or intentional direct connection between the public water supply and any other substance.

**Public Water Providers** protect the drinking water system from these kinds of incidents by ensuring the installation of a plumbing fixture called a backflow prevention assembly. The assembly is installed on the customer's side of the water meter preventing the delivered water from flowing back into the public water system. To ensure these backflow prevention assemblies are functioning correctly they are required to be tested annually by a certified plumber or state certified backflow tester.

**Some of the most common residential cross connections are:**

- Underground lawn irrigation systems.
- The outside garden hose being left in a swimming pool or hot tub while filling.
- Utility sinks with hoses that hang down below the rim of the sink.
- Liquid fertilizer applicators which are directly attach to the hose.
- Window cleaners directly attached to the hose.

The success of our cross connection and backflow programs often relies on the direct cooperation and understanding of our customers.

For more information about your public water provider's Cross Connection and Backflow Program please contact your local water provider. If you would like information about the State of Oregon's Cross Connection Control and Backflow Program, visit the State website at, <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/CrossConnection/Pages/index.aspx>

*Picture below is of a "double-check" backflow assembly at the meter.*





# Faces of Drinking Water

by Christine Hollenbeck

An Interview with  
Melanie Wagner at the City of Estacada

The Clackamas River Water Provider member employees are made up of many different professionals, young and old with a variety of backgrounds and skills ensuring the treatment and delivery of safe clean drinking water.

For our spring 2018 E newsletter we had a wonderful conversation with Melanie Wagner, of the City of Estacada. While Melanie may not work specifically in drinking water she is very much involved with the city's drinking water treatment and delivery and she is a very active participant in the Clackamas River Water Providers group.

**CRWP: How long have you been working for the City of Estacada?**

**Melanie:** I've been here just over 9 years.

**CRWP: Can you tell us what your title is and explain what you do at the City?**

**Melanie:** I am the Assistant to the City manager, which is a great position because I get to be involved in most of the departments of the City. The job involves project management work, and a lot of collaborative efforts with other city staff and community groups.

**CRWP: How did you acquire your position with the city?**

**Melanie:** My children were older and I was ready to start working, so I applied for the position of Assistant to the City Manager which was a new position with the city. I got the job and started working part time. My first assignment was to track all of the information about the 2009 flood for reporting to FEMA and the insurance company. After that, there was plenty of other work for me to do and I eventually began working full time in my role.

**CRWP: What is your background prior to working in drinking water?**

**Melanie:** Well, I have lived in Estacada



my whole life, except for 10 years when I went to college, and lived in the Seattle area. My sister and my parents still live here and my brother lives in Happy Valley. I have an Associate's Degree, and before my children were born I worked in marketing for an insurance company. The office where I worked was the corporate headquarters, and we would put together insurance quotes for agents who worked in the field. When I became a mother I stayed home for 12 years and raised my children.

I am currently working to get a Bachelor's Degree in business from Eastern Oregon University.

**CRWP: Do you have a favorite or least favorite part of your job?**

**Melanie:** One of the things I've always loved about my job is getting to learn so much about all the inner workings and operations of the city. I also really enjoy working with the community here. The people in our community are really wonderful people. I fully enjoy our staff as they are all great folks and fun people to work with.

My least favorite is process driven projects. I'm not really detail-oriented, so I can get a little bogged down in projects if they involve a long process with many details.

**CRWP: Do you plan to retire from the City of Estacada?**

**Melanie:** Yes, I could see that happening. I really love working here.

**CRWP: What accomplishment/s are you most proud of in your career?**

**Melanie:** It's hard for me to pick just one or two things because my job is made up of so many smaller tasks on a day to day basis. I am proud that we (city staff) are able to continue productive work under different management when there is change in our city council or city manager. I'm proud that we, as a city are moving forward and staying ahead of the rapid growth that is happening in the community.

**CRWP: What advice would you give to someone starting out in the field of public drinking water?**

**Melanie:** Through community college a person can get well trained to work in the field of drinking water. I would encourage young people not to overlook the field of public drinking water as a career opportunity. Unfortunately the business of public drinking water is kind of invisible to all of us, but there are so many opportunities that are available, and that can provide a person with a wonderful career.

*(Continued on page 7)*

# Get a FREE Landscape Water Audit to Help Save Water and Money

The Clackamas River Water Providers are offering free landscape water audits to the following member's service areas; City of Estacada, Sunrise Water Authority (City of Happy Valley and Damascus), Clackamas River Water District, City of Gladstone, Oak Lodge Water Services, and South Fork Water Board (Oregon City and West Linn).

Water use in our communities more than doubles during the summer months due to outdoor watering. Higher than normal outdoor water use is often the sign of inefficient use of water in our yards or an irrigation system that needs repair and scheduling adjustments. A landscape water audit is a way to get your irrigation system and landscape on track and running right.

Saving water and saving money is what a landscape water audit is all about. Our landscape auditor will assess your lawn and garden areas, irrigation system and more. Residential landscape water audits often include but are not limited to;

- A walk through your yard and gardens including all lawn area.
- Making note of existing soil types, plant material, naturally available water, and sun exposure.
- Locating the water meter, noting any existing leaks from the meter throughout the irrigation system.
- Locating the irrigation controller, making note of the make/model as well as the current schedule, each zone will be ran separately, recording gallons per minute used for each zone.

When the audit is complete you will receive a detailed report with recommendations such as controller schedule adjustments for better water efficiency, irrigation head



adjustments/replacements if necessary, maintenance of existing plant material for more efficient watering (i.e.... pruning up), soil amendments to reduce weeds and promote soil moisture, and reduce use of fertilizers giving you the tools you need to better manage your outdoor water use.

These free landscape water audits are available during the spring and summer months only (during the watering season). The audits are available on a first come first serve basis and audits are approximately 1.5 hours. Please be available to do the walk through with the auditor. Audits will continue through the summer season or until program funds are depleted.

To schedule your free landscape water audit contact Christine at [chrisitne@clackamasproviders.org](mailto:chrisitne@clackamasproviders.org) or call **503-723-3511**. For more information about our free landscape water audits, conserving water during the summer months, and other Clackamas River Water Provider programs visit our website at: [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org)

## Spring Quiz:

### Answers

**Question 1** - Answer is B  
**Question 2** - Answer is A

**Question 3** - Answer is D  
**Question 4** - Answer is C



# Congratulations Oak Lodge Water Services

This past March Oak Lodge Water Services beat out 6 other local public water providers in the Northwest Oregon Subsection Best Tasting Water competition held in Salem, OR.

Oak Lodge Water Services receives their drinking water from the North Clackamas County Water Commission (NCCWC), a drinking water treatment plant co owned by Oak Lodge Water Services, the City of Gladstone and Sunrise Water Authority. The NCCWC treats its water through membrane and slow sand filtration.

The City of Stayton took 2nd place in the competition, and the City of Hillsboro took 3rd. Other competitors were the City of Portland, the City of Salem, McMinnville and, the Joint Water Commission (drinking water treatment plant for Tualatin Valley Water District, City of Beaverton, Forest Grove, and City of Hillsboro).

Oak Lodge Water Services will go on to compete against other Pacific North West Section-American Water Works Association subsections Best Tasting Water winners at the annual conference in late April. Good luck Oak Lodge!



## Faces with Melanie Wagner *(Continued from page 5)*

### **CRWP: What do you feel is most important about your job?**

**Melanie:** Relating to water, I feel one of the most important things I do is to help educate people on the value of our drinking water. The average person doesn't even think about their drinking water. I know that I didn't in the past. We need to appreciate our inexpensive, yet safe, wonderful water. Having clean safe drinking water literally at our finger tips doesn't just happen. There is a whole process behind all of it and we all are so lucky to have it. Secondly, I get to be involved in the emergency preparedness exercises that we do with CRWP and I know that we will be so much better prepared when we do have emergency situations because of the partnerships we have through CRWP.

### **CRWP: What would you like the public to know about their drinking water?**

**Melanie:** How precious it is. But having said that I know many of our residents

are trying to conserve their water. That's good, I couldn't ask for more.

### **CRWP: What's the one thing you can't live without at work?**

**Melanie:** Power and phenomenal water operators. That's two, but we really need them both!

### **CRWP: What would you say water is to you?**

**Melanie:** Peace of mind. I can't help but think about the pioneers who traveled across America to get here. How in the world did they do it? How did they get water? What did they do when they couldn't find water? And not just for their family, but for their animals too. Amazing!

### **CRWP: What do you do for fun when you're not working?**

**Melanie:** Right now I am really enjoying my schooling. I play piano at our church, and I have always enjoyed my children's sports like soccer, tennis,

cross country, and softball. My children have also been involved in 4H with horses in the past, and now with llamas, so we really look forward to going to the county fair and showing the llamas. That's fun. I really enjoy being involved in our family activities.

As Melanie and I wrapped up our interview she made a point of saying how much she appreciates the CRWP partnership and all that we do for the City of Estacada.

Thank you, Melanie. The CRWP feels fortunate to have the City of Estacada as a partner and we look forward to many more years together protecting the Clackamas River watershed and delivering high quality water to all of our customers.

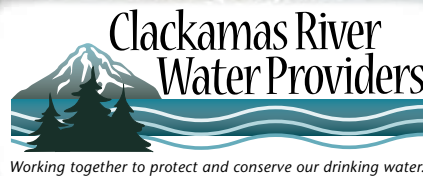
*Christine Hollenbeck*  
**Clackamas River Water Providers**

# Tips to Help You Save Water

- **Check all indoor/outdoor faucets** for drips. Do a routine check every three months.
- **Install low flow aerators** on all indoor faucets.
- **Install low flow shower heads.** You can cut your water use from about 5 to 10 gallons per minute to 1.5 gallons per minute.
- **Regularly check the pool area for leaks.** Swimming pools can waste 1,000 gallons or more per day.
- **Use a pool/spa cover** to cut down on water loss caused by evaporation. Evaporation in swimming pools can be as high as 3" weekly in the hottest part of the summer.
- **Keep drinking water in the refrigerator** so you don't have to run the tap until the water gets cold enough to drink.
- **Only run full loads** in your dishwasher. Scrape food from plates with a utensil, not running water.
- **Don't continuously run water** in the sink. Hand wash dishes in a sink full of soapy water; rinse all at once. Soak hard-to clean pans overnight.
- **Check toilets for leaks.** Drop a teaspoon of food coloring into the tank. If the color appears in the bowl after 15 minutes, you have a leak.
- **Replace regular or older toilets** with a new EPA certified High Efficacy Toilet (HET).
- **Walk around your yard** weekly looking for spongy or mushy ground where broken irrigation pipes might be hidden.
- **Water lawns and gardens** during the coolest times of the day, before 10 am or after 8 pm.
- **Water deeper** and less often.
- **Add a layer** of mulch in your flower beds to retain soil moisture.
- **Sweep instead of washing** driveways, sidewalks and steps.

To help you save water around the house we provide free low flow aerators/shower heads, and a number of indoor/outdoor rebates. For more information give us a call at **(503) 723-3511** or visit our website at

[www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org).



14275 S Clackamas River Drive, Oregon City, OR 97045 • [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org)

## Our Members:



[www.crwater.com](http://www.crwater.com)



[www.cityofestacada.org](http://www.cityofestacada.org)



[www.ci.gladstone.or.us](http://www.ci.gladstone.or.us) [www.ci.oswego.or.us](http://www.ci.oswego.or.us)



[www.oaklodgewater.org](http://www.oaklodgewater.org)



[www.sfwb.org](http://www.sfwb.org)



[www.sunrisewater.com](http://www.sunrisewater.com)



[www.tigard-or.gov](http://www.tigard-or.gov)

CHRISTINE HOLLENBECK, Public Education and Conservation Program Coordinator, (503) 723-3511 • [christine@clackamasproviders.org](mailto:christine@clackamasproviders.org)  
KIM SWAN, Water Resource Manager, (503) 723-3510 • [kims@clackamasproviders.org](mailto:kims@clackamasproviders.org)