

Summer Water Outlook/Campaign

This spring we have seen warmer and dryer weather than normal and the US Drought Monitor indicates that currently all of Oregon is experiencing some sort of drought conditions. On the upside, in the Clackamas Watershed we had a good snow pack this winter and the river levels are normal for this time of year.

Water conservation is something we all should be doing year-round and as we move into summer it is even more important to conserve our drinking water. Water use more than doubles during the summer months primarily due to outdoor water use. Summer is also the time of year



when the Clackamas River is flowing at its lowest levels and we get the least amount of rain fall to replenish river flows.

The CRWP has lots of tools to help you conserve water at home. Check out our free landscape water audits, water conservation rebates, free conservation

tools, tips and more information on our website. Or purchase a <u>Flume Device</u> with our rebate and find out exactly how much water you are using.

Keep an eye out later this summer for our annual "*Fish On the Run, Irrigation Done*" summer watering campaign designed specifically to help us conserve water so that there is enough water in the river for the fall fish migration.

COVID and the Value of Water

After over a year of COVID restrictions and changes to daily life we are finally starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel and the return to normal on the horizon. Throughout the pandemic access to clean water for drinking and hand-washing has been one of the main ways of slowing the transmission of COVID-19.

COVID-19 has brought a heightened awareness that safe water is a cornerstone of public health and community well-being. As water providers we have worked hard to keep our employees safe while keeping the water flowing ensuring you always have safe water from your tap. In addition to protecting public health, access to safe clean tap water is central to the economic success of our communities. Water is critical to the day-to-day operations of businesses in Clackamas and Washington Counties, and to the viability of new commercial enterprises, residential developments, as well as the quality of life and fire protection.

When you consider the critical needs addressed by water service, public drinking water will always be a tremendous value. In fact, it will be a bargain. You simply cannot put a price on a service that delivers public health, quality of life, fire protection, and economic development.

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SUMMER 2021 News

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Source Water Protection – Clean Rivers Cooperative

Protecting Our Drinking Water from Hazardous Material Spills

The Clackamas River Water Providers (CRWP) have identified potential spills involving the release of hazardous materials or petroleum products from commercial or industrial facilities with hazardous material storage as being a significant source of risk to drinking water quality in the Clackamas River watershed.

The Clackamas Industrial Area at the bottom of the watershed is an area of particular concern because many of the businesses in the industrial area are less than a quarter of a mile away from the Clackamas River, and because of the hundreds of storm drains and four small tributary creeks (Rock, Sieben, Carli, and Cow Creeks) that drain this area and flow into the river just upstream of four of our drinking water intakes.

To address this potential risk in 2017 the CRWP began developing response strategies to protect drinking water intake infrastructure so that immediate and proper action can be taken to reduce the impact of spilled hazardous material or oil in the Lower Clackamas River watershed.





In April of this year Clean Rivers Cooperative conducted response strategy and swift water training on the Clackamas River which included exercising two of our geographic response strategies for protecting the Clackamas River Water and Lake Oswego/Tigard's intake structures. The Cooperative is a nonprofit, membership-based Oregon cooperative dedicated to professional oil spill response and prevention. Their mission is the protection of water resources and the establishment of industry standards for spill prevention and response, as well as providing training and coordination of response resources for its members. Go to <u>https://cleanriverscooperative.com</u> to find out more about the work that the Clean Rivers Cooperative is doing.

Testing and practicing the response strategies we have developed to see how well they work, and identifying areas where we might need to make changes is critical to protecting our drinking water infrastructure and drinking water source. It also gives us an opportunity to build stronger relationships and partners such as Clean Rivers Cooperative.

In addition to working with spill response organizations, in 2016 the CRWP received a State Revolving Fund Drinking Water Protection Grant to develop a Hazardous Spill Prevention Program for businesses located within the Clackamas Industrial area providing them with free or discounted spill prevention and response equipment, and free technical assistance. For more information about this program go to:

https://www.clackamasproviders.org/hazardous-material-spillprevention.



Outdoor Water Conservation

How many times have you seen someone hose off their driveway or sidewalk? Or a sprinkler that hits the pavement as often as it hits the lawn? Or someone wash their car with a hose that doesn't shut off? Summer is peak water use time and these are all too common examples of water waste. Each summer water use in our area doubles and triples due mainly to lawn and garden watering, causing most water bills to jump! In fact, about 32% of your total yearly water bill goes to watering during the summer months. A large part of this may simply be the result of over-watering – something that can be managed.

Summer is the time of year when the Clackamas River is flowing at its lowest levels. The River is the drinking water source for more than 300,000 people, and is home to and spawning grounds for Chinook and Coho and Steelhead, all of which are listed as threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act. The River is also a popular recreation spot for kayaking and camping as well as host to many Christmas tree farms and other agricultural uses. Using our water wisely allows us to nurture beautiful lawns and gardens, while leaving more water in the river for other water users. Healthy lawns and gardens don't necessarily need a lot of water. By learning how to <u>amended your soil</u>, choose the <u>right plant for the right place</u>, and <u>water efficiently</u> you can save hundreds or even thousands of gallons of water a year.

The Clackamas River Water Providers have many tools and information to help you achieve efficient outdoor water use. Check out our FREE Landscape Water Audits, Outdoor Water Rebates, view our "Water Efficient Plants For the Willamette Valley" plant guide, and sign-up for the Weekly Watering Number. Using these tools and recommendations anyone can be on their way to watering more efficiently and wisely.





Partner Spotlight Clackamas County Local Emergency Planning Committee

The Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know

Act (EPCRA) was passed in 1986 by the United States Congress after a series of incidents in the United States and abroad raised concerns about a lack of planning and preparation for accidental releases of hazardous materials. This Act created a provision for states to establish State Emergency Response Commissions (SERC) and Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs). In Oregon LEPCs are organized by County and are required to develop an emergency response plan, review the plan at least annually, and provide information about chemicals in the community to citizens.

This Plan is developed by LEPCs with stakeholder participation with the goal of helping to increase the public's knowledge and access to information about chemical use at facilities and businesses. It also provides an organizational structure through SERCs and LEPCs so that government and communities can work with facilities to improve chemical release preparedness to help protect the public, environment and emergency responders.



The LEPC membership must include (at a minimum):

- Elected state and local officials
- Police, fire, civil defense, and public health professionals
- Environment, transportation, and hospital officials
- Facility representatives
- Representatives from community groups and the media

On October 23, 2018, America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) was signed into law. AWIA Section 2013 requires drinking water systems serving more than 3,300 people to develop or update risk assessments and emergency response plans (ERPs). In updating these assessments and plans water providers are required to coordinate with their existing Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) when preparing or revising their ERP. By partnering with stakeholders like LEPCs it allows all parties to understand response processes and procedures used during a drinking water incident.

The Clackamas County LEPC was formed in 2018 and the Clackamas River Water Providers was one of the organizations that was instrumental in getting the LEPC up and running. CRWP staff continue to support the LEPC in the position of Secretary/Information Coordinator for the committee. This provides the coordination with the Clackamas LEPC for CRWP members that is required by AWIA. In addition, participating in the Clackamas LEPC is helping the CRWP to develop relationships with local partners and businesses to protect our drinking water source from hazardous material spills. The LEPC currently meets four times a year, if you would like to know more about what we are doing please email Kim Swan at kims@clackamasproviders.org.

Summer Quiz:

1. Water meters use mechanical magnetic or electronic devices to measure water.

A. True B. False

2. The Clackamas County LEPC was formed in what year ?

A. 2000 **B.** 2018 **C.** 1985 **D.** 1998 3. CRWP partnered with whom to develop a new video series on Erosion Control Practices?

- A. City of Portland
- B. PGE
- **C.** Regional Water Providers Consortium
- **D.** Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District

Answers - Can be found on page 7

4. The Clackamas River is home to and spawning grounds for which fish?

A. Chinook B. Coho C. Steelhead

How Our Water Systems Work Water Meters

Water metering is a process of measuring water use. Water meters use mechanical magnetic or electronic devices to measure the amount of water being used. An effective metering program allows us to compare measured flows in our systems and metered deliveries to our customers. Residential and commercial water meters are generally owned, read, and maintained by the public water provider. Water meters are read regularly, and you receive a bill based on the amount of water use since the meter was last read. Meters are most often made of bronze or brass and plastic, and are often located in front of your property, inside a concrete or plastic meter box that is set flush with the ground. Water meters not only help utilities collect the revenue they are due, they also help pinpoint leaks, locate pressure problems along their waterways, and identify and study periods of peak and non-peak use among both residential and business customers.

Meter Maintenance Programs

All CRWP members are required to have Meter Maintenance Programs which facilitate regular calibration and/or replacement of water meters to ensure accuracy. Water meters tend to deteriorate with age, resulting in inaccurate readings. Old meters are often damaged or do not record water use at all. Inaccurate readings result in inaccurate information about water usage which impacts system audits and leak detection efforts. Meter maintenance programs are designed to test all system meters at regular intervals. This is to ascertain that meters are appropriately sized, and to ensure meters are working properly. In addition, it identifies meters that should be replaced or repaired. Accounting for all water is a number one priority for our water utilities.



Use your water meter to check for household leaks.

Visit our website at: www.clackamasproviders.org



Faces of Drinking Water

For this Summer 2021 issue of our E-Newsletter, we interviewed Brad Lyon, Field Supervisor for Oak Lodge Water Services (OLWS).

CRWP: How long have you been working for Oak Lodge Water Services?

Brad: I have been at Oak Lodge for over 18 years.

CRWP: How did you acquire your position with OLWS?

Brad: When I started working for OLWS I began as a Utility Worker and worked my way up into the position of Field Supervisor.

CRWP: What is your back ground?

Brad: Prior to working in drinking water distribution, I worked for Les Schwab for two years, then I worked for A and A drilling for 7 years. A&A Drilling is a company which has served the Pacific Northwest for over 40 years, providing hot tapping, line stopping, and valve inserting services. They specialize in flow control techniques for alterations, relocation, extension, addition, repair, replacement or abandonment of water piping or vessels without shutdown or interruption of service to critical processes or to customers.

CRWP: What is your favorite/least favorite part of your job?

Brad: My favorite part of the work I do is keeping customers happy and having a crew that shares the same goal. These days, my least favorite part are Zoom Meetings.

CRWP: Do you plan to retire from Oak Lodge Water Services?

Brad: Yes, I would like to finish my career with Oak Lodge.

CRWP: : What advice would you give to someone starting out in the public water industry?

Brad: Work to learn all of the different aspects of the job, as

this the makes you a more wellrounded and valuable employee.

by Christine Hollenbeck

CRWP: How has the industry changed since you started?

Brad: One of the things that has changed over the years are water meters. In 2014, OLWS began a program to upgrade and replace all 8,200 analog water meters which are at the end of their useful life, with new radio-read meters for District homes and businesses. The replacement of these meters will save time and money as the old analog meters must be read manually and the new radio-read meters take much less time to collect water use data and are more accurate.

One of the other things I have seen change over the years is that there are many more regulations to adhere to now than when I first started working in the drinking water industry, which has changed how certain tasks are done.

CRWP: What do you think is most important about your job?

Brad: Providing safe reliable drinking water to our community.

CRWP: What can the public do to help make your job easier?

Brad: Use their drinking water wisely. Populations in this area is rising, creating more demand from the Clackamas River.

CRWP: What's the most significant project you've been involved with in your career?

Brad: Honestly, the ice storm this last February. It was amazing to see how neighboring water providers worked to move water around to keep all customers in the region with water, and to see how all agencies were willing to assist if needed.

Brad Lyon Field Supervisor Oak Lodge Water Services



CRWP: What's the one thing you can't live without at work? Brad: A staff that cares about our customers.

CRWP: What would you say H2O is to you? Brad: Water is life.

CRWP: What would you say H2O is to you?

Brad: I have always felt Oregon has the best water in the country and I'm very fortunate that I can turn on the tap and enjoy great tasting water and not have to buy bottled water. This is great for me since I have always been a big water drinker.

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

Brad: When not at work I like to go camping with my wife and dogs, mostly on the Oregon Coast, and visit our grandson and daughters in Nebraska.

The CRWP would like to thank Brad for this interview. Brad and I have known each other for many years which date back to when I was an employee of Oak Lodge. Working with Brad is a real pleasure as he is the type of employee who always comes to work with a witty sense of humor and can put a smile on your face every day.

10 Ways to Save Water Outdoors

1. Water your lawn only when it needs it. A good way to see if your lawn needs water is to step on the grass. If it springs back up when you move, it doesn't need water. If it stays flat, fetch the sprinkler.

2. Deep soak your lawn. When you do water, do it long enough for the moisture to soak down to the roots where it will do the most good. A light sprinkling can evaporate quickly and tend to encourage shallow root systems.

3. Water during the cool part of the day to avoid evaporation. Early morning is generally better than dusk since it helps prevent growth of fungus.

4. Don't water the pavement. Position your sprinkler so water lands on the lawn or garden, not on paved areas. Also avoid watering on windy days.

5. Plant drought-resistant trees and plants. Many beautiful trees and plants thrive with far less watering than other plants.

6. Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants. Mulch will slow evaporation and discourage weed growth.

7. Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks.

8. Don't run the hose while washing your car. Clean the car with a bucket of soapy water and use a hose with a shut off nozzle.

9. Use a commercial car wash that recycles water.

10. Set mower blades one notch higher since longer grass means less evaporation.



Summer Quiz:

Answers

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

Question 3 - Answer is D Question 4 - Answer is D

Source Water Protection Video Series for Erosion Control Practices

Since the early 2000's we continue to see low levels of pesticides in the Clackamas River from the urban and agricultural areas of our watershed. Pesticides carried by stormwater runoff, wind, and irrigation can degrade water quality in streams and the Clackamas River, threatening aquatic life and potentially impacting our drinking water source. There are a number of practices that both residents and agricultural landowner in our watershed can do to reduce the possibility of pesticides reaching the Clackamas River.

This past year the CRWP partnered with the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District to develop a new video series on Erosion Control Practices for agricultural landowners. Erosion control is an important practice in helping to keep soil and pesticides on farm lands instead of washing off into our tributaries and into the Clackamas River. This is especially important during our rainy season.

Agricultural operations that require growers to work the soil during the rainy season, know that keeping soil in place is a challenge. That challenge often extends to operations that are not performed just in the winter but, year-round. To bring new ideas on how agricultural owners can hold their ground, we have created a video that addresses the challenging facets of preventing soil from leaving agricultural operations and ending up in our local streams.

The videos include episodes on best management practices for: operational and planning, border and entry, covering,

slope management, ditches, piping, and ponds. It features local growers, watershed councils, water providers, agency and industry representatives all talking about the importance of soil and erosion prevention.

Watch the Videos Now

Managing erosion is not a cut-and-dried process. Not every practice works for every situation, but we hope that landowners will find new ideas that can be applied to farming practices. We recommend landowners view every video, as many

practices can work in combination with each other to achieve the best results.

This video series was made possible by support from the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Clackamas River Water Providers, and assistance from



the <u>Pudding River Watershed Council</u> staff. The <u>Clackamas</u> <u>Soil and Water Conservation District</u> offers technical assistance and resources to control erosion. Call them **503-210-6000** for more information. By working together, we are working towards conserving and protecting both our land and water resources while helping our communities be better stewards of their natural resources.





Our Members:







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