

## Group B Water Supply Annual Permit Renewal

The Group B water supply annual permit for the next operating year is due July 1, 2013. A \$105 billing invoice will be mailed to each water system the first week of June, 2013. If you do not receive the invoice by July, contact Drinking Water staff by phone or email to make sure the water systems contact information is current. Staff contact information is on the front of this newsletter. We will update the water systems information and resend the invoice.

The permit must be renewed annually to remain in compliance with regulatory requirements. If you do not have a Group B Water Supply Annual Permit your water system is considered out of compliance. This may result in denial of home loans, building permits, on-site sewage system permits, or other permits

for properties served by the water system. To return to compliance status, the water system will be required to apply for a sanitary survey and pay all applicable fees.

**Questions?** Contact any of the Drinking Water staff by phone or email. Staff contact information is on the front of this newsletter.

**Reminder:** Group B public water systems are required to test for coliform bacteria once a year and nitrates every three years.

**Thurston County Public Health and Social Services**  
*Always working for a safer and healthier community*

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# Small Public Water Systems

A Publication For Group B Public Water System Owners and Managers

March 2013

## Announcing Recent Staffing Transition in the Thurston County Water Quality Testing Lab

Thurston County's Water Quality Testing Lab recently went through a staffing transition when Mike Clark retired. Please join us in welcoming Erik Iverson, our new Drinking Water and Water Quality Lab Supervisor. Erik joins us from Grays Harbor County, where he managed their Water Laboratory and Drinking Water Program for over 5 years. Erik will be an important partner because of his additional experience conducting sanitary surveys, providing technical assistance to small water systems and discussing treatment options with them. He welcomes any questions you have about our lab, water testing or analytical results, water system operational issues and is looking forward to doing business with you. He takes pride in reporting accurate test results and providing excellent customer service. While dropping off samples, be sure to introduce yourself to Erik.

The lab is accredited by the Washington State Department of Ecology to test drinking water for coliform bacteria, including E. coli, as well as nitrates. Accreditation through the Department of Ecology is required of labs that analyze drinking water samples for compliance monitoring. If a lab is not certified by Department of Ecology to perform the tests, samples won't be credited towards meeting drinking water compliance monitoring requirements. Remember, all Group B public water systems are required to conduct compliance testing for coliform bacteria annually and nitrates once every three years. Don't forget to include your public water system identification number (PWSID#) and name on the lab slip to make sure the samples are credited towards your compliance monitoring requirements.

**Sample Test Fees and Drop-Off Schedule:** As of January 1, 2013, the cost of bacteriological and nitrate testing is \$27 per test. If you drop samples off at the lab, the drop-off schedule is as follows:

**Bacteriological Samples:**  
Monday through Wednesday: 8 am—5 pm  
Thursday: 8 am—12:30 pm

**Nitrate Samples:**  
Monday and Tuesday: 8 am—5 pm

For additional drop-off locations and times, visit our website at [ww.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm](http://ww.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehadm). The lab is located in Bldg 1 of the Thurston County Court House Complex at 2000 Lakeridge DR SW. Feel free to call Erik at 360-867-2631 if you need directions or have questions.

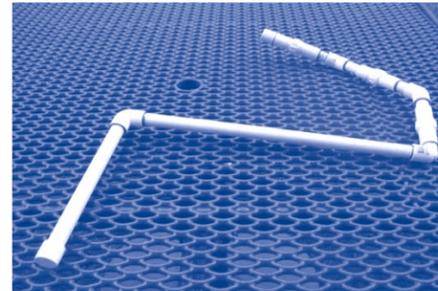
**Reminder:** The Permit Assistance Center (PAC) closes at 12:30 pm. Any samples dropped off for testing after 12:30 pm must be left at the Front Desk in the 1st floor lobby area. If not prepaid, you will need to attach a check with the sample. Only checks are accepted for payment at the Front Desk.

## Tech Tip: How to Improve a Sample Tap Location

Sometimes we get questions as to why a sample tap or its location can cause an unsatisfactory coliform sample. There can be several causes as to why sample taps can cause unsatisfactory samples. For example, some sample taps are very close to the floor or ground. When the tap is flushed, water that was in contact with the floor or ground can splash upwards and contaminate the tap. A tap can also face upwards or sideways or the valve stem packing may be leaking. All of these situations can increase the chance of having an unsatisfactory coliform sample.

**Use a Tap Extender as a Simple Fix:** There is a simple and inexpensive way to improve a sample tap when you can't easily replace or relocate it. Anyone that can cut and glue PVC pipe can easily build a tap extender. You can make an extender any length you need that incorporates adjustable non-glued elbows to easily change the extender to different lengths or positions.

One end of the extender is a threaded fitting you can screw onto an existing threaded tap. At the other end is a threaded adapter with an unthreaded end. Store the extender capped to keep it free of debris. Disinfect the extender before using by removing an end cap and pouring a small amount of chlorine bleach into the extender. Replace the cap and rotate the extender until the entire interior has been coated with bleach. Remove the end caps and flush the bleach out with clean water before you collect a sample.



Reducing the chances of having an unsatisfactory coliform sample can reduce your operating costs. Using a tap extender can also increase your confidence that if a coliform sample does have an unsatisfactory result, the result is due to a condition in the water system and not the tap or its location.

**Questions?** Drinking Water staff contact information is on the front of this newsletter.

*(excerpts from "Washington State Department of Health Water Tap Newsletter, March 2011")*

## Group B Public Water System Regulation Updates

After several years of rules development, the Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water submitted revisions to Chapter 246-291 WAC, the regulation governing Group B Public Water Systems, to the State Board of Health for adoption. The revisions were adopted and go into effect January 1, 2014. Thurston County Environmental Health is in the process of revising Article III of the Thurston County Sanitary Code, the county ordinance governing public water systems in Thurston County, to reflect the newly adopted state regulation.

### What is the process to update Article III?

We will be reaching out to our stakeholders and hold a public workshop to get input and comments on our proposed changes to Article III. Changes to Article III are expected to be minor and will reflect upgrades in technology that have occurred since the rule was last updated in 1994.

### How Do I Keep Informed?

If you wish to stay informed or receive a notice about the upcoming public workshop, just send an email to Sara Brallier at [brallis@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:brallis@co.thurston.wa.us)

**Questions?** Drinking Water staff contact information is on the front of this newsletter.

## One Stop Shop for Small Water System Information!

What if you could go to one website to find free information about drinking water operations from hundreds of organizations and agencies? Searching the Internet for useful information can be frustrating and time consuming, especially if links don't work or websites are outdated. SmallWaterSupply.org manages that problem by continually updating resources and events and providing relevant information directly to you.

### What Will I Find at SmallWaterSupply.org?

- A database of information from several hundred organizations that support water and wastewater operators.
- Easy-to-find resources you can filter by topic, type, state, and sponsoring organization.
- Searches based on keywords, categories, and other criteria linked to each resource to help you find the best information quickly.
- Direct links to state operator associations, technical assistance providers, and state and federal agencies that have provided each resource.
- An events calendar, including almost 20,000 training events.
- An operator forum for sharing ideas, questions, and expertise.
- A weekly newsletter with popular, informative articles and blog posts.

### How Do I Get Started?

Go to [www.smallwatersupply.org](http://www.smallwatersupply.org) and click on the tabs at the top to find:

- **Documents:** Search and filter the database of fact sheets, guidance, reports, tools, and more.
- **Calendar:** Find a training event in your area. Don't forget to check Evergreen Rural Water of Washington for a list of training events available near you or available online training courses they offer at [www.erwow.org](http://www.erwow.org)
- **Newsletters:** Read archived newsletters and sign up for the newsletter mailing list.

### Are There Any Resources Available Locally?

Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water has fact sheets, guidance, tools and more available for free from their publications site. You can download most files from their publications website, including references available online from other organizations, at: [www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater/PublicationsandForms](http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater/PublicationsandForms).

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