

# Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR  
2024 – 2025



Regional Water Providers Consortium





*Annual Report photos courtesy of Portland Water Bureau, Clackamas River Water, City of Tualatin, and Tualatin Valley Water District.*



On July 19, 1999, I began working for the Regional Water Providers Consortium. Since that time, I have raised two boys and grown and matured professionally with this incredible organization. This will be my last Annual Report as Managing Director as I flow into retirement.



Retirement has compelled me to reflect on my career and contributions. One of my first assignments was to figure out how emergency preparedness and water system resiliency could be integrated into our work.

Twenty-six years later we have made incredible strides in our regional resilience – through our collective hard work, planning, collaboration, cooperation, sharing of best practices, training and exercises, mutual aid, and learning from what nature and the world throws at us – we have made our regional water systems more resilient. Our members' customers are more aware of the work we do and how to prepare for emergencies. We have obtained funding to support our work. Since 2007, we have benefited from over \$2.4 million in federal grants to conduct studies, buy equipment, and help educate the public about the importance of emergency drinking water. We have greatly increased awareness of the role water providers plays in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from an emergency.

Being part of an organization for twenty-six years brings continuity and steadiness. As Managing Director for the past fourteen years, I have seen the organization become more collaborative, efficient, accountable, and creative. With any leadership change, there is some uncertainty, but there is also great opportunity. I am confident that the great work you all do together will thrive and grow in the years ahead.

I leave you in good hands and will continue to support your work from my garden. Thank you all for believing in the power of collaboration. I truly believe our members are stronger being part of this organization.

With respect and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca".

Rebecca Geisen  
Managing Director





## SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Kicked off Emergency Drinking Water Framework Tabletop Exercise Project with Clark County
- Collaborated with media and regional partners to conduct 38 on-air interviews and produce 40 ads for the Consortium's annual media campaigns
- Hosted workshops for members on Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) and water system interconnections
- Updated Consortium governing and guiding documents including Staffing Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and Bylaws
- Received "Excellence in Communications Award" from Pacific Northwest Section of the American Water Works Association



*Each year, Consortium members continue to advance the resiliency of our region's drinking water systems.*

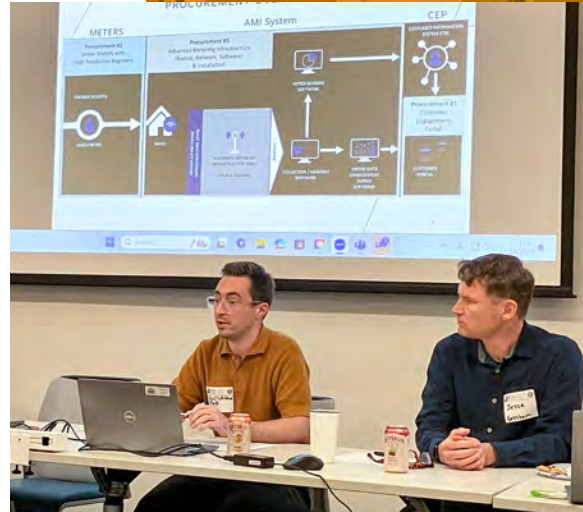
Sometimes the work is as basic as updating a contact list. Other times it is foundational, like building a seismically resilient water reservoir. Regardless of scope, each part of our collective work plays an important role in ensuring that people across the region have high quality drinking water 24/7/365.

The Consortium has been fortunate to have received federal grants over the years to support water providers in their emergency planning and resiliency work. In 2010, we completed a regional interconnections study and created a geodatabase. In 2022, we developed an Emergency Drinking Water Framework. Both of these projects supported water providers with their own projects and continued regional work. This year, the Consortium focused on advancing our interconnections and emergency drinking water work, bringing in new partners, and collaborating with each other.

## Training and Collaboration

A large part of the Consortium's role is to serve as a convener, bringing together water provider staff to share resources and learn from one another. These educational offerings provide members with opportunities to share ideas, identify gaps, set goals, and collectively work together to address issues. Bringing staff together also connects members with their peers and helps forge strong relationships which are crucial to effectively being able to respond and recover from regional emergencies.

# Building Resiliency



Each year, training topics are identified by Consortium members. Subcommittees of members and partners often help staff develop and put on trainings. This year, we focused on water system interconnections, Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), implementing recommendations outlined in the Emergency Drinking Water Framework, and training member staff on Consortium resources.

### AMI Workshop

**Purpose:** To provide a forum for water providers to learn about Advanced Metering Infrastructure. The panel shared their knowledge about developing a business case for AMI, running a pilot program, procurement processes, system deployment, operations, and funding strategies.

Attendees: 46 | Sponsors: Regional Water Providers Consortium and Portland Water Bureau | November 14, 2024

### Drinking Water Advisory Tool Training

**Purpose:** To provide participants with an overview of the tool's functions and a hands-on training opportunity for new users to gain credentials to become Drinking Water Advisory Tool administrators.

Attendees: 40 | Sponsor: Regional Water Providers Consortium | February 26, 2025

### Interconnections Workshop

**Purpose:** To provide an overview of the capabilities and limitations of the Interconnections Geodatabase, foster peer-to-peer conversations about standard operating procedures and best management practices relating to interties, and determine next steps for this work. More information is in the *Project Spotlight* on pages 10-11.

Attendees: 58 | Sponsors: Regional Water Providers Consortium | May 20, 2025



## Emergency Drinking Water Planning

### Emergency Drinking Water Framework (Framework)

The Consortium began planning for five county-specific tabletop exercises to advance recommendations from the Framework. A consultant was hired, and the first event was held on May 27 with Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) and Clark County water providers. Participants focused on roles and responsibilities, enhancing emergency water distribution planning, and identifying post-disaster emergency drinking water supply needs.



*Each year, the Consortium collaborates with water providers, media, and other regional partners to run multimedia campaigns and to develop outreach resources.*

This work helps our members' customers and community members learn how they can take simple steps to use water more efficiently, to protect local waterways, and to use water to prepare for emergencies.

By working in partnership with others, the Consortium was able to speak collectively on important topics and tailor its messaging to meet the needs of the communities it serves.

## Multimedia campaigns

### *“Clean Water. It’s Our Future.”*

The Consortium, along with 21 partner agencies, sponsored this year-round television campaign which focused on ways that people can keep local streams and waterways healthy by making small changes to their daily activities. By working together, we can positively impact the health and water quality of water sources across the region.

### *“Use water wisely. It’s just the right thing to do.”*

The Consortium’s annual water conservation multimedia campaign ran from July – September 2025 and focused on giving people tips for using water efficiently in their gardens and homes. Taking small steps during the drier summer months when there is little rainfall to replenish the region’s drinking water sources is an important way that we all can collectively help stretch existing water resources. The messaging ran in several print publications and on television, social media, radio, cable, and several other platforms.

### *“Before there’s an emergency: Get ready. Get water.”*

The emergency preparedness campaign focused on the important role that the public plays in making the region more resilient. When the region is more prepared for emergencies – from broken water pipes to earthquakes – water providers have more capacity to focus on system repair and service restoration. The messaging included tips for how to store, treat, and access water in an emergency in twelve languages. The campaign ran from July – September 2025 on television, TriMet buses, social media, and in several print publications.

# Public Outreach and Education



## Water wisely THIS SUMMER



with your Weekly  
Watering Number!

**SIGN UP  
NOW**

### មុនគ្រោះមានអាសន្ន



គ្រោមខ្លួនទុកគ្រឿម  
ទឹករួចរាល់ ។

**រៀនការចេះដឹងបន្ថែមទៀត**

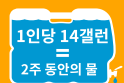
До возникновения чрезвычайной ситуации



Будьте готовы.  
Запаситесь  
водой.

**ПОДРОБНЕЕ**

긴급 상황이 발생하기 전에



준비하세요.  
물을 준비하세요.

**더 자세한 정보**

BEFORE THERE'S AN EMERGENCY



**Get ready.  
Get water.**

**LEARN MORE**

### “Sign up for Public Alerts”

The Consortium partnered with the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) for a second year to run a multimedia campaign in English and Spanish from April through May 2025. The campaign included roadside billboards, TriMet bus ads, digital display ads, streaming audio ads, and social media ads. Messaging focused on promoting the PublicAlerts.org website as the place to go to sign up for emergency alerts and to get locally specific information on how to prepare for emergencies.



### Public Outreach Resources

**Updating Spanish outreach messaging:** The Consortium started rebuilding its Spanish language outreach campaign materials this year. This work included reviewing and translating website content and producing 12 new Spanish radio ads which ran on El Rey Radio and several digital audio platforms over the summer. By taking a measured approach to its projects and working together with partners, the Consortium is ensuring that its new messaging is effective and culturally competent while also keeping costs low.



### Community events

One of the best ways to connect community members with the resources they need to use water wisely and to prepare for emergencies is to participate in local events. This year, the Consortium connected community members who speak Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese with emergency preparedness messaging and materials in their own languages at four events.

- **Lunar New Year Gala:** The event presented by the Chinese Friendship Association of Portland included a visual art exhibit, craft workshop, and performances. The Consortium sponsored the event which included advertising space in the event brochure.
- **Marhaba Arab Celebration:** The fourth annual event in collaboration with Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District celebrated Arab traditions and culture. Marhaba translates from Arabic to “welcome”.
- **Taiwan Pulse:** The musical performance and tabling event was a cultural appreciation of beauty and tradition as part of Taiwanese American Heritage Week.
- **Latino Cultural Festival:** The nineteenth annual festival organized by the Washington County Chamber of Commerce and hosted by the Hillsboro Hops included a series of live performances, a futsal tournament, local vendors, and resources for the Latino community.





## Accessible Communications

The Consortium is committed to creating messaging and outreach resources that are accessible to the widest possible audience. These efforts include making digital assets accessible to screen readers, using plain language, and engaging native speakers to translate public outreach resources into multiple languages. This year's projects included:

- Assessing technical web content for grade level and readability and using plain language to make specialized information more easily readable and user-friendly for the public
- Increasing accessibility of regionalH2O.org website to provide better access to digital resources and website content to every member of our community, regardless of disability, access, or functional needs
- Reviewing and updating multilingual web pages, ads, and other outreach materials
- Creating resources which include alternative text for digital images and vetted translated content for Consortium members and regional community partners to use for clear, consistent messaging

*A separate public outreach report is available upon request.*

## Youth Education

**Children's Clean Water Festival:** The Consortium co-sponsored and helped plan the Festival which took place at Portland Community College's Sylvania campus on April 29, 2025. Approximately 1,000 fourth grade students from Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties attended the half-day event which included a stage show, hands-on classroom presentations, and an exhibit hall. Students learned about water-related topics including water science, ecology, native fish, water quality, and ways they can protect and conserve natural resources.

**Educator Input:** The Consortium collected input from more than sixty regional educators through an online survey and two focus groups. Listening to local teachers helps ensure that future educational programming and materials are responsive to and aligned with the needs of educators and the students they serve.





## Interconnections Workshop

### OBJECTIVES

- 1 Determine interconnection capabilities and limitations, and define water provider roles, responsibilities, processes, and protocols to activate interties.
- 2 Ensure new and established staff are aware of and understand the capabilities and limitations of the Interconnections Geodatabase.
- 3 Identify process for creating an updated, standardized inventory of regional interties, create an update schedule, and determine which information should be included in the Interconnections Geodatabase.
- 4 Develop a list of follow-up actions for water providers to work on individually and sub-regionally. Examples include trainings, functional exercises, testing and maintenance of interconnections, development of agreements and SOPs, and data updates and reviews.

**INTERCONNECTION:** a physical intertie (connection) between two independent water systems that allows for the flow of water in one or both directions.

### PARTICIPANTS

- 58 Attendees
- 17 Agencies

### WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

On May 20, 2025, the Consortium hosted an Interconnections Workshop at the City of Portland Emergency Operations Center. The event consisted of an overview of the Interconnections Geodatabase, presentations by member staff on their entity's interconnections work, and breakout sessions to discuss water provider coordination around interties, standard operating procedures, and best management practices.

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

Without the contributions of member staff, the Consortium could not put on these types of events. Thank you to the following staff who contributed their time and expertise to make this a successful workshop:

Erik Vahtel, City of Lake Oswego  
Ernie Castro, City of Tualatin  
Heather Knapp, City of Hillsboro  
Jamaal Folsom, Portland Water Bureau  
Jeremy Hudson, Rockwood Water PUD  
Robin Pederson, City of Gresham







## BACKGROUND INFO

In 2010, the Consortium completed the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant-funded Interconnection Map and Evaluation Project. This included creating an Interconnections Geodatabase which used Geographic Information System (GIS) data from Consortium members to create a regional map of water system interties. The purpose of this work was to create a tool that water providers could use in their planning and response to water emergencies.

In 2017, the Consortium completed a second project which included expanding and updating the geodatabase. Since that time, the Consortium has hosted several tabletop exercises that used the geodatabase to challenge water providers to use interconnections to meet regional water needs by moving water across service areas in simulated disaster scenarios.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The Consortium plays a key role in helping to ensure that this important work continues to build on past successes. As a result of this workshop, attendees have a better understanding of regional and subregional intertie locations, their ownership, and associated agreements needed for their maintenance and use. In addition, attendees identified several next steps to carry this work forward. These included recommendations for:

- Creating standard operating procedures and best management practices for maintaining, exercising, and managing interconnections
- Updating and maintaining the Interconnections Geodatabase so it can be routinely used in planning and during emergency response situations
- Developing sample intergovernmental agreements that water providers can build on for different types of interconnections and use cases

## OPPORTUNITIES

When water providers gather to share resources, plans, and data, they are better able to advance critical work in providing water during normal operations and in emergency situations. The Consortium will continue to bring regional water providers together to discuss interconnections, coordinate peer-to-peer learning and work groups, and host workshops, drills, and exercises that support water provider collaboration.

*More detailed information about the workshop and follow-up actions is available in the Interconnections Workshop Summary Report, by request.*



## Emergency Water Shut-off Messaging Resources

### BACKGROUND INFO

Each year, the Consortium produces a variety of resources for its members to use as part of their outreach to customers and community members. Creating these resources helps water providers and their partners to speak with one voice on topics of shared regional importance. One example of these outreach resources is the messaging and resource toolkits that the Consortium produces monthly.

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Emergency Water Shut-off Toolkit focused on the importance of knowing where residential water shut-off valves are located and how to use them to turn off a home's water supply in an emergency. Increasing customer awareness of this information is important because it can help customers minimize water damage caused by burst pipes in their home. Burst pipes most often occur during prolonged cold weather.

The toolkit was released in December 2024, when the possibility of freezing temperatures and frozen pipes became more likely across the region. This helped water providers get consistent and timely messaging out to their customers before cold weather set in. The toolkit included website links, social media copy, graphics, and additional resources in English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese.

*The Emergency Water Shut-off Toolkit is available by request.*

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESILIENCY

The emergency water shut-off information is a key part of emergency preparedness messaging for the greater Portland metro region. As winter temperatures and weather events become more extreme, the likelihood of water service impacts could increase for residential customers.

Publicizing these messages contributes to the resilience of our region by:

- Helping residential customers prepare for emergencies before they happen
- Reducing emergency calls to water providers during extreme weather events
- Connecting more community members with timely, easy to understand information in multiple languages and formats

*This project won the “Excellence in Communications Award” from the Pacific Northwest Section of the American Water Works Association.*

*Find multilingual web content on [regionalH2O.org/emergency-water-shut-off](https://regionalH2O.org/emergency-water-shut-off).*









*Part of what makes the Consortium valuable to its members, partners, and the community is how it connects our region together.*

Water touches every part of our lives, economy, and neighborhoods, so it makes sense that it also brings people and organizations together to work on projects and solve problems. This year, the Consortium collaborated with organizations around the region, state, and nationally on issues that included emergency planning, cybersecurity, youth education, legislation, messaging, and sharing resources. Below are a few highlights.

## Collaborate with regional, state, and national partners

**Consortium Member Support:** Provided programming, resources, and training opportunities to members

**Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization:** Participated in several workgroups and committees

**Alliance for Water Efficiency:** Contributed to the Education and Outreach Committee monthly and annual meetings where programming and resources were shared among water efficiency staff peers

**WaterSense:** Attended webinars, participated in seasonal programming (like Fix a Leak Week), and promoted the WaterSense label on regionalH2O.org and in other outreach

# Collaboration and Partnerships





## Legislative Advocacy

**Cybersecurity:** Sent letters to the Oregon congressional delegation in support of H.R. 7922 to establish a Water Risk and Resilience Organization to develop cybersecurity standards for the water sector.

**PFAS Liability:** Sent letters to the Oregon congressional delegation in support of H.R. 7944 to provide liability protection for water systems and to ensure polluters, not the public, pay for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) cleanup.

**Water Workforce Program:** Provided a letter in support of Oregon House Bill 3634 to establish a water workforce program to grow the supply of skilled water professionals.

**WaterSMART Funding:** Signed onto a letter supporting the continued federal funding of the WaterSMART program.

## Share information and resources

- **AWWA Pacific Northwest Section Conference:** Consortium staff attended the PNWS-AWWA Section Conference in Boise, ID on May 7-9, 2025.
- **The Consortium received the “Excellence in Communications Award”** in the Digital Communications category for its Multilingual Emergency Water Shut-off Toolkit.
- **Population Estimate and Forecasts:** The Consortium worked with Portland State University’s Population Research Center to prepare population forecasts and historic population and household data. Water providers use this information when estimating future water demands.
- **Large Water Users:** A small work group from the Conservation Committee collected and shared information about the types of programming and resources that water providers have to serve non-residential customers such as landscape professionals, multifamily properties, and other commercial customers.



# How We Work

The Consortium is governed by its Board and works with committees to complete the annual workplan. Consortium staff provide program management and support in addition to administrative, technical and financial services. Our work is governed by an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that was updated last year. This year, we focused on modernizing our bylaws and updating our agreement with City of Portland to staff the Consortium. We are in a great position to serve members in the years to come.

- **Member Relations:** Consortium staff conducted several one-on-one onboarding meetings with staff from member entities throughout the year. At its June meeting, the Consortium Board unanimously approved adding Rivergrove Water District as the Consortium's twenty-sixth member at the start of Fiscal Year 2025 – 2026.
- **Consortium and Committee Bylaws:** The Consortium, Executive Committee, and Technical Committee bylaws were updated.
- **Staffing Agreement:** The Consortium Board and City of Portland signed a new, 10-year intergovernmental agreement to provide staffing and administrative support to the Consortium, continuing a 28-year partnership.

## Organizational Structure of the Consortium Board and Committees



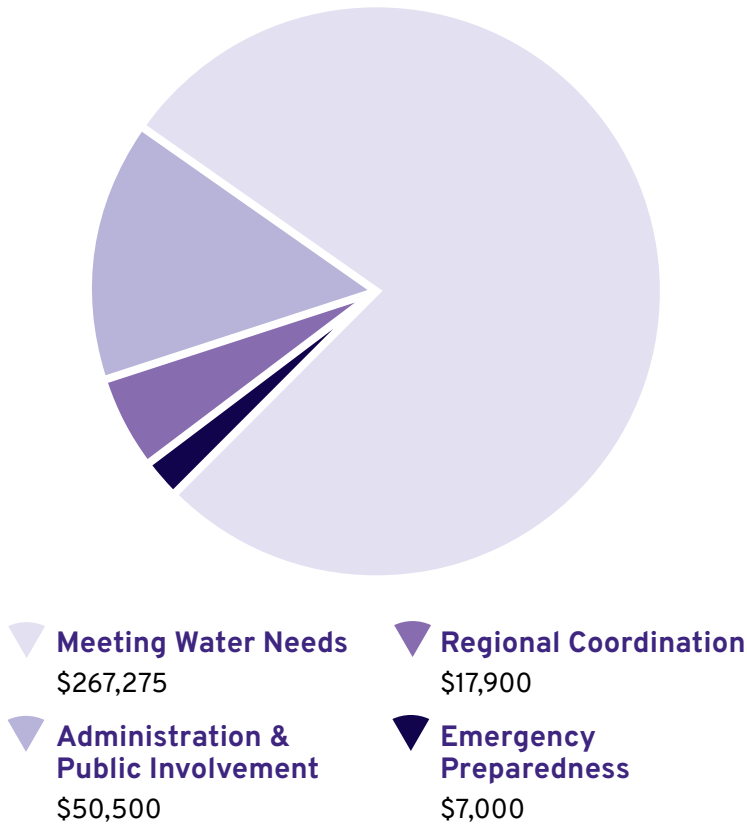


The Consortium’s budget is supported through the membership dues of its water provider members. Dues are based on the number of connections and quantity of water served by each member organization. Each voting member has an equal voice in the Consortium’s work regardless of the amount it contributes to the Consortium’s budget.

The Consortium’s budget was \$1,297,186 which included a \$41,000 carryover from Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024. A total of 86% of the Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 budget was expended. Unspent contingency, personnel, and some materials and services contributed to the under-expenditure.

Consortium staff provided members with bimonthly expense reports throughout the year. The Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 Consortium Work Plan and Budget and final expense report are available on the Consortium’s website at [regionalH2O.org/member-page](http://regionalH2O.org/member-page).

***Consortium Budget Allocation by Program Area  
(materials and services only)***



The Consortium budget also includes \$897,510 for personnel/overhead, \$6,000 for training/travel, \$10,000 for contingency, and a \$41,000 carryover from Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024.

# Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 Budget and Expenses



## Consortium Members and Regional Water Sources 2024 - 2025

Beaverton, <i>City of</i>	Rockwood Water PUD
Clackamas River Water	Sandy, <i>City of</i>
Cornelius, <i>City of</i>	Scappoose, <i>City of</i>
Forest Grove, <i>City of</i>	Sherwood, <i>City of</i>
Gladstone, <i>City of</i>	South Fork Water Board
Gresham, <i>City of</i>	Sunrise Water Authority
Hillsboro, <i>City of</i>	Tigard, <i>City of</i>
Lake Grove Water District	Troutdale, <i>City of</i>
Lake Oswego, <i>City of</i>	Tualatin, <i>City of</i>
Milwaukie, <i>City of</i>	Tualatin Valley Water District
Oak Lodge Water Services	West Slope Water District
Portland, <i>City of</i>	Wilsonville, <i>City of</i>
Raleigh Water District	

## Consortium Staff

### Managing Director

Rebecca Geisen

### Management Assistant

Patty Burk

### Program Manager

Bonny Cushman

### Program Specialist

Riley Berger











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