



What's on Tap

Vision of Tomorrow | Action Today

18631 SE 300th Place, Covington WA 98042 * 253-631-0565 * Fax: 253-630-4825
CovingtonWater.com General Manager: Thomas Keown

Backflow tests due to the District July 31st

2019-2020 Highlighted Accomplishments

The Covington Water District was established in 1960 and this year we celebrated our 60th Anniversary in January 2020. The District's history has had its noted "ups and downs", but like all utilities there is a resilience and resolve by every team member to provide our customers with safe, reliable water.

This past year the District has maintained its efforts to continue getting from "good to great" while locally responding to the King County Franchise Decision, facing water industry challenges related to educating our customers on the potential impacts of PFOS/PFOA; and of course the global threat of COVID-19 which we are still in the midst of learning and adjusting our workflows. The productivity, positivity and ingenuity of District employees and the past/current investments by the Board, have allowed the District the ability to effectively and efficiently weather and endure these circumstances.

We look forward to the daily challenge of providing our customers safe, reliable water 24/7/365 and are happy to provide the recap below of our accomplishments in this review period below:

Community Relationships: Covington Water won the overall best tasting water in 2020 by the King County subsection of PNWS-AWWA. Our maintenance foreman, Tyler Howard, won the meter madness competition and the first District's women's hydrant team competed at the event as well. Our 2019 men's hydrant team took 3rd place in the national competition.

Water Supply: There was a lack of precipitation in November that caused a brief loss of "run of river" conditions in the Green River. *It acted as a reminder/point of emphasis on the value of the District's existing groundwater supply.* The timing of snow in January/February/early March and cool temperatures should allow the Regional Water Supply System (RWSS) to have "run of the river" conditions like normal this coming summer. The District will continue to use the results of the Firm Yield Supply Study to support/promote the completion of the Additional Water Storage (AWS) project at Howard Hanson Dam. It will be an on-going point of emphasis for the District to work with our RWSS partners and local/federal elected to get AWS funded.

Security and Emergency Response: CWD has completed significant emergency response planning and preparation activities to date. We continued to follow-up on the J100 Risk and Resiliency Study and completed the initial list of prioritized security improvements at the District's headquarters. Other Administration Building security improvements will be combined in the Tank 1 project. These past efforts will also place the District in a good position to complete the federally required risk and resilience assessment work as part of the American Water Investment Act (AWIA) in 2020 and Emergency Management Plan update in 2021.

Financial Sustainability: The District did not raise residential rates for the 4th year in a row. The impact has been that winter rates are \$12.55/month less in 2020 than what was projected back in 2014. At the end of 2014, the District's undesignated/cash on hand was \$9.5M and a debt ratio of 51%, but now it stands at \$29.3M and our debt ratio has fallen to 29.9% respectively. One significant benefit of keeping operation and capital expenses in check the past 4+ years is less pressure on possible rate increases.

For more information on our accomplishments, our rates and budget, please visit our website at www.covingtonwater.com.



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Backflow Prevention: Protecting Water, Protecting Yourself

Backflow tests due before July 31st.

The District requires all cross-connections to be protected by customer installed backflow prevention assemblies and be tested on an annual basis **before July 31st** of each year. These tests can be completed and submitted to the district any time after January, you do not need to wait until July to complete this test. Many testers are very busy the closer you get to the due date, so we encourage you to schedule your test early to allow the test to be completed prior to the due date to avoid any fines.

Why it's critical to test these devices.

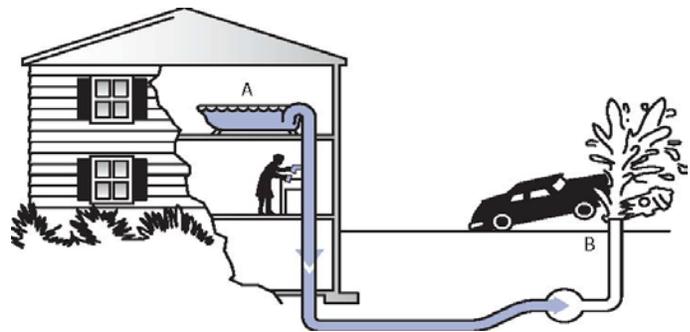
For potable water, life is a series of one-way streets. Safe drinking water depends on all "traffic" within a water system to move from source to use. Normally, fresh drinking water flows one way. It isn't supposed to turn around and travel in the other direction.

In a perfect world, the flow of water would always follow the rules. But in reality, there are several situations that can cause backflow, such as a broken water main pipe.

Backflow is an accidental and unwanted reversal in the flow of water within a piping system. When this happens, any contaminants within the piping system can flow back into the source of fresh water, which could mix with drinking water and potentially contaminate the water supply.

Consider this example: A home irrigation system with below ground sprinklers is running as usual when a neighborhood water main is damaged during road construction. Suddenly, the pressure that keeps potable water flowing into the system is gone and the water flow changes directions. Water from the irrigation system flows backward taking with it any pesticides, fertilizer, or animal waste that it may have come in contact with. This contaminated water can then mix with the potable water supply potentially making the homeowner and his neighbors sick.

The danger of this kind of contamination exists wherever there is a "cross-connection" or link between potable and non-potable water. This is where backflow prevention comes in. Appropriate backflow prevention devices keep non-potable water from flowing backward toward the potable water supply.



Visit our website for more information.

For more information about cross-connections and backflow prevention assemblies, please see the District's website at covingtonwater.com or contact the District's Cross-Connection Control Specialist at 253-261-8453.



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Meet Leslie Boren - Employee Highlight

We enjoy introducing our team to the community and industry through Employee Highlights! We will periodically pick an employee to present them to you so you can get to know us even better. For July, we'd like to introduce Leslie Boren, Project Coordinator at Covington Water District.

Leslie Boren, Project Coordinator

Start Date: November 28, 2016

Day-to-Day Responsibilities: I am responsible for the administration of developer extension projects. I identify, track and document the required information necessary for developer extensions from the application process through completion of Board acceptance.

What motivated/intrigued you about working for Covington Water District? I was working for the City of Emmett, Idaho. I spent 2 years working as a Utility Clerk and 6 years as Deputy City Clerk. My family was contemplating a move to Washington, and I wanted to remain in the public sector. Covington Water District had an opening for an Account Specialist, and I thought it would be a great opportunity to remain in a field I enjoy. I spent my first 3 years at Covington Water District as an Account Specialist, just recently moving to our Engineering Department as Project Coordinator.

Personal Background: I grew up in Southern California and attended college at BYU-Hawaii and Boise State University. While I have moved several times, I always seemed to find my way back to Washington. I have been married for 28 years and have 5 children.

Outside Interests: Outside of work, you can find me enjoying time with my family or reading a good book. My favorite places to be are at the beach or mountains, so I can take long walks and admire the scenery. I enjoy taking pictures of the beautiful landscape our state has to offer. I am a huge family history buff, and spend much of my free time researching my family tree. I also love to volunteer my time researching and helping others complete their family trees.

Other Questions:

Fun Fact: I am the youngest of 10 children, with 113 nieces and nephews.

What has kept you coming to work each day at Covington Water District? I love my job, but mostly, I love the people I work with!





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Water – Too Valuable to Waste

Conservation is important all year round, but it's especially important during the summer. Outdoor watering increases water use at a time when nature gives us the least amount of water.

Each person's individual effort to use water wisely helps preserve the balance between wildlife, outdoor recreation, the economy and the quality of life we enjoy. Summer's peak flows also determine the size of facilities, financial investment and cost to operate the District effectively to meet the needs of all customers.

Easy ways to save water this summer:

- ◆ **Aerate** your lawn every year to allow air, water and nutrients to reach the roots.
- ◆ Soils that have organic matter, such as **compost**, incorporated into them retain moisture and grow healthier lawns and gardens.
- ◆ Balance the **timing of outdoor watering** opposite normal high demands for domestic use. Water before 6 a.m. or after 8 p.m. Avoid watering in the heat of the day to reduce evaporation.
- ◆ Before turning on the **sprinkler**, check the soil 3" to 4" below the surface to see if it's still moist.
- ◆ Including recent rainfall, apply no more than **1" of water a week on lawns**, or allow the lawn to "go golden."
- ◆ Have your car washed at a **car wash** that recycles their wash water.



For more information related to conservation, visit <https://www.covingtonwater.com/160/Conservation>.



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A Friendly Reminder from Our Meter Technicians



We like to think of our meter technicians as exceptionally resilient, creative people. Like mail carriers, they're out there day after day in all kinds of weather. Lucky for mail carriers, they don't have to hack their way through jungles, leap over tall wood piles or risk their behinds with ferocious growling dogs while trying to find the water meter.

Most meters are in the public right-of-way, but many homeowners choose to plant the area around the meter as part of their landscape. If this is the case with your water meter, and the area has become a bit overgrown, we would appreciate your approaching the problem with some pruning shears. Do not place items such as firewood, garbage cans, cars, trailers or boats too close or on top of the meter.



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The District will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Thursday, July 4th, 2020 – Independence Day
- Monday, September 2nd, 2020 – Labor Day