



Volume 1, Issue 1

September 30, 2013

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

# Multi-Fauceted

## The DE Corner

### Attention to details

By Janice Thomas

At a tradeshow a few years ago, I asked the audience how they would like to receive information to stay current on drinking water requirements. The audience told me that courses by Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and on-line classes were preferred as were newsletters and emails.

With this, our first newsletter, we are happy to share updates and important aspects of our regulatory program. We have a section called Hints and Tips, an article on our office hours, information on keeping your permit up to date, preparing for emergencies, what do in a water outage, tank maintenance, and operator certification.

We also share what we know about the proposal to move our program to the State Water Resources Control Board.

The USGS forecasts that the San Francisco Bay Area has a 62% chance of a 6.7+ magnitude earthquake in the thirty years spanning 2003-2032. When that happens, I would like our area to exceed expectations in its resilience and recovery. With that in mind, we are working with RCAC to

give local trainings on emergency response plans and Capital Improvement Plans.

Last October, we participated in the Great ShakeOut by sending an email to emergency and primary contacts. If you were a recipient, you may recall that we had a glitch where messages were sent at 10:24AM and at 5:00PM. Suffice to say, it was a learning experience for us.

We plan to participate again in the exercise and send an email drill on October 17, 2013 at 10:17AM.

Thank you for your suggestions over the years. We look forward to continuing our partnership.



## Office hours

By Zachary Rounds

Do you have questions about your water system that can't be answered over the phone? Are you unsure if your emergency notification plan will be approved by your friendly state regulator? Will you be near

downtown Santa Rosa during the afternoon? Sonoma District sets aside daily hours for unannounced drop-ins from water system staff.

Every day, from 2:30 to 4:00 pm, an engineer from Sonoma District will be

available to answer questions, help with forms, provide guidance, chemical monitoring schedules, and technical assistance.

Appointments are not necessary, although they are appreciated to help ensure prompt service.

### Inside this issue:

Certified Operators—who are they?	2
Distribution System Maps	2
Icky Storage Tanks	2
What To Do In An Outage	3
State Water Resources Control Board Move	3
When To Request a Water Supply Permit	3

### Hints & Tips

- CDPH forms at Wine Country Waterworks website: [www.wcwwa.org](http://www.wcwwa.org)
- Contact changes? Call (707) 576-2145
- Example binder to organize small water system records at our office
- Free trainings through RCAC and CRWA
  - ⇒ [www.rcac.org](http://www.rcac.org)
  - ⇒ [www.calruralwater.org](http://www.calruralwater.org)

# Why should I look into my storage tanks if my tap water looks fine?

By Marianne Watada

Once upon a time, a water system's water suddenly started looking tea-colored at the taps. The turbidity leaving the treatment plant met standards and coliform tests were absent. However, the water leaving the clearwell had color.

Upon inspection of the tank, the system found that five inches of sediment had accumulated at the bottom. The sediment was getting stirred up and was getting out into the distribution system. The system had to schedule emergency cleaning of the tank.

AWWA Standard G200-09—Distribution Systems Operation and Management recommends that a tank inspection program include comprehensive inspections

every three to five years.

Periodically climbing and looking inside your tanks can provide your system with valuable information and can prevent problems. Seeing how the inside changes over time can help you plan for maintenance, rather than necessitating emergency action. Regaining the confidence of your customers after an emergency takes much longer than fixing the original problem. Tank inspection forms can be found on the Wine Country Waterworks website under the heading *Tank Inspection*.

Is anything accumulating at the bottom of the tank? How fast is it accumulating? Can you even see the bottom? Is anything floating on the top? Are there signs

that unauthorized persons have been climbing the tank, such as empty bottles or graffiti on top of the tanks?

## What's in your tank?



## Certified operator? What do they do?

By George Chien

You may have been notified by our office that your public water system needs a certified Treatment and/or Distribution operator.

Treatment operators need to know about: source water characteristics, water quality analysis, treatment processes, sampling and disinfection techniques and procedures, water volume and flow rates, pump/meter/pressure operation and maintenance, and drinking water regula-

tions.

Distribution operators need to know about: disinfection of wells/storage/water mains, backflow and cross-connection prevention, mains and pressure maintenance, monitoring and sampling procedures, and drinking water regulations.

To fulfill the certified operator requirement, your system may have a system owner, manager, or system staff/operator obtain an operator's certificate, or hire a certified contract operator.

To obtain a certificate, an operator must pass a written examination and renew their certificate, including completion of contact hours, once every three years.

For information on the certified operator requirements the examination, and renewal process, please visit the Department's website at: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/occupations/Pages/DWopcert.aspx>

## Map your water system

By Waldon Wong

Emergency preparedness is crucial for community water systems. Water systems should have the ability to weather most disasters and continue to serve customers with pure and clean drinking water.

Community water systems should have a map of their distribution system to assist

during an emergency and for routine cleaning, flushing, leak detection & mitigation, and valve exercising.

This map should include locations of valves, meters, piping (flow direction, pipe size, material and condition/age), tanks, tank isolation valves, pumps, elec-

trical access, and more.

Water systems should also have a list of suppliers and contractors who will assist the water system in an emergency.

***Water systems should have the ability to weather disasters and continue to serve customers with pure and clean drinking water.***

These two documents should be kept together at the water system office to ensure continued distribution of clean water.

# What to do when you have a water outage or loss of pressure?

By Karen Bolan

Distribution system pressure is the last barrier against contamination. If any part of your system becomes depressurized, due to planned repairs or unplanned problems, take the following steps to remain in compliance.

If your system pressure regularly falls below 20 psi, you are not required to take any specific action. However, low pressures like this could indicate a problem in your water system; you should investigate and repair any problems you find.

**For unplanned outages**, you will need to issue a boil water notice (BWN) to all affected customers. Contact CDPH as soon as possible. Repair the problem and take extra bacteriological samples. Only CDPH can lift the BWN.

**For unplanned pressure loss to less than 5 psi**, contact CDPH as soon as possible and take extra bacteriological samples. CDPH may want you to issue a BWN.

**For all planned and unplanned outages affecting food facilities** (restaurants, schools, camps, markets, cheese retailers, etc.), permitted food facilities cannot operate since there will not be any available water.

- *In Marin County*, food facilities need to shut down. The water supplier and the food facility should notify Environmental Health (415-473-6907).



*Low pressure reading?  
Big problem.*

- *In Sonoma County*, food facilities need to shut down. The water supplier and food facility should notify Sonoma County Environmental Health Department (707-565-6565). If a food facility wants to try to operate, they can contact Sonoma County and submit a contingency plan for how to operate.

**For planned outages**, notify customers in advance with door hangers (containing CDPH-approved language). Take extra bacteriological samples. Contact CDPH in any of these cases: the repair is delayed (greater than eight hours); many customers are affected; cross connections are suspected; sewer lines are in bad shape; or if you know of any other hazard in the area.

## We're moving?!

By Janice Thomas

In late July, we were informed that the Governor's Office has decided to move forward with plans to relocate the CDPH Drinking Water Program (DWP) to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The intent of the move is to consolidate all major water quality programs within a single department. A document outlining the

*We have been assured that  
DWP will continue its mission  
to protect public health.*

Governor's position is posted here:  
<http://www.acwa.com/sites/default/files/news/water-quality/2013/07/drinking-water-reorganization-final-7-24.pdf>

Recently, the assembly bill supporting the move failed in the Senate Appropriations Committee. We have been told that even though the bill did not pass, the Governor's Office is proceeding with transition plans.

We have been assured that DWP will

continue its mission to protect public health and that the new drinking water division at the SWRCB will be led by a person with public health experience.

DWP will move in its entirety. The specific details have not yet been determined.

We will share information about this reorganization as we learn more.

## When to request a water supply permit application

By Cindi Lee

There are a variety of situations that require property owners or their representatives to contact our office and request a water supply permit application.

**Change of owner:** When selling a property with an existing water supply permit, the seller should notify the new owner of the existing permit. The new owner must request a new permit as permits are not

transferrable.

**Change of source:** Adding or modification of existing water sources, including status changes.

**Change of treatment:** Adding, changing, or removing of treatment.

**Change of storage:** Adding a finished water storage tank with 100,000-gallon capacity or greater.

All water supply permit applications must be complete before the system installs or operates the new source, treatment, or storage units.

If you're involved in the development of a new facility and want to know if a permit will be required, a handout is available that provides the definition and categories of public water systems. We also have a permit application request form available. Call if you have questions.



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

50 D Street, Suite 200  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Phone: (707) 576-2145  
Fax: (707) 576-2722  
dwpdist18@cdph.ca.gov

***Sonoma District Field Operations  
Branch***

*The Sonoma District Field Operations Branch is responsible for the enforcement of the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts (SDWAs) and the regulatory oversight of approximately 450 public water systems to assure the delivery of safe drinking water to Sonoma and Marin County residents and visitors.*

*Sonoma District staff performs field inspections, issues operating permits, reviews plans and specifications for new facilities, takes enforcement actions for non-compliance with laws and regulations, reviews water quality monitoring results, and provides technical assistance and outreach.*

**Forms on the web!**  
**[www.wcwwa.org](http://www.wcwwa.org)**