

working for clean rivers

CLARIFIER

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A NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Message From The Director



I hope you are all having a good summer. I'd like to use this space to highlight a few notable things happening this summer.

First, Amin Wahab has rejoined our staff after taking a year away from managing the Fanno-Tryon Watershed team to work on environmental issues in his native Afghanistan for the U.S. Agency for International Development. I've received a letter from USAID commending Amin's work.

Next, we've had some beautiful weather and more people are turning to a clean Willamette River for summer fun. For example, more than 2,000 people showed up at Waterfront Park on July 27 to take part in the annual Big Float. Thanks to our Investigations and Monitoring Manager Duane Linnertz for doing some advance water quality testing that showed the water was fine for a float. I'd also like to thank Willie Levinson and his Human Access Project for doing so much to let the public know how clean the Willamette is and to make the river more accessible. The low *E. coli* counts displayed weekly on the River Recreation Index at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/WaterQuality are more proof that river is healthy and fine for recreation.

Finally, Portland is becoming more popular as a summer meeting and conference destination and sometimes that gives our staff a chance to share our successes with people from around the country (see the StormCon article on page three). Last month, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies held its summer conference in Portland. About 300 wastewater and stormwater professionals from all parts of the country came to learn about how stormwater management utilities like Environmental Services are leading the way to keep our watersheds healthy. BES staff took delegates on a walking tour of green infrastructure. Chief Engineer Bill Ryan and Watershed Services Manager Jane Bacchieri presented a detailed green infrastructure talk attended by over 100 experts.

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A Safety Milestone

BES occupational injuries and illnesses last fiscal year were the lowest in frequency and costs ever. Only ten BES employees sustained injuries or illnesses. Just three of the ten occurred in the Wastewater Group, which is remarkable because of the variety of exposures and hazards many Wastewater employees experience.

Over the last seven years, the bureau averaged 18 to 20 losses annually. Going back a decade or two, the average was 25 to 30 a year. Today, improvements in training and safety awareness have substantially reduced back and fall injuries. Maintaining task focus and looking out for each other plays a huge role in this success story.

We should all be proud of our safety and health efforts and the positive impact they have on bureau operations, families and resources.



Blue Ribbon Commission

The Portland Utility Oversight Blue Ribbon Commission started work in July with meetings on the 15th and 29th. Mayor Hales and Commissioner Fish appointed the 12-member panel in June to review oversight of Environmental Services and the Portland Water Bureau. The commission will present recommendations to the City Council this November. Meeting schedules and panel background are posted on Commissioner Fish's webpage at <http://www.portlandonline.com/Fish/index.cfm?c=65200>.



StormTV

Last month, Environmental Services entered the video "Ecoroofs – The Nature of Portland's Rooftops" in the Water Environment Federation's annual StormTV Project video competition. WEF will announce winning videos in August. WEF will feature the top videos in an awards session in the Stormwater Pavilion Theater at WEFTEC® 2014/the Stormwater Congress in New Orleans this September.



WEF started the StormTV Project three years ago to recognize and highlight the work of stormwater professionals and share their ideas. You can check out the Ecoroof video and the other videos submitted this summer at www.pinterest.com/weforg/stormtv-project-2014/.



WPCL Recognition

The July issue of *Spectroscopy* magazine features a full page ad for Water Pollution Control Lab Coordinator Jason Dahl's on-demand webinar on the lab's low-level mercury analyses. About 100 scientists logged on for the live webinar in May and it's now available as a free, on-demand video. The webinar's success led to the EPA inviting Jason to give a presentation at the annual EPA Quality Assurance Conference in Dallas this October.

The WPCL is recognized nationally for its leading edge work on the analysis of low-level mercury in the environment. The EPA has given the lab formal approval to use EPA's special procedures to conduct mercury analyses for all the city's permitted work. The procedures have shortened analysis times and realized extremely low detection levels. They are also less expensive than traditional methods, which saves ratepayer dollars.



StormCon Coming

StormCon, the North American Surface Water Quality Conference and Exposition, comes to

Portland next week. Trainings, a tour and other activities will be held at the Oregon Convention Center Sunday through Thursday.



StormCon is an annual technical exhibition and conference for stormwater professionals. It's the largest event of its kind in the country and attracts surface-water quality professionals from around the world.

Several Environmental Services staff members are giving presentations at the conference:

- Jeremy Biittner, Measuring PCBs in Soil and Sediment
- Ivy Dunlap, Leveraging Partnerships
- Beth Hiscott, Stormwater Sampling
- Dawn Hottenroth, Landscape and Automotive BMPs
- Tim Kurtz, Green Streets
- Michael Pronold, Green Infrastructure for Industrial Facilities
- Josh Robben, Implementing Private Stormwater Retrofits



Regatta at 20

On August 3rd, the Columbia Slough Regatta turns 20. Environmental Services is a long-time sponsor of the annual celebration of the scenic slough.



It's a great chance to get on the water in a canoe or kayak and keep an eye out for eagles, turtles, otters and other wildlife that inhabit the upper slough. This year the event is at NE Mason and 150th Court and participants will get a great view of Mt. Hood from the water. Go to <http://columbiaslough.org/index.php/events/event/248/> for more Regatta information.



Blue Heron Time

The annual Blue Heron Awards ceremony is coming up in September and now's the time to nominate a BES employee or workgroup. The Blue Heron Award acknowledges individuals, committees and work groups that make outstanding contributions to the bureau. The deadline to submit nominations is Friday, August 29, 2014. You can submit nominations online and get more information at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/BlueHeron.

This year's Blue Heron Awards ceremony is on Tuesday, September 23, 2014 starting at 9:30 a.m. in the Portland Building Auditorium.



New Stars



The Environmental Services Recognition Committee circulates Shining Star Awards throughout the bureau. Employees give them to co-workers to recognize outstanding achievement and notable performance on the job. Recipients display the Shining Star on their desk for two months, then pass it on.

The Shining Star acknowledges achievements and good work that might otherwise go unnoticed in a bureau as large as BES. When it's time to pass on your Shining Star, consider employees in all groups, as well as your own work team or group.

Here is a list of new Shining Stars.

Scott MacKenzie	Shining Star # 1	to Ryan Corti
Randy Hess	Shining Star # 2	to Gail Luthy
Ronda Fast	Shining Star # 3	to Ali Young
Michael Sisler	Shining Star # 4	to Mark Liebe
Loren Shelley	Shining Star # 5	to Angela Henderson
Bob Fraley	Shining Star # 6	to Joel DeWit
Jeremy Biittner	Shining Star # 7	to Kris Dennis
Rolly Ramos	Shining Star # 8	to Cynthia Triplett

Read more about this awards program at www.portlandonline.com/bes/stars.



Meet your PEERS

PEER Resource volunteers are available to all Environmental Services employees to listen and offer support about problems in the workplace. PEER volunteers take special training in listening and communication skills, legal, labor, and employee assistance issues. They are available at the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Water Pollution Control Laboratory, the Portland Building, Pioneer Tower and the Guilds Lake office. Alice Coker is the PEER Resource Program coordinator. Contact Alice for more information at 3-7914 or alice.coker@portlandoregon.gov.

The PEER Program recently recruited new volunteers and some current volunteers renewed their commitment. In the next few Clarifiers, we'll get to know your PEER volunteers.



Beth Hiscott

Beth has worked as an Environmental Technician for Field Operations since 2007. Before coming to the city, she used her geology degree to perform underground storage tank cleanups and environmental site assessments. Beth has also served in the Peace Corps, worked for the National Park Service, and consulted for an art gallery. Outside of work, Beth enjoys the outdoors, studying alternative healing and cooking. Although during work hours Beth spends quite a bit of time wading in streams and sewers, her desk is on the first floor of the Water Pollution Control Lab. You can email her or call her at 3-5653.



Paul Ketcham

Paul Ketcham joined Watershed Services in 2007 as the Willamette Watershed team manager. He places a high priority on teamwork in meeting the many challenges of improving watershed health conditions in the city. He values good communication and considers it essential to building a supportive and productive workplace, and sees the PEER program as a valuable volunteer service. Paul's office is on the 10th floor of the Portland Building and you can reach him at 3-5549.



Victoria Busch

Victoria is an AutoCad Technician II. She updates plans to reflect the as-built conditions at project completion and maintains and updates drawing files. Due to the variety of projects and because AutoCAD software continuously changes, Victoria views her job as an enriching experience. Victoria was born and raised in Oradea, a city in the Transylvania region of Romania, as an ethnic minority Hungarian and she is proud of her Hungarian heritage and rich culture. She and her family moved to Portland in 1984.

Victoria works on the 11th floor of the Portland Building. You can reach her at 3-7099.

Wellness Tip

A new University of Ontario study says flavonoids in citrus appear to prevent weight gain. There's evidence a flavonoid called naringenin reduces triglycerides and cholesterol and may reprogram the liver to burn fat instead of storing it.

Contact your PEERs

PEERs are specially trained Environmental Services staff volunteers who are available to offer bureau employees support, guidance and referral. [Click here to learn more or to contact a PEER volunteer.](#)



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY OF PORTLAND
working for clean rivers



Our Mission

Environmental Services serves the Portland community by protecting public health, water quality and the environment.

We provide sewage and stormwater collection and treatment services to accommodate Portland's current and future needs.

We protect the quality of surface and ground waters and conduct activities that plan and promote healthy ecosystems in our watersheds.

Our Vision

To be recognized as a trusted service provider and innovative environmental leader through a demonstrated commitment to clean rivers, healthy watersheds and our community.

Environmental Services: www.portlandoregon.gov/bes
Nick Fish, Commissioner Dean Marriott, Director

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