

working for clean rivers

CLARIFIER

APRIL 2015

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

A Message From Jim Hagerman



BLT Road Show

Later this month, members of the Bureau Leadership Team will hit the road to visit various BES work places and meet with employees (please, no Antiques Road Show jokes). We want to have a chance to tell you what we're working on and hear your questions, concerns and comments. Watch your email for announcements of meetings times and places.

Director Recruitment

The deadline for candidates for BES Director to apply was March 27. The Selection Committee will begin interviewing candidates in late April and we hope to have a finalist selected by the end of May.

Value Awards

The BES Recognition Committee organized the first annual Value Awards in 2007 and since then the program has handed out more than 600 awards to recognize BES staff for excellence in practicing one or more of the 11 bureau values in their work. Now it's time to nominate your co-workers for the 2015 Value Awards.

I think this award program has helped create a more positive workplace. Value Awards spotlight the hard work and accomplishments of our staff. And they raise awareness of the many important jobs and activities all of our work groups engage in.

Go to the [Value Awards web page](#) to learn more about the awards, see past winners, familiarize yourself with BES value statements and to nominate a co-worker. You can use the online nomination form or download, fill out and return a PDF of the nomination form. Then plan to attend one of the awards presentations posted on the page. I hope to see you there!





Wildlife Friendly Cities

We love our wildlife in Portland.

The National Wildlife Federation calls Portland one of the country's **top ten cities for wildlife**. The list is a nod to cities whose residents have the strongest commitments to wildlife. Portland is second on the list behind only Austin, Texas. The NWF cited Portland's 8,200 acres of salmon safe, natural area park land as a key factor in its ranking.



Energy Trust Incentives

Commissioner Nick Fish welcomed staff from the Energy Trust of Oregon to last month's BES management team meeting. The Energy Trust presented BES with a \$284,210 **energy efficiency incentive** for modifications at the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The project, led by Vu Han, uses an advanced dissolved oxygen control system in the plant's aerators to reduce demand on the aeration blowers. The blowers are the most energy intensive equipment at the CBWTP. Improving the efficiency of the aeration system reduces power used and saves money for sewer rate payers.



Energy Trust staff Tonya Zinzer (left) and JP Batmale (right) presented Jim Hagerman, Paul Suto and Bill Ryan with a check to the city for \$284,210 at a recent management team meeting.



BES in the News

Oregonian City Hall reporter Brad Schmidt visited the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant to interview Watershed Services Manager Jane Bacchieri about reports of bird strikes on the windows of the Columbia Building. Oregonlive published the story **Why Portland's budget-busting sewer building is killing birds** on March 12 and also **posted a short video** featuring Jane discussing the issue.

KGW environmental reporter Keely Chalmers was also at the CBWTP last month reporting on plans to reuse more biogas. Keely posted the story **Portland plan makes more fuel every time you flush** on the KGW website on March 10. The transportation industry trade magazine NGT News also published a version of the story, **Portland Has Alt-Fuel Plans for Sewage Plant**, on March 11.



Micro-Grants

The BES *Cut Through the FOG* program applied for two micro-grants from the city's Innovation Fund and got them both. The City Council approved a \$15,000 grant to pay for free grease trap cleaning coupons to give to food service establishments and another one for \$20,000 to produce multilingual best management practices videos for food service establishment owners and staff.

Extra Strength Program Manager John Holtrop went to the March 25 City Council meeting to accept the grants. A city employees' panel reviewed 46 grant proposals from 13 city bureaus and offices and chose 17 proposals for funding.

Cut Through the FOG staff will give small food service establishments a coupon for one free grease trap cleaning by companies that participate in the regional *Preferred Pumper Program*. Staff of many smaller establishments try to clean grease traps themselves but some can't keep up with the cleaning and have trouble complying with city requirements as a result. Businesses that use Preferred Pumpers have higher compliance rates.

The second grant will fund production of short best management practices demonstration videos to enhance Cut Through the FOG outreach to food service establishments. Videos will be produced in English and possibly four other languages including Spanish and Korean. Staff will show the videos when making technical site visits and post them on the *Cut Through the FOG website*.



PEER Training

Ten new PEER volunteers and 19 returning volunteers finished their training last month and are ready to begin giving their co-workers a safe environment to vent, and to help them work through issues and solve problems at the lowest level possible.

Over 100 BES employees have volunteered for the program and taken PEER training since the program began in 2001. The program brings positive changes to the workplace culture by improving communication and promoting tolerance and respect for co-workers. Staff from the Water Bureau and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability attended the training this year and are working on similar programs for their bureaus.

You can find PEER Volunteers at six BES locations. Just look for the blue PEER flags at cubes and workspaces around the office. *Visit the PEER website* for more program information, and help improve the PEER program by going to www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/64130 and taking a brief survey.





New Division

BES employees who worked in the Watershed Services Sustainable Stormwater Division and the Engineering Services Stormwater System Program are settling into new roles. In January, staff from the two programs merged within Watershed Services to be part of the new Stormwater System Division managed by Dawn Uchiyama.

The Stormwater System Division integrates innovative stormwater system planning, implementation, technical assistance, stewardship policies, design guidelines and monitoring to develop a continuous “plan-do-check” cycle for Portland’s stormwater systems that informs larger bureau and city efforts. The new division has four work teams: John Burns leads Stormwater System Planning; Tim Kurtz is in charge of the Stormwater Implementation and Technical Assistance team; Amy Chomowicz manages the Stormwater Stewards team; and Amber Clayton heads up the Stormwater Management Manual and stormwater facility monitoring.

The changes will improve support for stormwater system planning and revising and implementing the Stormwater Management Manual. The reorganization strengthens stormwater technical assistance internally and to the public by providing support through Clean River Rewards, Private Property Retrofits, and Downspout Disconnection. It also helps leverage partnerships for green infrastructure stewardship through Green Street Stewards and the Urban Tree Canopy Program. The division will help develop innovative stormwater management solutions to address emerging stormwater needs throughout the city.



Clarifier Survey

Thanks to all of you who responded to our Clarifier survey. We received responses from 118 of you, with most of you leaving comments as well. Respondents consistently said they enjoy reading messages from the bureau Director, project updates, and especially news from other work groups.

There were many good suggestions for topics, including news about new hires, promotions and retirements and BES news stories, as well as suggestions about different ways to format and deliver the Clarifier.

Overall, the comments we received were thoughtful and constructive. Over the next few months, we will begin making changes to the Clarifier in response to survey results. Thanks to those of you who participated for your help in making our bureau newsletter more useful, accessible and interesting to our staff.



Records Management

BES has posted records management information on the bureau intranet at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/65118. You can find information about the bureau’s records management policy, links to training and resources, retention schedules and how to archive records.



Wellness Tip

If you have intestinal problems, consider cutting your gluten intake by avoiding foods that contain wheat, oats, barley and rye. Read food labels carefully. Cold cuts, soups, candies, soy sauce and many other products contain gluten. Gluten can even be in stamp and envelope adhesive, medicines and vitamins. The good news is that gluten-free versions of beer, soy sauce, pancake and muffin mixes, pizza dough, bread and many other products are readily available.



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 James Hagerman, Interim Director

Produced electronically OD 2015