



Coordinating the SOAKED program

SOAKED (Sharing Our Assets and Knowledge for Employee Development) is an eight day intensive orientation to the Water Bureau that was held in May and June. Participating staff are both seasoned and new employees representing a cross section of all 7 bureau divisions at all level positions.

Participants receive an integrated overview of the organization that illustrates the complexity of the water system, its unique features, and the diverse responsibilities of employees. SOAKED includes presentations from representatives of every bureau division and several site visits that trace the source of Portland's water at Bull Run and the Ground Water Pump Station, through the entire system from storage and delivery to operations, and finally customer service.

The program promotes:

- Employee Engagement
- Organizational Knowledge
- Employee Efficacy
- Networking and personal connections among co-workers
- Professional Development

Staffing:

- 15-20 Participants (2 to 3 from each work group)
- 8 full days of content
- 1-2 Coordinators + M&C Liaison
- Planning begins at least 6 weeks ahead
- 50-60 different presenters
- Most time slots between 30 to 90 minutes

Content:

Content is generally split about 50/50 between "in the field" and "classroom setting." The "classroom setting" content is comprised of presentations/discussions from each of the different work groups. We try to encourage simple activities along with these.

Presenters are coached to engage their audience with stories and activities

Examples of site visits incorporated into the program include:

- Bull Run Watershed
- Treatment facilities

- Open reservoirs
- In-town pump stations
- Groundwater pumping facilities
- CIP construction projects

Examples of hands-on activities that are integrated:

- Operating a backhoe
- Surveying
- New service installation (at work site)
- "Meter Madness"- meter assembly and testing
- Locating and Leak Detection
- Main Break Simulation and Leak Repair
- Simulation of service install, service leak, crimping and freezing a service

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/SOAKED>

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