



Where Life is Sweet

Mayor and Members of the City Council
STAFF REPORT
For the Meeting of April 22, 2024

Title/Subject

Recognizing the dedicated staff in the Water Department for their role in supporting the public health, economy, and environment.

Summary and Background

The City of Hermiston's Water Department staff performs a critical function in protecting public health and the environment while providing a bedrock service which supports all aspects of our growing local and regional economy. For such an important service, we are proud of the fact that because of the hard work of our staff, most people never have to think twice about this system.

Our staff maintains two major systems which collectively produce approximately 2 Billion gallons of water per year. The systems utilize extensive pumping infrastructure to pull water from four main groundwater wells and a Columbia River intake station. The river water is additionally treated through a complex water treatment facility to bring it to the highest drinking water standards while well water is meticulously monitored to meet our stringent water quality standards.

Non-Potable water from the Regional Water System is a critical function to several significant industries in the region which use it to provide over 1,000 megawatts of electricity generation capacity, irrigate several thousand acres of high value farmland, and provide the backbone computing capacity that the modern internet relies on. Collectively, the users of water supplied by our staff through the Regional Water System represent over \$2 billion of assessed property value, or roughly one-third of all taxable value in Umatilla County.

Potable drinking water from the Regional Water System and City Wells provides an essential need for more than 20,000 residents and businesses in our community. This clean and healthy water supply is used 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in our homes, schools, businesses, medical facilities, and emergency responders. It's delivered immediately on-demand, without a second thought by users through a complex system of more than 90 miles of piping with thousands of valves to ensure it gets where it needs to go.

This operation is only accomplished through the hard work of our staff whether it's 118 degrees, or minus 18 degrees. Therefore, in anticipation of the American Water Works Association's Drinking Water Week, we want to recognize and thank:

- Chad Atkins, Utility Worker
- Sean Basford, Utility Worker
- Roy Bicknell, Water Superintendent
- Fernando Cervantes, Utility Worker
- Scott Dammeyer, Utility Worker
- David Estrada, Utility Worker
- Jorge Gonzalez, Utility Worker
- Jason Lohman, Utility Worker
- Alex McCann, Chief Operator

Tie-In to Council Goals

Focus Area- Wellness: a Healthy Community

Fiscal Information

N/a

Alternatives and Recommendation

Alternatives

Recommended Action/Motion

Submitted By:

Mark Morgan, Assistant City Manager