



Island County

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Drinking Water Summer 2025

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Drinking Water Summer 2025

Summer Water Conservation



The National Weather Service is [forecasting](#) warmer temperatures and less rain this summer. Rain supplies the water that becomes drinking water for Island County. Rainwater may infiltrate the soil to become groundwater and flow over the soil to enter a creek or river. Most Island County residents get their drinking water from groundwater. Residents of Oak Harbor get their drinking water from the Skagit River. Oak Harbor's [water supply signs](#) show when the river level drops, and water use is restricted. People tend to use more water in the summer when less water is available. Conserving water helps protect our drinking water supplies.

Tips for Summer Water Conservation:

- Only water plants when needed and follow any watering schedules and restrictions from your water provider.
- Use drought tolerant and native plants in landscaping.
- Water plants during the coolest part of the day to reduce evaporation.
- Ensure sprinklers are watering plants and not sidewalks and driveways.
- Switch from sprinklers to soaker hoses for gardens, trees, and shrubs.
- Use mulch around plants to retain water in the soil and reduce thirsty weeds.
- Set the lawn mower to a higher setting to shade roots and reduce evaporation.
- Allow the lawn to go dormant.
- Fix any leaks promptly. Common household leaks include outside spigots, worn toilet flappers, and dripping faucets.

Did you know?

More indoor water is flushed down the toilet than is used for showering or washing clothes. And a leaky toilet can waste an additional [200 gallons](#) of water every day. That waste is the equivalent of 77 extra flushes every day!



August is National Water Quality Month



As many of us drink more water in the summer, now is a great time to think about the quality of our drinking water. As water quality can change, it should be regularly tested. Contact your water provider or search [Sentry](#) for your water quality results. Although regular [water quality](#) testing is not required for Individual Water Systems and Two-Party Public Water Systems, it is strongly recommended. When water quality is unknown, there are several options for treating the water before drinking.

Water treatment while hiking, camping, and traveling

When visiting places with unknown water quality, treat water to make sure it's safe to drink. **Boiling water is the most reliable way to kill germs.** If you cannot boil your water, the next best option is to use a filter (especially if water is cloudy) and then use another treatment method. Follow instructions on the treatment product's label, including the contact time for disinfectants. This guide can help you decide which treatment method or combination of methods to use to make your water safe to drink.

TYPE OF GERM	BOIL (for 1 min., or 3 min. at elevations above 5,500 feet)	FILTER	PURIFIER	CHLORINE TREATMENT (disinfectant)	IODINE (disinfectant)	CHLORINE DIOXIDE (disinfectant)	COMBINING FILTER AND DISINFECTANT	UV LIGHT USED IN CLEAR WATER
BACTERIA (such as Campylobacter, Salmonella, Shigella, <i>E. coli</i>)	✓	✓ 0.3 micron or smaller filter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ 0.3 micron or smaller filter, plus disinfectant	✓
VIRUSES (such as norovirus, hepatitis A, enterovirus, rotavirus)	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PARASITE <i>Giardia</i>	✓	✓ Filter certified for "cyst" and "oocyst" reduction	✓	!	!	✓	✓ Filter certified for "cyst" and "oocyst" reduction, plus chlorine dioxide	✓
PARASITE <i>Cryptosporidium</i>	✓	✓ Filter certified for "cyst" and "oocyst" reduction	✓	✗	✗	!	✓ Filter certified for "cyst" and "oocyst" reduction, plus chlorine dioxide	✓

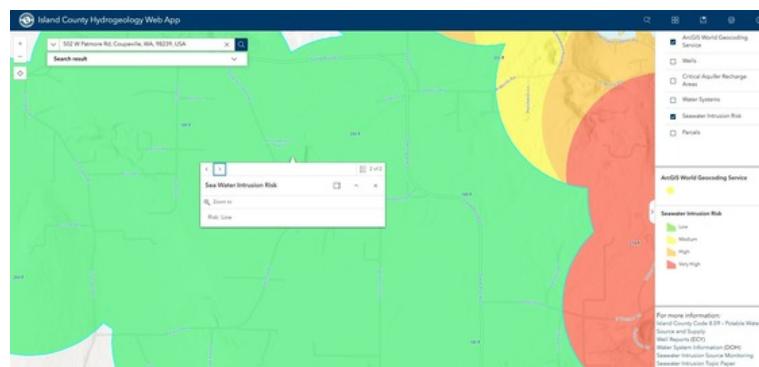
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of Water, Emergency, and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases
Learn more: www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/travel/backcountry_water_treatment.html

✓ **EFFECTIVE**—will remove or kill this type of germ
! **SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE**—may remove some germs of this type, but water could still be unsafe
✗ **NOT EFFECTIVE**—will not remove or kill this type of germ

Reminders for Public Water Systems

It's almost time to monitor for seawater intrusion

Monitoring to check if seawater is intruding into our freshwater aquifers at your water source(s) helps protect the drinking water in Island County. Water sources located in medium, high, and very high risk areas are required to be sampled for **chloride and conductivity** every year in April and **August**. Make sure to check the compliance box on the lab form so that your results will be submitted for seawater intrusion monitoring in Island County.



To verify the seawater intrusion risk rating associated with your Public Water System, check our [Hydrogeology Dashboard](#) or [Hydrogeology Map](#) (photo above).



Island County Public Health has a water level tape available to check out for FREE

Measuring water levels in wells is recommended as problems with the well or aquifer can be detected before serious issues arise and the record of water levels is needed to determine if your water rights have been impaired.

Thank you for your interest in Island County Drinking Water.
For more information, contact us at drinkingwater@islandcountywa.gov.

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