

# State honors “best of the best” for annual drinking water awards

## *Drinking water professionals honored throughout the state May 7-13*

**OLYMPIA** - The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is pleased to share 10 people from Washington state are being honored during the annual National Drinking Water Week for ensuring their communities have access to safe and clean drinking water. The [American Water Works Association](#) started Drinking Water Week more than 40 years ago to highlight the essential role drinking water plays in the daily health of our communities and economy. DOH has participated in these awards for 20 years.

One story from this year involves Town of Coupeville Public Works Director Joe Grogan who won the Grace Under Pressure award. Grogan started his career as Utility Supervisor in 2016, right as the Navy confirmed [PFAS](#) contamination in Coupeville’s newest, highest producing drinking water well. Grogan became an expert on PFAS contaminants, testing, state and federal regulations, treatment operations, and more. He acted as liaison between the Navy and the town, communicating complex information in a transparent and understandable way. Grogan was recently promoted to Public Works Director and continues to oversee major capital construction projects and the utility crew, all while keeping current with emerging state and federal PFAS regulations.

DOH recognizes these professionals for maintaining high-quality water systems, a critical part of public health and a vital economy.

The winners are:

- **Commitment to Excellence:** John Anderson, Water Treatment/Water Quality Superintendent, Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District, Sammamish; Kevin Cook, Treatment Plant Operator, Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District, Bellingham; Wyatt Long, Public Works Manager, City of Rock Island; Scott Dixon, General Manager, Dallesport Water District, Dallesport.
- **Above and Beyond:** Christopher Roblin, Evergreen Rural Water, Republic.
- **Grace Under Pressure:** Joe Grogan, Public Works Director, Town of Coupeville.
- **Lifetime Achievement:** Jon Lovie, Former Whidbey Island Water System Association President (retired), Freeland; Mark “Bubba” Scott, Water System Manager, PUD 1, Pend Oreille; Tim McMurrin, Water/Wastewater Managers, Klickitat PUD; Sue Kennedy, Senior Environmental Health Specialist, Lewis County.

Washington’s Drinking Water Week winners are from all over the state and work at organizations ranging from rural systems serving 15 households to large utilities serving hundreds of thousands. We recognize them in a variety of categories: innovative solutions; those who overcome difficult, recurring problems; and others who demonstrate a commitment to excellence, or who go above and beyond the normal range of duties. They were nominated by supervisors, peers, and staff from the DOH Office of Drinking Water.