

Notes from the Whidbey Island Water Systems Association Meeting

September 15, 2022 at the Coupeville Water Filtration Plant

PLWA Attendees: Bill Burnett, John Romanski (author)

(The author's comments are italicized)

A number of speakers presented on various topics dealing with the treatment of PFAS contaminated water. There was also a tour of the facility which had been recently upgraded to treat PFAS by the Navy. Here are the principal take aways:

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- Wells last ~ 50 years, but may require “rehab”.
 - *Not sure what rehab meant. At my previous residence, Annapolis, non productive wells had compressed air blown into them to loosen the sand formations at the bottom.*
- Saltwater incursion is a problem in their older wells which extend more than 70’ below sea level and are close to the shore. These wells are held in reserve.
 - *Ours is ~ 100 feet below sea level but is pretty far from the shore. It is probably similar to their “production” wells in current use.*
- For Fe & Mn removal they use a Pyroflex ATEC system. The media lasts about 20 years and also removes some arsenic.
 - This probably is similar chemistry to our current system & what we are likely to get in the future.
 - Presence of cleanout ports on media tanks was noted
- PFAS removal done by Granulated Activated Charcoal (GAC) in large tanks. Also removes some other contaminants. Media is replaced every 3 years. Media is a slurry which can be drained by valves at the bottom.
- Media disposal is an unsolved problem as it is probably toxic.
- Talked with Jeff Tasos of DHG, our rehab contractor. I will contact him in early October. He as not done anything yet.

PFAS Issues

- About 75% of the meeting was taken up with this topic. There were multiple presentations by the state DOE, DOH and the Navy cleanup project manager. These dealt with levels, testing, clean up methods, etc. Also the status & extent of the Navy cleanup efforts were detailed. The presentations are on the WIWSA web sight
- The major take away is that Group A systems will have to test for PFAS starting in 2023
 - *This will be a KING water task & will undoubtedly add to our very modest testing bill.*
 - *If we do have a PFAS problem, it will be very easy to point the finger across the fence to the Navy.*