

## Managing Our HIEA Water System

Safe and reliable drinking water doesn't happen by itself. Dedicated people committed to appropriate system planning, design, operation and management make it happen. In our case, this also involves maintaining a quality swimming pool for our members.

Many small system governing board members receive little or no compensation for their time and oversight. The members often don't fully understand their proper role and responsibility for providing safe and reliable drinking water when they take on these duties.

Many small system operators have responsibilities that extend beyond the water system. They often have limited time and resources to do the job that needs to be done.

People who govern or operate small community water systems have giant responsibilities.

- a. Safe drinking water is a 24/7 activity. Serious illness may result from a single unanticipated event in the system.
- b. Economic considerations. The value and pride of a community's homes are connected to the safety and reliability of the water system that serves them.
- c. High expectations. Water system customers have expectations as high as those they place on phone and electric power utilities.
- d. Serious legal obligations. There are serious legal and financial liabilities associated with owning and operating a public water system.

Small systems face tremendous financial pressures because they spread their costs across fewer customers. This means each regulation and new task imposes a disproportionately high cost to each customer. Working with budgets involves everyone and keeping members informed.

Nothing lasts forever. Eventually, you will need to replace every single part of your water system. The best managerial and technical planning tools will not help if the infrastructure is failing. And, this is where the Reserve Study really comes into play.

These guidelines are to help us continue with the task of providing quality water to our members. In doing so we must follow state laws which includes the reporting of SMSMP (Small Water System Management Program). This report is to be completed and submitted every 10 years.

WA DOH Small Water System Program Guide 2016  
HIEA Board of Trustees Guidelines 2022