

Building Sustainable Small Water Systems – Call for Participants

- Are you involved in the operation or management of a small water system within your community?
- Do you feel a bit overwhelmed at times and don't know where to begin to make improvements given the many challenges being faced?
- Do you desire a better understanding of the some key building blocks that can help your community water system become more resilient and sustainable for the long term?
- Would you like some free help and guidance towards getting on the right track, reducing your stress, and providing peace-of-mind that the right actions are being taken?

The BC Water & Waste Association (BCWWA) is launching a pilot project to build financial and management capacity among small water systems in BC to help safeguard public health and the environment. Through training, professional coaching and community engagement, the BCWWA will provide representatives from small water systems with the information and tools to advance the financial sustainability, operational resilience and safety of their systems.

Who should participate?

We are looking for representatives from up to 40 small water systems i.e. owners, managers, elected or appointed councilors and trustees for an improvement district, strata or water users group from across BC to participate in the *Building Sustainable Small Water Systems* pilot.

Are you part of a Water Users Community (WUC), water society, Mobile Home Park, strata, utility, or small Improvement District? Does your water system serve a population of up to 500 people? Is your system independent and not directly connected to a municipality or regional district and as a result, not eligible for government funding for upgrades or major repairs? If you answered “yes” to the above questions, you may be a great candidate to participate.

What is involved?

Building Sustainable Small Water Systems has three main components: a one-day workshop, a series of educational webinars, and one-on-one professional coaching from system experts.

A. Taking Care of Your Water System Workshop (1 day)

This locally-delivered workshop will introduce you to the challenges and responsibilities of your role, help you to assess potential risk areas within your system, and highlight additional tools and resources to help you identify and address these risks.

B. Webinar Series (2 modules)

To help you utilize the tools introduced in the workshop, the webinars will provide supplementary information on topics and you can customize your learning by selecting those modules that address your specific needs. The webinars will be available on demand, free of charge, and through an online portal.

Module 1: Financial Best Management Practices (BMP)

- a. Introduction, Value, Best Practices;
- b. Create a basic asset inventory;
- c. Create an assessment management plan;
- d. Create a 5-year operating plan;
- e. Create a long-term financial plan;

- f. Establish sustainable water rate structure;
- g. Create communication plans.

Module 2: Small Water System Regulations and Guidelines in BC

- a. Legislation in BC
- b. Self-assess your compliance;
- c. Permits – Which ministry or government department to go to for which approval .e. water permits, licenses, securing easements and rights of way;
- d. Source Protection and Planning.

C. One-on-One Coaching Support

Up to eight hours of coaching from consultants with expertise in small water systems will be provided to select participants. Participants may choose individual coaching to address their specific system needs or, depending on regional proximity, pool their coaching hours with others in the group who are experiencing similar issues.

What are the benefits of participating?

You will receive information and tools to effectively plan for financial sustainability, operational resilience and system safety. Participating in the project will also provide the opportunity to connect and network with other small water system owners and operators in the region. As a group, there will be access to peer support and the opportunity to learn collectively from the challenges, issues and progress faced by others.



What commitment is required?

There is no cost to participate in the pilot project. Participants selected will be asked to commit to completing the workshop, webinars, coaching and a system self-assessment as well as creating plans and taking action to improve the sustainability of their water system.

How do I get involved?

For more information on the Building Sustainable Small Water Systems project and to determine if you are a candidate to participate, please contact:

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The BC Water & Waste Association (BCWWA) is a not-for-profit professional association representing the people responsible for ensuring safe, sustainable, and secure water and wastewater systems in British Columbia. The Association's 4,600 members include water system operators, utility managers, engineers, consultants, government policy and enforcement staff, and suppliers.

The BCWWA is not a government agency and all system information shared during the course of the pilot will be kept confidential.