

Issue No. 2 WINTER 2009/10



Originally built in 1946 and jointly owned by Longview and the Cowlitz PUD, the existing drinking water treatment plant on the Cowlitz River needs to be upgraded or replaced to continue meeting the needs of our community. Many of the plant facilities need to be replaced due to age, and increasing amounts of sediment in the Cowlitz River from the Mt. St. Helens eruption threaten the reliability of our water supply. These newsletters will keep you up-to-date on our progress.

Questions?

If you have concerns or questions regarding this project, or would like additional information, please contact Amy Blain, Project Manager, 360.442.5206, or visit our website at www.mylongview.com.

This information provided by:



Groundwater Supply Testing Concludes

In our fall newsletter, we shared with you some of what we are doing to evaluate obtaining our drinking water from a deep groundwater aquifer beneath the Mint Farm Industrial Park. Continuing with that evaluation, this fall we constructed and pumped a test production well continuously at a rate of 5.5 million gallons per day for 36 days. While it is typical to test pump a well for only a few days, we pumped for an extended period of time to capture any changes in groundwater quality caused by pumping and confirm the viability of the aquifer as our municipal water supply. Using our network of 17 monitoring wells in and around the Mint Farm, along with sampling from other water sources, we collected and analyzed water quality and flow data.

The comprehensive evaluation is nearly complete and we're confident from the extensive testing and analysis that there is an abundant supply of high quality groundwater which will ensure a safe and sustainable water supply for years to come. The final evaluation will be complete in February 2010, but meanwhile, we'll begin to answer your big questions:

- Will the groundwater last?
- Where does the water come from?
- Is the groundwater safe and will it remain safe?

Please continue reading for more information and dates when you can meet our technical experts and discuss your concerns and questions with them.



Will the groundwater last?

Our testing indicates there is an abundant supply of water available from the aquifer and there is no concern that it will be depleted when we begin pumping 10 to 20 million gallons per day (MGD) from the aquifer. Our test pumping showed very little effect on the aquifer, and that it recharged continuously during our pumping.

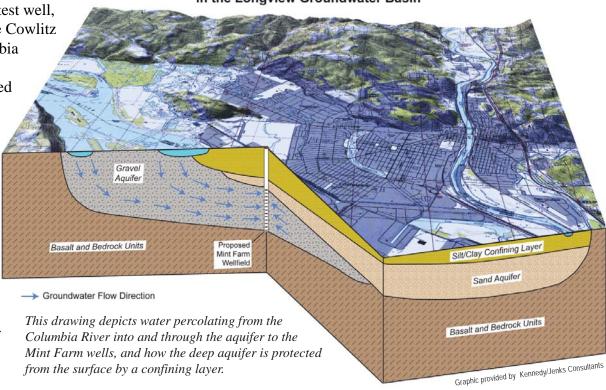
Where does the water come from?

Before, during and after the pump test, water samples were collected from the production test well, monitoring wells, the Cowlitz River and the Columbia River. These water samples were analyzed to compare aquifer water to water from various potential recharge sources. Using water chemistry indicators, our analysis shows the aquifer is recharged by water percolating from the bottom of the Columbia River through thousands of feet of sand and gravel layers.

Is the groundwater safe and will it remain safe?

Soil samples collected while drilling the monitoring and test wells confirm the confining layer beneath the industrial areas is very resistant to water seepage, which protects the deep aquifer from potential contamination at the surface. In addition, the deep aquifer is under pressure, which prevents potential shallow contamination from migrating into the deep aquifer. More than 11,000 soil and water quality tests have been performed to identify potential contaminants in the groundwater, and arsenic (a naturally occurring mineral also found in our rivers) is the only contaminant found at a level of concern. Drinking water regulations do not require that we treat for arsenic at the levels detected, only that we advise our customers that it's in the water. However, we plan to treat for arsenic, along with iron and manganese, to ensure we provide high quality drinking water to our community.

Groundwater Flow Paths to the Mint Farm Wellfield in the Longview Groundwater Basin



Opportunities for Discussion and Input

If you would like to learn more and discuss your concerns and questions with our technical experts and City staff, you are invited to participate at the following events:

Water Supply Open House January 7 from noon to 8 p.m. Cowlitz PUD Auditorium, 961 12th Avenue

Joint City Council/Cowlitz PUD/Beacon Hill Sewer District Workshop January 21 at 7 p.m. Cowlitz PUD Auditorium, 961 12th Avenue

Key Community Council Council Milestones Presentations Presentation Decision **Public January 7 January 21 January 28** Participation Open House Council/PUD/ **Council Meeting** Opportunities **BHSD** Workshop