



**Joint Meeting of SPU Water System Advisory Committee (WSAC)  
and Creeks, Drainage and Wastewater Advisory Committee (CDWAC)**

November 13, 2019 Meeting Notes  
Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

*WSAC Chair: Rodney Schauf  
WSAC Vice-Chair: Joel Carsley*

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff	Role
Joel Carsley	Y	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Steven Cole	N	Celia Kennedy	Drinking Water LOB Liaison
Rodney Schauf	Y	Alex Chen	Planning and Program Management Division Director
Kat Dej-Panah	Y	Ned Worcester	SPU Risk & Quality Assurance Division Director (Interim)
Wendy Walker	Y	Melanie Cole	Office of Emergency Management, Outreach and Training Specialist
Annie Saunders	Y	Andrew Lee	Deputy Director, Drainage and Wastewater LOB
Christina Heinlen	Y	Ingrid Goodwin	Strategic Communications Advisor
Angella Mickowski	Y	Sue Ellingson	Sr. Executive Assistant, Water LOB & Shared Services (Acting)
Imani Martinez	Y	<b>Guests</b>	
Colum Lang	Y	Dane Madsen	
Gary Olson	Y	Amal Saleh	
Maria McDaniel	Y	Kit Gardner	
Thy Pham	Y	Robert Smith	
Andrew Schiffer	Y	Akemi Smith	
Weng-Ching Cheung	Y		
Jason Devaney	Y		
Isabel Carrera Zamanillo	Y		

**1. Regular Business**

- WSAC Chair, Rodney Schauf called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM
- Members helped indicate emergency exits and exit procedures.
- Meeting notes from October will be sent out electronically for review and approval.
- Last call for written nominations for WSAC Officers.

**2. SPU Customer Review Panel update**

Rodney Schauf provided an update on the most recent Customer Review Panel (CRP) meeting and shared the PowerPoint presentation “The Voice of the Customer,” focusing on SBP outreach. More information to come in December.

- **A member** commented that they were concerned that not enough attention is paid to the importance and condition of the creeks in Seattle and the water quality of the creeks.

### 3. SPU Emergency Response for Drinking Water

**Ned Worcester**, SPU Risk & Quality Assurance Division Director (Interim)

- Ned provided an overview and introduction of SPU Emergency Management. Ned then provided a detailed PowerPoint overview of the emergency management program, with information on planning goals, reviewed the emergency management cycle, program leadership and employee roles in an emergency. He then provided an explanation and review of the Incident Command System (ICS). He finished the presentation with an overview of the response to Water Supply emergencies. Additional information was presented about how the traditional messaging of having enough emergency supplies for three days may not be enough. Having enough food and water for at least two weeks is what emergency response agencies around the country are now recommending.
- **A member** asked if urban wildfires are a threat. Alex Chen mentioned that in the downtown core, natural gas can pose a fire risk. Ned added that there is still a lot of wood construction in downtown. Ned noted that for most City buildings that have gas valves they have seismic protection.
- **A member** asked what who is a “critical customer.” Staff answered that they are hospitals, shelters, government buildings, and sites which are essential for emergency response.
- **A member** asked how communities get emergency water. Ned answered that we can establish six portable distribution systems, which may be connected at reservoirs or water tanks which all have water in them. They will be used to dispense water into gallon bags for public consumption. The bottled water distribution system is in coordination with FEMA, which includes food and shelter. However, this can take time.
- **A member** asked where the gallon water bags for emergency use are stored. Ned answered that they are at the South Transfer Station where there are vehicles equipped to transport them with the portable distribution systems. We are looking at how to distribute supplies throughout the city in more locations.
- **A member** asked about the progress of bridge restoration after the Nisqually quake, and if it was complete. Ned answered that bridge retrofitting is an SDOT project. Progress and schedules are available from SDOT. [<https://www.seattle.gov/transportation/about-sdot/funding/levy-to-move-seattle>]
- **A member** asked what the primary emergency response area was for SPU. Ned answered that the primary distribution area is the City of Seattle but noted that we do coordinate with our wholesale water customers outside Seattle. We also partner with Seattle Office of Emergency Management as we have a vested interest with fixing broken infrastructure after an emergency so the services will be restored.
- **A member** asked staff if practice drills are important. Staff answered yes and noted that we have quite a robust training program ranging from smaller focused exercises to large scale regional exercises to practice and build skills.
- **A member** asked what were the vulnerabilities that appeared in the Cascadia Rising Exercise. Staff answered that they could share the after-action plan.

- **A member** asked how we learn from other cities and how we interface with them? Staff answered that we do regular training and planning with other cities, as well as other water utilities. We work with other water suppliers to bring trainings to SPU (e.g., TEEKS – Texas A&M Program). We also have mutual aid trainings and agreements. Statewide groups come together to share best practices. We do periodic training through the American Water Works Association.
- **A member** asked if Seattle Department of Transportation had a similar emergency preparedness group and whether we work with them. Ned answered yes.
- **A member** asked about climate driven emergencies, such as fire in the watershed. Ned answered that SPU has had a fire response program in the Cedar Watershed since the early 1900s. We have a fully credentialed wildland fire crew, and have three engines and a tender, and do mutual trainings with Seattle Fire. The Habitat Conservation Management Plan also speaks to the risk of wildfires and mitigation measures. Alex Chen mentioned how we are trying to look forward, given hotter and drier summers, and how this planning will work in the watershed in the future.
- **A member** asked how our emergency plans are addressing population growth in Seattle. The rate of population change is predicted 5-10 years out for emergency planning, and we do factor it into citywide planning.
- **A member** asked if we plan for specific emergencies, and what they are. Ned answered yes. The City, county and state do hazard identification vulnerability analyses. They look at what could happen, including likelihood and severity. Then group the risks into low to high likelihood and low to high impact. For example – we don't plan for typhoons, but we do plan for high winds. We also do general or all hazard planning. It doesn't matter necessarily what happens, what matters is the impact (e.g., the customer has no water). The member asked a follow up question about if there was a list of what is planned for. Staff answered yes and that it is located at [www.seattle.gov/emergency](http://www.seattle.gov/emergency)
- **A member** asked a question about how some places that have had emergencies have had to wait for, or request funding and how that works in Seattle. Staff answered that SPU has an emergency fund and substantial reserves. City Budget Office is looking at the emergency funds for the city to determine if they are sufficient. If there is an emergency, we activate the Incident Command System, which puts in place a structure to allow us to respond to a disaster. This gives the Incident Commander budget authority to spend as necessary in an emergency.
- **A member** asked about how the City's declaration of the state of emergency on homelessness works in comparison to a declaration of emergency for a natural disaster. Staff answered that when the state of emergency on homelessness was declared, we used the Emergency Operational Center and almost every City department devoted some resources to this emergency.

#### 4. BREAK

## 5. City Wide Emergency Response: Focus on Drinking Water

**Melanie Cole**, Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Outreach and Training Specialist

Melanie provided an overview of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and discussed how an emergency is staffed. She reviewed Citywide response priorities, and what happens when an emergency happens (i.e., how police, fire, and emergency response works). She then reviewed what SPU does in case of an emergency and discussed messaging and outreach from OEM. They encourage neighborhood preparedness. OEM can come teach small groups how to prepare as part of their outreach. Contact the office or visit the website at [seattle.gov/emergency](http://seattle.gov/emergency).

- **A member** asked how communications work during an emergency, including if texts will work. Staff answered yes and noted it could take days for some texts to get through, but that it still the best way to communicate in an emergency. Cell systems can become overloaded. Have a home communications plan.
- **A member** asked if OEM uses HAM radio operators. There is a program in the City, called Community Emergency Hubs which are pre-designated locations, and some have with HAM operators. They are called HUBCAPS and locations are available on the OEM website.
- **A member** asked why water has an expiration date. Staff answered that the reason behind it is more to do with the storage container than the water itself and that taste could be affected.
- **A member** asked if they could order the aseptic bags. Staff answered that they are not particularly good for long-term storage. They are mostly used for transport. There are other sources for water. For example, in a single-family home you can use a water heater as a water supply source. You can also add bleach (read document on the WSAC web page on how to use bleach properly), boil or use factory sealed water to ensure the water you store is safe to drink.
- **A member** asked a question about a water purification method called Life Straws, and how effective they were. Staff answered that they are safe to use as a filter for certain water sources but cannot remove chemical contaminants.

## 6. CAC Update

**Sheryl Shapiro**, CAC Program Manager

Sheryl announced her retirement in February 2020. Kathleen Baca, SPU Community Affairs Director, will be sending an email on the CAC program assessment tomorrow or the next day.

Andrew Lee, Deputy Director of Drainage and Wastewater, acknowledged Sheryl's contributions on behalf of the SPU Executive Team. He conveyed huge thanks for all her work in helping SPU engage on behalf of the community.

Copies of the book [Seattle at 150](#) were given to WSAC and CDWAC members from SPU and the General Manager/CEO Mami Hara.

## **7. Around the Table & Community Insights**

- Puget Sound Partnership releases their Puget Sound Water Quality Report today.
- The Duwamish-South Park Youth Corps will have an environmental justice event at the South Park community Center on Nov. 16, 10-12 including free trees.
- In an effort to increase awareness during the holiday season, there will be outreach in different neighborhoods about FOG (fats, oil and grease). FOG negatively impact residential pipes and the City wastewater infrastructure. Thanks to members who volunteered to assist staff in Lake City and Rainier Valley and also to participate in a media event.
- Pike Place Market Foundation, which supports social services in the market neighborhood voted to end the market front expansion holiday charms sale. This has been a major fundraiser.
- On November 21st, William Ackerman, acoustic guitarist will give a concert in conjunction with presentation of photos of Lake Washington at Benaroya Hall. Many of the photos were highlighted in the Pacific Magazine of the Seattle Times.
- It was mentioned that if people have the Garmin in-reach device, this can be used as an option for text messaging in an emergency.
- The WA Dept. of Ecology's Stormwater Permit should be released soon.

**Adjourned at 7:35 p.m.**