Media Release

Portland Water Bureau

For Immediate Release

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For more information, contact Public Information at 503-823-8064.

**Portland Water Bureau Resumes Normal Operations As Chlorine Shortage Resolves**

After a shortage threatened reliable shipments of chlorine to the West Coast and other parts of the country, the Portland Water Bureau has resumed normal operations.

Two main factors triggered the resolution to the shortage. Westlake, the chlorine production facility in Longview, Wash., successfully repaired its transformer on June 23 and has ramped up operations to deliver chlorine to its customers, which includes the Portland Water Bureau. Also, Portland has received several chlorine deliveries and does not anticipate interruption to upcoming deliveries.

“This chlorine shortage demonstrated how smart investments, strong partnerships and emergency planning came through,” said Portland Water Bureau Director Gabriel Solmer. “A million people depend on us to provide safe and reliable drinking water. We take this responsibility seriously and we deliver, every minute of every day.”

**Please note that water providers throughout the region have different chlorine supply situations. Please check with your water provider about your local situation if you live outside our service area.** [**Find your water service provider.**](https://www.regionalh2o.org/our-regions-water/drinking-water-advisory-tool)

**What’s Happening Now**

Throughout the regional chlorine shortage, Portland Water Bureau was able to provide uninterrupted water to Portlanders and partner water providers. Portland had adequate chlorine on site and made operational adjustments to ensure there was no interruption in the delivery of safe drinking water to our customers. Portland did not activate groundwater to extend the supply of Bull Run chlorine during this shortage but was prepared to do so if needed.

**How we adjusted**

The Portland Water Bureau made operational shifts and identified additional steps that could be taken to extend our chlorine supply. Groundwater has its own supply of chlorine that can augment the Bull Run, if needed. We proactively lowered our chlorine target to 1.8 mg/L, which continued treating water at a safe level and met treatment requirements. We are now targeting 2.5 mg/L, which is typical for this time of year.

We stayed in close contact with our partners at Portland Parks & Recreation to also identify activities that prioritize water for people. No changes were needed and Portland Water Bureau and Portland Parks kept water flowing to Benson Bubblers, splashpads and fountains.

**How we prepare for the unexpected**

Because of wise planning and investment, Portland is prepared for a variety of situations affecting clean and safe drinking water. Two high-quality water sources, the Columbia South Shore Well Field and the Bull Run Watershed, give us operational flexibility. Partnerships with other regional water providers further strengthen our ability to be ready for the unexpected. We have a [Seasonal Supply Plan](https://www.portland.gov/water/about-portlands-water-system/seasonal-supply-planning) that we update each year to be ready for what comes our way.

**What’s next**

As we head into summer, our reservoirs have begun their annual drawdown, when more water is being used in town than is coming into Bull Run watershed. This is a normal occurrence and there is no need to reduce your household water use. While we always encourage wise water use, we anticipate having enough water to meet everyone’s needs this summer. If needed, we can supplement our Bull Run water supply with groundwater from the Columbia South Shore Well Field.

**What can you do?**

Portlanders have a strong ethic of using water wisely. Keep doing what you’re doing and the Portland Water Bureau will keep you informed of changes.

* Before an emergency, get ready by storing water. Learn more at regionalh2o.org/emergency-preparedness.
* Sign up for Public Alerts at [PublicAlerts.org](file:///%5C%5Cwbfile1%5Cgroup%24%5CAdmin%5CCommunications_Group%5CPIO%5CPress%20Releases%5CPress%20Releases%5CPublicAlerts.org) for updates on a variety of events affecting our community.
* Bookmark the Drinking Water Advisory Tool at [regionalh2o.org/our-regions-water/drinking-water-advisory-tool](http://regionalh2o.org/our-regions-water/drinking-water-advisory-tool) so you’re always ready to learn about emergency drinking water notices in effect.
* Follow Portland Water Bureau on the following channels: [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/PortlandWaterBureau/) | [Twitter](https://twitter.com/portlandwater) | [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/portlandwaterbureau/) | [Water Blog](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/39678) | [PublicAlerts.org](http://publicalerts.org/) | [Email Newsletter](http://bit.ly/2DYKePO)

### About the Portland Water Bureau

The Portland Water Bureau serves water to almost a million people in the Portland area. Portland’s water system includes two high quality water sources, 53 tanks and reservoirs, and 2,200 miles of pipes. With 600 employees working on everything from water treatment to customer service, the Water Bureau is committed to serving excellent water every minute of every day.