Media Release

Portland Water Bureau

For Immediate Release

Aug. 2, 2022

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

**Groundwater: Here When We Need It**

**Portland Water Bureau to Begin Annual Groundwater Maintenance Run**

Starting today, Aug. 2, the Portland Water Bureau will begin blending a portion of water from its Columbia South Shore Well Field with water from the Bull Run Watershed as an annual maintenance operation. The purpose of a maintenance run is to ensure that the groundwater system is in good working order and here when we need it. Our groundwater supply is instrumental in meeting the public’s drinking water needs should we have a long, dry summer, or any unplanned emergency events that impact the Bull Run such as wildfire or a landslide.

This maintenance run is a part of our annual supply planning. Each year, we develop a [Seasonal Water Supply Plan](https://www.portland.gov/water/about-portlands-water-system/seasonal-supply-planning) for Portland's water system. This plan evaluates the availability of water from the [Bull Run Watershed](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/29784) and our [groundwater source](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/29785), projected weather forecasts, and water demands. Between careful management and the region's strong conservation efforts, we are prepared to meet the range of potential water supply and demand conditions that could occur in Portland this season.

During the groundwater maintenance run, the Portland Water Bureau will operate the well field for approximately 10 hours a day, Monday through Friday, for approximately 25 days. The Portland Water Bureau anticipates returning to 100 percent Bull Run water upon completion. It can take up to two weeks, depending on location, for the blended water to make its way through the distribution system to all homes and businesses.

“Thanks to careful planning and investment, Portland has access to two excellent water sources, the Bull Run and groundwater. ” said Portland Water Bureau Director Gabriel Solmer. “Ensuring groundwater is prepared gives us confidence that we will have enough water for everyone in Portland through this dry season ahead.”

The Columbia South Shore Well Field is a high-quality water supply that meets or surpasses all federal and state drinking water regulations.

The city’s groundwater supply is a complex system of groundwater wells, pumps, treatment systems, electronic controls, and other equipment that must be operated regularly to identify maintenance needs. By doing maintenance activations routinely, the bureau ensures the reliability of the system when needed, either in an emergency or to meet seasonal supply needs.

The Portland Water Bureau informs the media and sensitive water users, as a practice, when it activates groundwater and when it has significant operational changes. We will issue a notification when we return to 100 percent Bull Run water. Sensitive water users can sign up to be directly notified by the Portland Water Bureau at [portlandoregon.gov/water/notification](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/78873).

Customers with questions should call the Water Line at 503-823-7525. For information on Water Bureau operations and summer supply updates visit [portland.gov/water](https://www.portland.gov/water/news/2021/7/6/portland-water-bureau-resumes-normal-operations-chlorine-shortage-resolves).

### 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 great 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.