



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
NORTHWEST DRINKING WATER REGIONAL OPERATIONS
PO Box 47800, MS 47822, Olympia, WA 98504-7800

March 10, 2025

STACIA GREEN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
GLACIER SPRINGS WATER SYSTEM
info@glaciersprings.org

Subject: Glacier Springs Water System (ID #27755)
Whatcom County
Routine Sanitary Survey

Dear Stacia Green,

This letter is to follow up to my routine sanitary survey of the Glacier Springs Water System on 3/7/25. I appreciate Operator John Mercer, Jim Klessig, and your time to meet with me and show me around the water system. We covered the eight elements of a survey, with a focus on changes since the last survey.

The sanitary survey program's goals are to provide a line of communication between the Dept. of Health and water systems, and to work with operators and their governing organizations to strive for excellent water system reliability and safety. This includes assessing technical, managerial, and financial capacity, as well as identifying immediate health and system operations risks.

First, I would like to acknowledge Glacier Springs' response to the E. coli results since February 2023 and the improvements since the last survey. While there is still a ways to go, there has been a lot of technical learning about the water system design, strong leadership, and significant progress. The source is in much better condition than it has been for years, there's a new distribution meter, and I understand that your membership voted unanimously in favor of the CT6 chlorination design project. This progress took significant trust and excellent communication from your Board. In addition, I understand that the volunteer board at Glacier Springs has met frequently, identified the best available engineers and contractors to meet the community's expectations, and made extremely difficult decisions with success. Keep it up!

While the system is meeting the needs of the community, we did discuss some areas that have room for improvement. These findings may have been part of the original approved design and may have been in place for many years without DOH requiring changes.

I have enclosed a copy of my sanitary survey notes. Please review them for accuracy. These notes, along with this letter, reflect my understanding of your water system and highlight the key issues and specific recommendations that we discussed during my visit.

Action Items:

In the next 30 days, please write an email responding to all the following action items including observations and recommendations with photos of your complete solution, your schedule for making improvements, or your proposed alternative to address the issue. I would like to hear about your plans. Send responses and photos to me at laura.mclaughlin@doh.wa.gov.

The bold text describes items that need to be addressed.

Significant Deficiencies: *Potential significant public health risks. My office enforces the correction of these items.*

None observed.

Significant findings: *Defects in your facilities or operations that need immediate attention. My office enforces the correction of these items.*

None observed.

Observations and Recommendations: *to notify you of other drinking water rule violations or improve your technical, managerial, or financial capacity. I would appreciate hearing about your progress on these items and may ask about them at your next survey.*

1. During the survey, the board asked if it was possible to lift the boil water advisory due to the recent four months of favorable coliform samples. While the recent favorable results are good news, they do not provide a multi-barrier approach to safe and reliable water. The sample results represent a small water volume, compared to the water volume that Glacier Springs serves to customers. These samples are one of many indications (historical results, source construction, etc.) used to determine if water is safe. Coliform sampling is typically part of a multi-barrier approach that includes a source that aligns with the Dept. of Ecology's construction standards, a sealed water and distribution system that aligns with current standards, and treatment. Glacier Springs' water system does not meet this multi-barrier approach and wouldn't be approved under today's standards. Due to the water system's history over the past 15+ years and recent contamination, the only way to lift the advisory is to install CT6 chlorination treatment. I understand the Association is making progress on this design. I look forward to reviewing it.
2. We toured the recent source improvements during the survey. They appear to be complete. Great! Please **have your engineer sign off on the construction and send me a stamped Construction Completion Report for this project, along with As-Built drawings if there were any changes during construction.** This indicates that the project is complete in DOH's records.
3. I understand that Glacier Springs is working on their Small Water System Management Program, with plans to be eligible for the Oct. 1st - November 30th construction loan cycle. April is a good submission date target to have an approval for the construction cycle. This is a good opportunity to **have your operator review your cross-connection control plan and update anything that the Association plans to ask of customers.**
4. PFAS sampling is under way. Systems that have higher levels of PFAS compounds will be required to treat and notify their customers. **Visit our website for general information on PFAS:** <https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/contaminants/pfas>. **Check out your WQMS for your schedule.**
5. If you have questions about the Nooksack Adjudication, contact the Dept. of Ecology Adjudication team at 360-255-4406: WRadjudications@ecy.wa.gov.

The Drinking Water Regulations require that all Group A public water systems have a sanitary survey every 3-5 years. Regulations establishing a schedule of fees for sanitary surveys have been adopted (WAC 246-290-990). To receive credit for the survey, a sanitary survey fee must be paid. The total cost is **\$408.00**. An itemized invoice for this survey has been sent to the DOH primary contact on file for your water system. Please remit the complete payment within thirty days of the date of this letter. See DOH

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Pub 331-688 (<https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/331-688.pdf>) for electronic payment instructions.

Please note that satisfying the conditions of this sanitary survey does not necessarily mean that your water system is fully compliant with other applicable requirements that may be found under other federal, state, or local statutes, ordinances, or regulations. These and other departmental requirements should be addressed separately from the sanitary survey process.

Please give me a call at (564) 669-0753 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura McLaughlin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Laura McLaughlin, PE
Regional Engineer
NW Drinking Water Operations

cc: John Mercer, WSSI, john@watersystems-services.net
Jim Klessig – Board member, info@clearsolutions-septic.com
Patrick Hull – Whatcom County Health Department phull@co.whatcom.wa.us
Hayli Hruza – Whatcom County Health Department hhruza@co.whatcom.wa.us
Bethany Brunny, DOH – Sanitary Survey Program Manager

Enclosures:

- Invoice (only copy sent to: John Mercer, DOH Primary Contact, per ODW DOH policy)