



PHOTO CREDIT: JASON OTTO

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Monthly Update:

In June, the CWA field crew finished installing the remaining of the nearly 300 failed endpoints that occurred at the end of April. With that lengthy project finally completed, or mostly completed, we are now fully set up to read meters more effeciently.

We do have one outstanding old, failed endpoint and register that we need to get replaced, however the property owner has refused us access to the property. We hope to come to an understanding with the property owner soon so we can get those parts replaced.

Near the end of June, we did a little sprucing of the structures belonging to CWA. We had the roofs and gutters cleaned at each of our locations. Based on the gunk that was coming out of the gutters, we're wondering if we ever had them cleaned since the original gutter install. Because of the dry weather, it was very easy to blow and remove all the dirt, leaves, and trees - yes, trees- growing in the gutters. Let this be a reminder for you to look at the status of your

gutters before the rain and poor weather returns to Western Washington.

Our goals for July is to finish installing the outstanding DCVA (Double Check Valve Assembly/Backflow device) that have been previously paid for by members opting into the program. Another goal is to solidify when the backflow company will be able to carry out the test for the devices installed within our water system. For more information about the Cross Connection Control (CCC/DCVA/ Backflow device) program, click [here](#). Lastly, we have surveyors for the CIP- Pipe Replacement starting to go around the neighborhoods that will be immediately affected. For more about the CIP project, click [here](#).

-CWA Staff



Meet James

Being a field tech for a water company is no easy job. It takes real physical strength, grit, and a willingness to tackle the “grunt work” that keeps a system running. Our field crew spends their days digging, shoveling gravel, mowing, installing and replacing parts in meter boxes, taking water samples, and much more — often in the hottest sun or the coldest winds.

Sage was one of the hardest-working field techs we’ve ever had, and we were grateful for the dedication she brought to the job. Ultimately, she decided the role wasn’t the right long-term fit for her. While the Board and staff were sad to see her go, we fully understand how demanding this work can be. Her departure left us searching for

someone who could step into the very large shoes she left behind — and thankfully, James answered the call.

James has jumped in with enthusiasm, learning the ins and outs of our water system and proving himself to be a quick study. He did excellent work during the recent endpoint and register installations and played a key role in the DCVA (Backflow Device) installation in late June.

Be sure to say hello when you see him out in the field. James brings a great sense of humor to the job and genuinely cares about making sure every member of the Association is well taken care of.

We’re Going Digital

CWA is transitioning to a more efficient, digital-first communication system. Moving forward, we’ll send important alerts and updates directly to the email addresses we have on file, and we’ll continue posting real-time information on our website. Paper letters and door hangers will be reserved for specific emergencies or special circumstances.

We know not all members are technologically savvy, and we want to acknowledge that upfront. Even so, digital communication is the fastest, most reliable, and most cost-effective way to reach the majority of our membership. This shift saves the Association, and therefore our members, thousands of dollars each year.



Those savings go directly into essential Capital Improvement Projects, including upcoming pipe replacement work that strengthens the reliability of our water system.

Email alerts will come from **noreply@utilitybillingsystem.us**. Please add this address to your contacts to prevent messages from landing in your junk folder. And remember to check the CWA website regularly — we’ll post updates there that may be helpful or interesting even when they don’t require an email notification.

Make sure we have the best contact info for your property! Thank you for supporting this move toward faster, more efficient communication that helps us better serve the entire community.

CWA Reminders



Become a Board Member

JULY BOARD MEETING CANCELED!!!

The Board typically meets at 9:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the CWA office. Curious how decisions get made or whether board service might be a good fit? Sit in on a meeting — it's the best way to see the work firsthand.

Serving on CWA's nonprofit board is a meaningful way to support your community. Trustees help guide long-term planning, ensure financial responsibility, uphold our mission of safe, reliable water, and keep member voices at the center of major decisions. It's a collaborative environment where diverse perspectives truly matter.

Have questions or want to learn more? Contact the CWA office at (360) 387-9136 or info@camanowater.com. We're always glad to help community members get involved.

Meter Access

As we get closer to our annual testing for the Cross Connection Control (CCC/ Backflow) devices installed within our system, it is a good reminder that CWA legally can go on your property to check or do any routine maintenance on the meter or meter box.

WAC 480-110-305 (Washington Administrative Code) states, "Authorized personnel of a water company have the right to enter a customer's property during reasonable hours to perform meter reading, maintenance, testing, installation or removal of the company's property. Customers may ask to see the identification of the water company personnel before allowing entry to the customer's property." WAC 480-110-355 states that we can discontinue service if tampering with our system has occurred. Tampering can be classified if physical damage or changes have been done or preventing us from doing routine maintenance.

By not allowing us on the property to do our work, you could be in violation based on WACs and our Bylaws and potentially face legal repercussions.



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A Few Notes To Remember

- Email is the best way to communicate with us! Phone calls are great too but for quick responses, email is the way to go.
- If you ever are wondering if we received your payment, you can verify on your **Customer Portal**.
- Our website, www.camanowater.com has lots of updates and information. It is recommended to check it often!
- Remember we are made up of mostly your neighbors, so please be kind!



Building Trust Between CWA and Their Customers

Water utilities occupy a unique place in the marketplace: they are monopolies most people rarely think about. Once someone chooses where to live, their water provider is essentially predetermined. There's no comparison shopping, brand research, or price matching. Because of this, utilities have traditionally operated quietly, focusing on performance rather than public perception.

That approach has had consequences. The International Bottled Water Association reports that U.S. bottled water consumption rose from 10 billion gallons in 2012 to more than 16 billion gallons in 2024, including a 2.4% increase from 2023 to 2024. Consumers continue buying bottled water even though it is far more expensive, less regulated, and linked to negative environmental impacts.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that tap water costs an average of \$6.64 per 1,000 gallons—less than one cent per gallon. For the same \$4 someone might spend on a case of bottled water, they could receive 600 gallons of treated drinking water delivered directly to their home.

Regulation also differs significantly. Tap water must meet extensive testing requirements developed by the EPA, while bottled water is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a packaged food product. FDA standards are less comprehensive, and bottled water producers typically test less frequently and for fewer contaminants. EPA oversight of public water systems is generally more extensive, transparent, and tightly enforced than FDA oversight of bottled water.

Tap water in the U.S. requires testing for 94 contaminants, including pathogens, complex organic molecules, and heavy metals. The EPA also sets 15 secondary maximum contaminant levels to help utilities maintain water that is aesthetically and cosmetically pleasing. Specifically, CWA is held to these high standards. According to the International Bottled Water Association, the FDA sets allowable limits for 75 substances in bottled water, aligned with EPA limits for public drinking water systems.

Although bottled water is essential during emergencies or temporary water-quality events, trust plays a major role in ongoing bottled-water use.

BUILDING TRUST BETWEEN CWA AND THEIR CUSTOMERS CONT'D

High-profile water incidents, amplified by media coverage, leave some consumers doubtful of the safety of all municipal systems. Combined with marketing that portrays bottled water as cleaner or more desirable, perception often drives people toward bottled products.

Historically, utilities have worked diligently but invisibly, providing safe, reliable water with limited public engagement. Most communication has been transactional—billing, maintenance, repairs—meaning customers often hear from their utility only when something is wrong.

CWA will have their annual reports near the end of July/Early August on the website for your convenience. While we do have hard water, a “charm” of living on Camano Island, we are please to say that the hard water level is not a health factor that restricts consuming it; it is merely an aesthetic issue when it comes to hard water stains or buildup.

Building trust in tap water is a core responsibility for every utility, achieved through strong service and transparent communication. This is why Camano Water Association is investing heavily in improving our website, expanding information about our system and others on the island, and producing regular monthly newsletters to give members a clearer view of our operations.

We’ve also built an exceptional team, both in the office and in the field, who are always willing to explain what’s happening in the system. Please never hesitate to call or stop by with your questions.

You can find our most recent Consumer Confidence Report and Water Efficiency Report [here!](#)

**Facts and ideas were inspired by the Journal AWWA July/August 2026 Edition from the article “Building Trust Between Utilities and Their Customers” by Naeem Qureshi, Emily Strand, and Racquel Vaske



Popular single-use plastic water bottles

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