

Protecting Our Drinking Water from Hazardous Material Spills

The Clackamas River Water Providers (CRWP), a coalition of municipal drinking water providers that get their drinking water from the Clackamas River, has been working with local first responders and Water Environment Services to better respond to potential hazardous spills on the Clackamas River. Together working to develop strategies to respond and protect our drinking water source if a spill does happen.

On Thursday, September 27th Riverside County Park will be closed from 8am - 4pm as we test some of our newly developed spill response strategies on the river. The CRWP will be working with NRC, a spill response contactor, Clackamas Fire District #1, Water Environment Services, DEQ and other partners to actually put boats and booms into the river to respond to a mock hazardous material spill.

"A hazardous material spill in the Clackamas Industrial Area is an area of particular concern," says Kim Swan, Water Resource Manager for the Clackamas River Water Providers. This is because many of the businesses in the industrial area are less than a quarter of a mile away from the Clackamas River and because of the hundreds of storm drains and four small tributary creeks (Rock, Sieben, Carli, and Cow Creeks) that drain this area and flow into the river just upstream of four drinking water intakes.

Testing and practicing the response strategies we have developed to see how well they work while identifying areas where we might need to make changes is critical to protecting our drinking water infrastructure. It also gives us an opportunity to build stronger relationships with our local, state, and federal first responders to protect our drinking water.

With funding from a State Revolving Fund Drinking Water Protection Grant, the CRWP has been developing a Hazardous Spill Prevention Program for businesses located within the Clackamas Industrial area to receive free or discounted spill prevention and response equipment, and free technical assistance.

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