

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PORT OF WALLA WALLA RECEIVES STATE AWARD
FOR BURBANK WATER SYSTEM**

The Washington State Department of Health has recognized the Port of Walla Walla with its "Going Above and Beyond Award" for the recently completed Burbank Business Park Water System.

The Port embarked on a \$3.5 million project to build a water system for its Burbank Business Park and neighboring entities. Funding assistance came from a \$1.6 million state appropriation and a \$721,000 grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The new water system includes a supply well, a 290,000 gallon water storage reservoir, a nitrate treatment system, a booster pump station and 2.6 miles of water distribution main.

"The Port went above and beyond meeting their own needs by expanding their water system to help the community solve a public health problem," said Denise Clifford, director of the state Health Department's Office of Drinking Water. "Thanks to their efforts, the Port's neighbors, including the kids at the Columbia School District, will have safe, reliable drinking water."

The Port now supplies water to the Columbia School District, which allowed the district to stop using nitrate – contaminated wells. The school district has over 900 students and 120 staff. The Port also plans to provide a better water source for the 100 residential customers of the Columbia View Water System when they connect to the Port's water system this summer.

"In today's challenging economic times it would have been far easier for the Port to have developed a water system to just serve its Burbank Business Park. We are fortunate to have a Port Commission with a vision and financial commitment to have developed a water system with community-wide benefit," said Dr. Lou Gates Superintendent Columbia School District.

Port Commission President Dr. Fred Bennett said, "While the Port's mission is to create and retain jobs within the communities we serve, this is not possible without communities having a safe and reliable drinking water supply."

United States Senator Patty Murray was instrumental in securing funding from the Environmental Protection Agency. State funding was made possible through the efforts of the late Representative Bill Grant. Senator Mike Hewitt and Representative Maureen Walsh also supported state funding for the project.

The Port is governed by three elected Commissioners, Dr. Fred Bennett, Paul Schneidmiller and Mike Fredrickson. The Port was founded in 1952 and is the lead economic development agency for Walla Walla County. The Port has been the recipient of the Port of the Year Award by the Washington Public Ports Association and has also been recognized by the Governor for its leadership in enhancing the economic vitality of southeastern Washington.

In addition to the Burbank Business Park Water System, the Port owns and operates water systems at the Walla Walla Regional Airport and Dodd Road Industrial Park.

The Port was nominated for the award by Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. an engineering services firm. Commissioner Bennett said, “We were surprised when the Department of Health selected our Burbank Water System as the state recipient for the “Going Above and Beyond Award”. We would like to thank Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. for taking the time to nominate the Port.”

For more information contact:
James M. Kuntz
Executive Director
Port of Walla Walla
(509)525-3100
jk@portwallawalla.com

