

# NEWSLETTER

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*Dan Sulak,  
Water  
Quality  
Analyst*

## NEW CLEAN WATER PROGRAM MEMBERS

Introducing our new members, Dan Sulak, Water Quality Analyst; and Leanne Ingman, Natural Resource Technician. They both have valuable experience to add to our Pollution Identification and Correction team and we are excited to see what they can do.

You will most likely see them out and about taking water samples. Water samples help to track water quality and to identify locations with high levels of bacteria.

Feel free to stop and say hi.

## WORK FROM HOME FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

The Clean Water Program could use your help. Healthy communities start with each and everyone of us. This is why we are asking you to look at your yard to see what you can do to reduce harmful bacteria getting picked up by rainwater and carried into our waterways.

Harmful bacteria can come from plant, animal and human waste. Look inside this newsletter for tips on what you can do around your yard.



*Leanne  
Ingman,  
Natural  
Resource  
Technician*

# HEALTHY WATERWAYS START WITH YOU

## HERE IS HOW YOU CAN HELP:

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### ① **MANAGE YARD WASTE**

Managing your yard waste is one way that you can stop pollution. As piles of yard waste degrade, bacteria and nutrients can contribute to water quality problems like algae blooms and fish kills.

- **LEAVE IT AND MULCH IT-** leave grass clippings and mulched leaves on your lawn as a natural fertilizer.
- **COMPOSTING-** collect your yard waste in a compost bin and reduce it down into useable soil.
- **REMOVE-** For information on locations and pick up service, visit:  
[bit.ly/YardWasteLocations](http://bit.ly/YardWasteLocations)



*Never  
dump yard  
waste near  
a stream or  
ditch*

### ② **SEPTICS: INSPECT IT TO PROTECT IT**

To keep up with regular maintenance, onsite septic systems (OSS) should be inspected every year, or every three years if you have a gravity system.

You can also help maintain your system with these simple tricks:

- **Don't Strain the Drain.** Fix leaks to prevent wasted water and spread out water use to reduce the stress on your system.
- **Don't Overload the Commode.** Only pee, poo and toilet paper down the toilet. Even items labeled as "flushable" can clog pipes, build up in your system, and prompt more frequent pumping.
- **Think at the Sink.** Limit the use of a garbage disposal and don't rinse coffee grounds or grease down the drain.

*Rebates for inspections are available!*

————— *For more information on rebates, tips and a Septics 101 course visit:* —————  
[skagitcounty.net/septic](http://skagitcounty.net/septic)

Septic  
Inspection





*Kids playing  
the Poo Toss  
game at the  
Skagit  
County Fair.*



### 3 PICK UP PET WASTE

We played the poo toss game at the fair! We had lots of fun meeting everyone. You all did such a great job picking up the poo and getting it in the trash.

Leaving pet poop on the ground can make your pet sick. It is important to remember to throw it away when you are recreating and at home. Pet poop should be double bagged and placed in the trash - not the yard waste.

You can also flush pet poop, but remember that this adds another "person" to your household septic system, and you'll have to pump more often. Call your inspector to make sure your system can handle it.

Visit [Poopsmart.org](http://Poopsmart.org) for more information.

### 4 MANAGE MANURE

We all love our farm animals, but we have to admit that manure happens, and it happens a lot. It is very important to manage manure for the health of our animals and the health of our waterways.

#### **Scoop it, Store it and Shield it.**

**Scoop it-** clear manure at least every 2-3 days, especially in your heavy use area.

**Store it-** Store manure in a designated location such as a manure bin. Your storage should be convenient but out of the way of your heavy use area. Keep in mind storage capacity, as it will continue to fill until you can share compost or spread it on your pastures.

**Shield it-** Cover your manure with a tarp or roof to shield it from rainwater.



Covered  
manure  
storage

Contact the Skagit Conservation District for information  
about available resources to construct a manure storage bin.

[skagitcd.org/farming-resources](http://skagitcd.org/farming-resources)



Skagit County Public Works Department  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

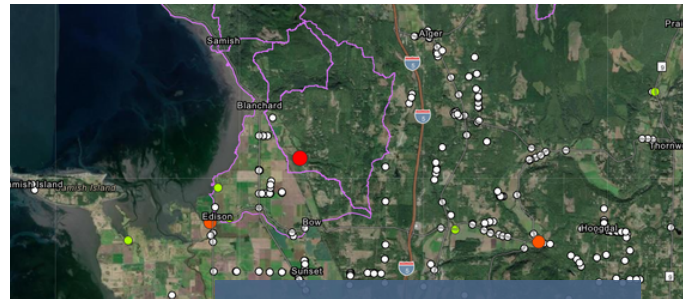
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## FOLLOW ALONG WITH OUR SAMPLING

The Clean Samish Initiative, as a part of the Clean Water Program, has made significant improvements in water quality over the years. However, this last spring there were 4 shellfish harvesting closures as a result of fecal pollution coming from the land.

We will continue to work toward a healthier watershed. You can follow our efforts on the water quality map.

Find the map at [bit.ly/SkagitWQ](http://bit.ly/SkagitWQ)



All sample results are  
uploaded to this map

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### ***UPCOMING EVENTS:***

**NOVEMBER 5: SALMON SIGHTINGS AT OYSTER CREEK**  
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, [skagitfisheries.org/events](http://skagitfisheries.org/events)

**NOVEMBER 11 & 18, 9am-12pm: SKAGIT LAND TRUST  
WORK PARTIES** at Tope Ryan and Samish Island Conservation  
Areas. Registration required at [skagitlandtrust.org/events](http://skagitlandtrust.org/events).

#### **Learn More!**

[skagitcounty.net/cleanwater](http://skagitcounty.net/cleanwater)

Find us on 

@SkagitCountyCleanWater

 **YouTube**

[bit.ly/CleanWaterYouTube](http://bit.ly/CleanWaterYouTube)