

Analysis

Item 37: Military Department

Drinking Water Coordination

Analyst: Julie Neburka

Request: Allocate \$50,000 from the Emergency Fund and establish one limited-duration position to coordinate emergency drinking water resources between state agencies, cities, counties, and tribal governments in Oregon.

Analysis: The presence of cyanotoxins in Salem’s drinking water in May and June 2018 brought the issue of drinking water safety in Oregon to the forefront. Several state and federal agencies are responsible for drinking water safety, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Homeland Security; the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is primarily responsible for regulating Oregon’s water systems and implementing the requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. In response to last summer’s drinking water contamination issue, OHA, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, and the Oregon Military Department are seeking additional resources to address future drinking water contamination issues and emergencies.

The Oregon Military Department (OMD) requests \$50,000 and one new limited-duration position to address drinking water emergencies by identifying resource gaps for threats and risks to drinking water systems, developing a list of resources available to communities whose water systems are threatened or out of service, and serving a coordinating function between state agencies, cities, counties, and tribal governments in water system emergencies. The agency’s strategic goal for this new resource is to develop and share a stronger understanding of ongoing and evolving risks to Oregon’s water systems, utility infrastructure, and communities; and to coordinate resources available to respond in case of a future drinking water contamination event.

The Office of Emergency Management assesses and plans for threats and hazards the state faces, including disruptions to drinking water supplies, but the agency does not currently have a position responsible for the specific tasks outlined above. OMD requests establishment of a new limited-duration Program Analyst 2 position, anticipated to start work on January 1st, 2019, at a 2017-19 cost of \$41,853, and \$8,147 for office equipment, supplies, and travel. The annualized cost of the position for the 2019-21 biennium would be \$167,410.

Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office notes that a 2018 Secretary of State audit of the state’s emergency management program found it understaffed for reducing Oregon’s vulnerability to disasters. In response, the agency has included a number of policy option packages in its 2019-21 agency request budget that seek to add resources to and strengthen its emergency management program. Ideally, this position should be evaluated against and included in the Office of Emergency Management’s program and policy priorities; therefore, the Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that this request be deferred to the 2019 legislative session.

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Request: Allocate \$50,000 from the State Emergency Fund to establish a full-time limited duration position responsible for coordinating, assessing and assisting with the development of identifying resources and gaps, which to threaten and risks drinking water systems in Oregon.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: During the month of May and June of 2018, there were multiple toxic algae blooms in the Detroit reservoir impacting the cities of Salem and Turner. The Governor issued an emergency declaration for Marion and Polk counties. Those emergencies triggered conversations with various community leaders and internal state government stakeholders.

The position requested will be tasked to identify appropriate state stakeholders; define and work with subject matter experts to develop a list of statewide resources; identify best practices and plans for addressing threats to safe drinking water; and plan for addressing an emergency impacting safe drinking water supplies.

The Oregon Military Department, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) was chosen to host this position, a Program Analyst 2, because it relates to the responsibilities for planning and preparing for emergency situations within Oregon. The agency does not have a vacant position available to reclassify to perform this work. In addition to this request, the following three state agencies will be submitting requests for addressing safe drinking water in Oregon: Oregon Health Authority, Department of Environmental Quality, and the Department of Agriculture.

Legal Reference: Allocation of \$50,000 from the State Emergency Fund to supplement the appropriation made by chapter 566, section 1(3), Oregon Laws 2017, for the Oregon Military Department, the Office of Emergency Management for the 2017-19 biennium.



OREGON MILITARY DEPARTMENT
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August 27, 2018

The Honorable Senator Peter Courtney, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Tina Kotek, Co-Chair
State Emergency Board
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon Military Department (OMD) requests a Limited Duration Program Analyst 2 position funded with \$50,000 General Fund appropriation. This position will emphasize coordination with other state agencies, cities, counties and tribal governments in development of an assessment methodology of response and recovery plans, systems, resources, and responsibilities as outlined in the Oregon Infrastructure Protection Plan (OIPP), Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CI/KR) plan and annexes specifically related to drinking water resources.

Agency Action

On May 29, 2018 the City of Salem, at the direction of the Oregon Health Authority, issued an advisory that due to toxic algae blooms in the Detroit reservoir, children age 6 and under, as well as anyone who was pregnant, nursing, receiving dialysis or was immunocompromised should not drink city water. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) conducts annual evaluations for infrastructure systems and assets with national level significance that meets established DHS criteria. This position will coordinate with other state agencies, city, county, local and tribal governments and industry associations to develop an assessment that identifies resource gaps with regards to threats and risks to drinking water systems. This position will consult with subject matter experts to develop a list of resources, best practices and plans for incidents that threaten drinking water safety, coordination of response and restoration of safe drinking water following incidents that adversely affect drinking water systems. The intended strategic result is a stronger understanding of ongoing and evolving risks to the citizens of Oregon, a better understanding of critical interdependencies among the water sector amongst the other infrastructure sectors and community systems, a water system resource list, and recommendations to fill identified gaps.

OMD plans to fill the position effective January 1, 2019. The estimated personal services cost for six months is \$41,853. Services and supplies funding of \$8,147 for a computer, office supplies and travel is also requested.

Action Requested

Increase General Fund appropriation in the Office of Emergency Management by \$50,000.
Establish one Limited Duration Program Analyst 2 position.

Legislation Affected

Office of Emergency Management General Fund – Section 1 (3), Chapter 566, Oregon Laws 2017.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



David A. Stuckey
Deputy Director
Oregon Military Department