

A-Engrossed House Bill 4005

Ordered by the House February 5
Including House Amendments dated February 5

Introduced and printed pursuant to House Rule 12.00. Pre-session filed (at the request of House Interim Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water for Representatives Ken Helm, Mark Owens)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: Makes a yearly celebration of water workers in this state that takes place in October. (Flesch Readability Score: 61.8).

Designates the first Saturday of October of each year through the end of the Sunday of the following weekend as Water Professionals Appreciation Week.

Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to Water Professionals Appreciation Week; and prescribing an effective date.

Whereas water is the lifeblood of Oregon, and no community or sector of the economy, from agriculture to manufacturing to tourism, can thrive or grow without safe and reliable access to water; and

Whereas reliable and effective delivery of public drinking water and sanitary sewer services is essential to protecting public health, to supporting community growth, to the production of housing, to livability and to the efficient operation of safety services, including critical fire protection services; and

Whereas technological advances by Oregon's thousands of water professionals have made this state's public drinking water and treated wastewater meet some of the most stringent water quality standards in the United States; and

Whereas water professionals are essential stewards of our state's natural environment, working diligently to protect both in-stream and out-of-stream water resources; and

Whereas through careful management of water withdrawals, treatment processes and discharge practices, water professionals help maintain healthy river and stream ecosystems, support fish and wildlife habitats and safeguard water quality for downstream users; and

Whereas the tireless dedication of Oregon's water professionals ensures that environmental protections are balanced with community needs, advancing practices that promote conservation, sustainability and the long-term resilience of Oregon's watersheds; and

Whereas regardless of where it originates, drinking water from public water systems is filtered, cleaned, tested and distributed in a process carefully managed by water system operators certified by the Oregon Health Authority; and

Whereas approximately 77 percent of Oregonians are actively served by public water systems that deliver safe drinking water each day through an extensive network of pipelines and distribution systems; and

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

Whereas hundreds of millions of gallons of wastewater are managed each day through thousands of miles of sanitary sewers and more than 300 domestic wastewater treatment plants in Oregon, protecting both public health and the environment in a process carefully managed by wastewater operators certified by the Department of Environmental Quality; and

Whereas Oregon's water professionals utilize innovative approaches to address both the state's decreasing water supply and impacts on water quality due to environmental changes, including significantly expanding the reuse of treated wastewater; and

Whereas water professionals at local public drinking water and wastewater agencies work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including on holidays, to protect public health and the environment, to plan for the future of our most essential resource, to maintain and upgrade crucial water storage, filtering and delivery systems and to improve the safety and resiliency of local water supplies; and

Whereas the League of Oregon Cities, the Special Districts Association of Oregon, the Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies, WaterReuse Pacific Northwest, the Oregon Water Utility Council and the Oregon Association of Water Utilities all acknowledge and celebrate the essential work of the water professionals employed by their agency members; now, therefore,

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) The first Saturday of October of each year through the end of the Sunday of the following weekend is designated as Water Professionals Appreciation Week.

(2) The purpose of the designation is to:

(a) Encourage public water agencies and wastewater agencies to offer tours, open houses and other events to educate Oregonians on the important functions of those agencies; and

(b) Encourage all Oregonians to learn about the water and wastewater industries in Oregon and consider careers in this critical field.

SECTION 2. This 2026 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the date on which the 2026 regular session of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly adjourns sine die.