

These funds, tied to lottery bonds, are expected to become available in the first half of 2027. This represents a significant investment by state legislators, if approved by Governor Tina Kotek.

Currently, the Clean Water Consortium is working with residents of the West Glen community, located south of Boardman. West Glen has a dense population, with many properties affected by elevated nitrate levels. A series of community outreach meetings have been scheduled to review different options with West Glen residents.

“While connecting to the City of Boardman’s water system may be the simplest solution for the West Glen area, the consortium is committed to collaborating with residents to explore all options, address concerns and develop a solution that best meets the needs of landowners in the community,” the consortium said in a statement.

For more information, please contact Matthew Jensen, Consortium Managing Director, at 541-240-0750.

The consortium's board includes representatives from both the county and the Port, supported by an 11-member advisory committee made up of residents and business representatives from the Morrow County portion of the LUBGWMA (Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area).

Why can't you just fix the groundwater? That would be the ideal long-term solution—but it's also the most challenging and it takes time. The nitrate issue did not appear overnight and isn't tied to a single, identifiable source. Multiple factors and sources contribute to groundwater contamination. Cleaning underground aquifers is extremely complex and time-consuming. State and federal agencies, along with local partners, are focused on this long-term



Is connecting to Boardman City water the only solution for West Glen residents? While connecting to Boardman's water system currently appears to be the most straightforward option, it is not the only one being considered. The Consortium is committed to exploring all viable alternatives. Community outreach meetings scheduled for August and September will offer opportunities to discuss these options in depth. Additional engagement efforts may be planned as needed.

Can't you just dig deeper wells for each resident? There are two key issues with this option. First, federal and state funding cannot be used to improve private property, including wells. Second, drilling deeper is no guarantee of avoiding nitrate contamination—now or in the future. The only reliable and monitored long-term solution is to connect to a public water system.

But I get free water with my current well. Why should I pay for water? While there may be no monthly water bill with a private well, there are still real costs. Some West Glen residents report paying around \$35 per month in electricity for pump operation. Additionally, pump replacements or well repairs can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$15,000—even if only needed once every decade or two. So while it may feel “free,” well water comes with hidden expenses and ongoing maintenance responsibilities.

What happens to my current well? There are currently no plans by the Consortium or Morrow County to require wells to be capped. Residents would be able to continue using their wells for purposes like irrigation. However, if connected to the Boardman

But we were promised free water. Why will we have to pay if connecting to community well or Boardman City water is the chosen option? During a public health emergency, government agencies such as the EPA and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) step in to provide temporary water solutions. However, this assistance is not intended to be permanent. While every resident deserves access to clean water, there is always a cost associated with delivering and maintaining that service. The Consortium is working to ensure that the costs of infrastructure installation are covered through grants and external funding. However, once a long-term solution is in place, residents should expect to pay for the water they use—just like other communities on public water systems.

What all will be paid for if SB 5531 develops a public water system for our community? The intent of the project and the SB 5531 funding is to build the distribution infrastructure, install connection valves at each property, and connect water service to each participating residence. While federal and state funds cannot be used for plumbing work on private property, the Consortium is actively pursuing additional funding sources to cover those costs. Upcoming community outreach meetings will help identify property-specific concerns and allow the Consortium to work toward solutions that minimize out-of-pocket costs for residents.

What if I want to irrigate my property with Boardman City water? Private residential wells allow pumping up to 15,000 gallons per day, which is ideal for irrigation. By contrast, using that same amount of water from the Boardman City system would result in a monthly bill of over \$900 at current rates. For this reason, the Consortium strongly recommends continuing to use private wells for irrigation. The primary goal of the connection to public water is to provide clean, affordable drinking water to homes—while allowing wells to remain in place for non-potable uses like irrigation.

"I am honored to represent House District 57 on the E-Board Committee," stated Smith. "This committee plays a vital role in ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and in addressing urgent needs across our state. I remain

The E-Board Committee operates during the interim when the legislature is not in session. In consideration of agency requests, the board allocates emergency funds, increases expenditure limitations, au-

Smith is the Republican budget leader who represents the entirety of Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman, Wheeler and Wasco counties, as well as portions of Clackamas, Jefferson, Marion and Umatilla Counties.

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Seniors Matter June/July Menu

June 24 - Sloppy Joes, Chips, Pickle
Spears, Dessert

July 1 - Salad Bar, Cheesy Bread and Dessert

July 8 - Beef Stroganoff, Rice, Buttered
Carrots and Dessert

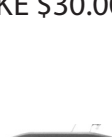
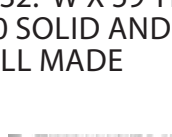
July 15 - Spaghetti, Garlic Bread, Garden
Salad, Dessert

July 22 - Hot Dog Bar, Potato Wedges and
Dessert

July 29 - Tamale Casserole, Garden Salad
and Dessert



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