

TITLE: Water Insecurity in Oregon?

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Practitioners and policy makers in environmental public health, natural resources, preparedness, health equity

ABSTRACT: Despite the common belief that Oregon has abundant water resources, population- and climate-driven pressures on water resources and water insecurity are a real concern for all people in Oregon. Water insecurity is inequitable access to enough safe and affordable water for drinking, food preparation, sanitation and hygiene. Water insecurity results in poor health, especially among vulnerable communities. Climate change, and social and physical determinants of health are drivers of water insecurity for all Oregonians. The authors systematically reviewed existing United States-based water insecurity literature with the aim to understand the evidence for developing public health water insecurity intervention strategies in Oregon. From the review, strategies include improving water affordability, carrying out community education events, recording drought risk and water loss, and tracking improvements in safe drinking water compliance. The review finds opportunities to take varied approaches that are both community-specific, partnership-based and culturally relevant. Recommendations for Oregon include characterizing communities experiencing water insecurity, assessing community needs, tracking regional water scarcity, and recognizing the human right to water in Oregon.

OBJECTIVE(S): Define water insecurity. Identify health outcomes related to water insecurity. Identify communities at risk in Oregon. Analyze evidence-based approaches towards mitigating and preventing water insecurity.
