

The City of Anacortes was incorporated in 1891. The original water system was operated privately until 1919 when the City purchased the water system from Washington Water and Power Company.

A raw water intake was constructed on the east bank of the Skagit River prior to 1930 north of the City of Mount Vernon. The river water was pumped untreated to the Whistle Lake Reservoir south of Anacortes City limits. The water was then treated at the filter plant along Whistle Lake Road and supplied by gravity to the Heart Lake Reservoir. The town of LaConner and Whidbey Island Naval Air Station purchased untreated water. The original raw water supply line was a 24" steel pipe. Portions of this line are still in service.

Shell and Texaco refineries were constructed on March Point in the 1950's and dramatically increased the water demands placed on the Anacortes Water Supply system. A 36" diameter pipeline was installed parallel to the existing 24" pipeline for much of the distance in order to deliver the quantities of water required by the oil refineries. A booster pump station was then constructed near Sharpe's Corner to supply the City of Anacortes and the Scott Paper Company during periods of peak industrial water demands.

Also in the 1950's a pressure filter plant was constructed on the east bank of the Skagit River to treat the total water supply. The filter plant on Whistle Lake Road was abandoned but the reservoir was still used for water storage.

As water demands increased, a new filtration plant was built to meet the growing needs. The new plant was placed in operation in 1971 using the Skagit River as a raw water source. With the completion of the 36" pipeline from the treatment plant to March Point, the booster station at March Point was no longer needed and abandoned. The new treatment plant and the new 36" line sufficiently increased the system capacity so that the City was able to add Oak Harbor as a customer in 1971.

A new 30" pipeline was installed from Sharpe's corner to the Whistle Lake reservoir parallel to the 24" line. The Whistle Lake reservoir was abandoned and replaced by a 3 million gallon covered steel reservoir.