



DATE: November 13, 2013

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Environmental Health Committee
Keith Grellner, Chair

SUBJECT: BRIEFING ON CHAPTER 246-272A WAC, ON-SITE SEWAGE SYSTEMS

Background and Summary:

The Washington State Board of Health has responsibility under RCW 43.20.050 to adopt rules to prevent and control health hazards related to the design, construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of on-site sewage systems designed to handle less than 3,500 gallons per day of wastewater. The Board has adopted chapter 246-272A WAC, On-site Sewage Systems, which received its last major revision in July 2005. WAC 246-272A-0425 requires the Department of Health to review the entire rules for effectiveness every four years, starting in 2009, and report to the Board and all local health officers about the results and any recommendations.

The 2005 revisions to chapter 246-272A WAC were phased-in over two years. They established new requirements for technical design, product registration, and management of on-site sewage systems. Local health jurisdictions enhanced management programs for the operation and maintenance of on-site sewage systems, especially for the 12 counties bordering Puget Sound. The Board's rules allow local boards of health to adopt their own on-site rules, as long as they are at least as stringent as the Board's and the local rules are approved by the Department. Local rules have been adopted by 22 jurisdictions, two jurisdictions have adopted the Board's rules by reference, and 11 jurisdictions have deferred to the Board's rules.

In reviewing the status of chapter 246-272A WAC, the Department surveyed local health jurisdictions, received input from its Technical Advisory Group, and convened a rule review panel. The responses indicate the rule is effective in protecting public health. Three issues were identified for possible rule revision: proprietary treatment product testing, application of treatment levels, and minimum land area requirements.

Jerrod Davis, Director of the Office of Shellfish and Water Protection, is here today to explain the results of the Department's review and its recommendations for chapter 246-272A WAC. A copy of his presentation, the full report, and a summary of findings can be found under Tab 9.

Recommended Board Action:

None

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