

Quarterly Community Update

RECENT HAPPENINGS

The Board met in October and November.

In October, ([watch the recording](#)) the Board met in Yakima.

Among other things, the Board:

- Directed Board staff to initiate rulemaking on [per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances \(PFAS\) standards](#) through [WAC 246-290-315](#).
- Heard updates on the Board's [School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Project](#), [Newborn Screening Criteria Review Project](#), and [rulemaking related to the Sanitary Control of Shellfish](#).
- Heard that staff have completed a [Health Impact Review](#) (HIR) on SB 5435 concerning residential rent increases. Senator Trudeau requested the HIR.

In November, ([watch the recording](#)) the Board met in Tumwater. Among other things, the Board:

- Heard from [Thurston County Public Health & Social Services](#) about their current work, including efforts to address social isolation as a public health crisis.
- Convened a [panel](#) on the impacts and efforts to reduce the impacts of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The panel consisted of technical experts from the Department of Health and Department of Ecology.
- [Declined a petition to amend WAC 246-290-220](#), Drinking Water Materials and Additives, within the Group A Public Water Supplies rules.

PARTICIPATION IN OUR WORK

The Board takes public comments at every meeting. We welcome your comments on any of our agenda items or other public health issues of importance to your community. Send written comments to the Board anytime at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov. If you would like to attend online or in-person, you can sign up to provide verbal public comment. The number of commenters determines the amount of time for each public comment (usually 1-3 minutes). Find out more about giving public comment on our [website](#).

Our [meetings](#) are open to the public and anyone may attend. Please invite others from your community who may want to join us in person or online.



The [School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Project \(SRP\) team](#) held listening sessions throughout much of the state. The goal of these sessions is to hear from Washington families, students, and school staff about concerns they have for school environmental health and safety. The SRP team held these sessions in Yakima, Thurston County, Spokane, and Vancouver. Outreach was conducted through school flyer distribution (Peachjar) and social media. Upcoming sessions will take place in Tri-Cities area and Seattle in January. For more information on how to get involved, contact [Andrew](#), Project Manager.

Outreach Videos

Recently, a community group asked the Board to consider updating its hearing screening standards, also known as auditory screening, to include another screening technology. The Board usually shares information about rulemaking through email, website updates, and social media posts. While planning for this project, staff noted that written English and American Sign Language (ASL) are different languages with their own vocabulary and grammar. Communications in written English are not always the most accessible way to reach the Deaf community.

To create more inclusive communications, staff collaborated with a highly qualified Deaf Interpreter (DI) to produce short informational videos in ASL. These videos include details about the project and ways for people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to get involved.

These videos (in ASL) are available on the Board's [rulemaking webpage](#). Please feel free to share them widely.

For questions, you can contact Molly Dinardo at molly.dinardo@sboh.wa.gov.



If you would like to learn more about the Board or get involved in our work, contact [Hannah Haag](#), Board Community Outreach Coordinator.

The Board conducts [Health Impact Reviews](#) (HIRs) in collaboration with the [Council](#) on Health Disparities. An HIR is an objective, non-partisan, evidence-based report. It provides the Governor and state Legislators with information about how policy or budgetary proposals may impact health and equity in Washington State.

An HIR can be requested by the Governor or legislators on a proposal related to any policy topic. Our most requested topic areas are healthcare, the criminal and civil legal systems, behavioral health, and education.

Check out this [short video](#) to learn about Health Impact Reviews.

Most HIRs are completed during Legislative Session, which starts January 13, 2025. [Email](#) the Team to receive HIRs completed this Legislative Session delivered directly to your inbox. All HIRs are available on the [Board's website](#).

January Board Meeting:

Our next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 8th, 2025 at the Department of Labor and Industries in Tumwater, WA.

Physical address:

WA Department of Labor & Industries (Auditorium)
7273 Linderson Way SW
Tumwater, WA 98501-5414

Zoom and physical information is posted on our [website](#) two weeks before the meeting. The meeting will have virtual and in-person options. It will also include American Sign Language and Spanish interpretation services.



Upcoming 2025 Meetings

All meetings are open to the public and are an opportunity to learn about and interact with the work of the Board. The Board welcomes verbal public comment during any of its regularly scheduled Board meetings. Written public comment is always welcome. Please send any written comments to the Board at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov. All dates are subject to change, so please check for updated and more detailed information on our [meetings webpage](#).

January 7: Shellfish Rules Advisory Committee

January 8: State Board of Health

January 14: Newborn Screening Technical Advisory Committee

January 15 and 16: School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Technical Advisory Committee

February 4: Environmental Health Subcommittee

February 6: School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Technical Advisory Committee

February 11: Newborn Screening Technical Advisory Committee

February 13: Health Disparities Council

February 20: Shellfish Rules Advisory Committee

February 27: Health Promotion Subcommittee

March 12: State Board of Health

March 19: School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Technical Advisory Committee



YEAR IN NUMBERS

2024 was a full year!

- 7 full-day Board meetings
- 6 subcommittee meetings
- 4 panels convened
- 10 Technical Advisory Committee meetings
- 6 Listening Sessions
- 10 Health Impact Reviews completed
- 42 page State Health Report from the Board submitted
- 32 page State Action Report from the Health Disparities Council submitted

We're looking forward to another full year of work to improve health and wellbeing in 2025!