



April 2009  
DOH 331-433

## Fact Sheet

*Privately owned systems (non-municipal)*

# Service areas in planning documents

With the passage of the 2003 Municipal Water Law, the Department of Health revised service area requirements and service area definitions within Chapter 246-290 WAC. Privately owned systems are not subject to the Municipal Water Law, but they should understand the new service area definitions when they develop their water system plan or small water system management program.

### Service Area Definitions and Requirements:

1. **Existing Service Area** is the specific area where a water system already provides direct service, remote service, or where service connections are currently available.

Water systems **must** identify their existing service area on a map in all planning documents.

2. **Future Service Area** is the specific area where a water system plans to serve.

Water systems **must** identify their future service area on a map in all planning documents. Water systems planning under the *Public Water System Coordination Act (Coordination Act)*, determine the future service area by written agreement. Water systems that are not planning under the *Coordination Act* must identify their future service area; however, they do not receive the exclusive right to serve the area.

3. **Service Area** is the largest area identified on a map where a water system currently provides direct service and remote service, and the area it plans to serve. The service area includes the existing service area and future service area.

Water systems that provide water to other public water systems through an intertie **must** include information about the intertie within their planning document as outlined in WAC 246-290-132. Wholesale areas are not considered part of the service area.

*Note: Privately owned water systems cannot expand their water right place-of-use boundary through the Department of Health planning process.*



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## **Service Area Boundaries: factors to consider**

- The size, location, and physical features of the water system's existing and future service area and those of adjacent utilities.
- Population projections and land use designations.
- System capacity and the number of connections the Department of Health approved.
- Resources available to construct facilities needed to meet growth demands.
- Commitments, pending requests, and potential requests for water service.
- Water right limitations.



## **For more information**

Please call the Department of Health Office of Drinking Water regional office:

Eastern Region: Spokane (509) 329-2100

Northwest Region: Kent (253) 395-6750

Southwest Region: Tumwater (360) 236-3030