

<i>INSIDE....</i>	
SDWA Reauthorization	1
WSAC Committee	2
A Letter From The Director	3
Legislative and Budget Proposals	4
Lead and Copper Program	4
State Revolving Fund	5
Satellite Management Agencies	5
IACC Directory Update	5
Water Use Data Management	6
WAC Revisions	6
Nitrate Assessment	7
Training	7
Dr. Drip	8

## Congress Reauthorizes the Safe Drinking Water Act

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was reauthorized by Congress this past summer and signed into law by the President on August 6, 1996. This new federal law, which updates the original SDWA of 1974 and its 1986 amendments, is as complex as it is comprehensive. The new amendments make extensive changes to some of the current requirements the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), states and water systems have been trying to implement and/or comply with for the past 10 years.

The 1996 amendments provide states with options, incentives, and funding for several of the new mandated activities. Required activities include statewide source protection, system capacity, and operator certification programs. Optional, and desirable program activities include the State Revolving Fund (SRF) funding program and increased monitoring waivers for water systems. Other major provisions of the amendments include standard setting, health research, consumer awareness and public notification, small system technologies, enforcement, and a number of specific drinking water standards/regulations.

Highlights of major provisions are described here. Future articles will explain the new requirements as states begin implementation.

**Standard setting** - The amended SDWA revises the process for setting standards for drinking water contaminants by focusing on regulation of contaminants known to pose health risks, and adding a cost-benefit analysis, in most cases. It eliminates the old requirement to set standards for 25 new contaminants every three years, regardless of need or any threat to public health. It also requires EPA to review and re-evaluate existing standards.

**Monitoring waivers** - The amended SDWA provides for interim relief for small systems. It allows states to adopt permanent alternative monitoring requirements for those systems that can not afford existing requirements. The state must first implement source water assessment programs for systems serving less than 3,300 people (and under 10,000 with EPA approval). However, these variances do not apply to microbial contaminants or contaminants regulated prior to 1986. They also do not apply to filtration requirements under the Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR).

**Consumer awareness and public notification** - Under the amended SDWA, community water systems will be required to provide an annual "consumer confidence report" on the source of their drinking water and levels of any contaminants found. The Governor may allow systems serving less than 10,000 population to publish the report in a local

newspaper in lieu of mailing, and may allow systems serving less than 500 to simply notify customers of the report's availability.

**Small system technology** - EPA is required when developing new rules to identify technologies that are affordable and achieve compliance for systems serving less than 10,000 people.

**Operator certification** - EPA is required to publish minimum standard guidelines for operator certification programs. This includes community and non-transient non-community (NTNC) water systems. The amended SDWA does not

---

require that every water system operator be certified. However, states will be required to meet minimum federal guidelines

---

in order to avoid a 20% reduction in SRF funding. In addition, systems serving a population of 3,300 or fewer persons may receive reimbursement of certain training and certification costs through grants awarded to states.

**Source water protection** - EPA is required to publish source water assessment program guidance for states. States have to develop programs, but can make use of data from wellhead protection programs, watershed initiatives or other existing data sources. States without source water assessment programs will not be able to grant permanent monitoring waivers.

**Capacity development** - States will be required to obtain legal authority or other means to ensure all community and NTNC water systems demonstrate long-term technical, managerial and financial capacity (i.e., viability). States failing to comply may lose 20% of their federal SRF funding allocation.

**Enforcement** - The amendments make it easier for EPA to enforce the SDWA, with higher civil penalties to be imposed for failure to comply. States are required to prepare an annual report for EPA listing systems with violations during the year, and make that report available to the public.

**State Revolving Fund (SRF)** - Community and non-profit non-community systems are eligible for low interest loans under the SRF. Funding can be used for capital facility projects, new prevention programs such as ground water protection programs, and other financial assistance programs such as operator certification training for small systems. The amount of individual state funding is directly linked with the state's certification, source protection, and capacity development programs. See separate article on page 5 for more detail on the SRF program.

Summaries and complete copies of the SDWA are available from EPA by calling (206) 553-1200 (or via the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/ow/ogwdw>). For additional information on the SDWA and DOH related program activities, contact Lisa Raysby at (360) 664-3951 INT: [lar0303@hub.doh.wa.gov](mailto:lar0303@hub.doh.wa.gov) ☞

## Water Supply Advisory Committee Finalizes Report

The reorganized Water Supply Advisory Committee (WSAC) completed its initial year by reaching consensus on a report that makes recommendations for policy, statutory, and funding changes to the Drinking Water Program. Building on a set of principles developed at a two day retreat in May, the Committee set a course toward greater sharing of responsibility for assuring safe, reliable and affordable drinking water for all Washington citizens. That this report was possible despite the marked diversity of interests represented on the committee is testimony to the hard work and commitment of the members and staff involved.

Committee members engaged in a review and assessment of program services as well as planning, governance and funding systems now in place before adopting a set of guiding principles as a basis for its detailed recommendations. Between full committee sessions and the work of a series of smaller focused work groups, thousands of volunteer hours were spent in this effort. Representatives from the full range of water purveyors -- from the very small to the largest municipalities--worked with a wide variety of public and private interests to reach mutually acceptable recommendations. The task was complicated by the reauthorization of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. The committee had gone through much of its work when the Congress acted in August of this year. The federal action opened up new opportunities for state programs, and provided enhanced funding, both of which led to substantial revisions in the WSAC report.

Delivery of the WSAC report is not the last word. The committee has ongoing responsibilities both in gaining acceptance of the recommendations and in pursuing the next steps necessary for the state to move toward the WSAC vision of shared responsibility for assuring safe, reliable and affordable drinking water.

The report will be available this December. Call 1-(800) 521-0323 or email to [DWINFO@hub.doh.wa.gov](mailto:DWINFO@hub.doh.wa.gov) for a copy. ☞

<p style="text-align: center;">INTERNET Visit the DOH Division of Drinking Water's Homepage <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/">http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/</a></p>
---

---

## A Letter From the Director.....

Another era in drinking water has begun with passage of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Amendments of 1996 (see cover page article). The 1996 Amendments were developed with unprecedented contributions from water utilities, and state and local officials. They embody a partnership approach that includes funding to states to help water systems, especially smaller utilities, comply with the SDWA. Nonetheless, the 1996 Amendments still represent significant challenges and impacts for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), states and all federally-regulated public water systems.

The Department of Health (DOH) Drinking Water Division sees this as an opportunity to work more closely with stakeholders in implementation of federal drinking water law, especially where greater flexibility can now be exercised by the states. Because of some existing DOH programs, especially in the areas of financial viability, source water protection, and operator certification, we are prepared to move forward into new activities called for under the SDWA. The Water Tap's page one story outlines the main provisions. The following are some key areas that we expect to focus on in Washington.

- **Source Water Assessment/Greater Monitoring Flexibility** - DOH has already elected to pursue the waiver approach with water systems and provide greater monitoring flexibility where there is no increased risk to public health. DOH and water systems will be able to focus resources on the most pressing water quality needs. Our ability to do this will first require a comprehensive statewide source water assessment.
- **Capacity Development** - The new capacity development provisions require adequate technical, financial, and managerial resources from water systems. This has been promoted and, to some degree, already required under the DOH's water system planning and financial viability programs. We don't see significant changes to what we are already doing, other than expansion.
- **Operator Certification** - During 1995, the Washington State Legislature enacted an agency request bill (E2SSB 5448) that brought more systems under state operator certification requirements. The new federal laws, requiring EPA to work with states and their existing programs, should allow a transition time to minimize the impact to Group A systems currently not required to have certified operators. The SDWA also provides an opportunity for reimbursement of certain training and certification costs for small system operators via pass-through grants to states.
- **Consumer Information** - DOH has always encouraged customers to obtain water quality information directly from their water systems, and has provided water quality data when readily available. The new requirement for annual consumer reports puts water systems in a proactive role, which a number of water systems have already assumed.
- **Water System Funding** - DOH intends to take full advantage of federal funds offered to states to provide financial assistance under the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program. DOH staff have been assisting EPA in developing implementation at the federal level, and have begun coordination efforts with the Public Works Board for Washington's program (see article on page 5).
- **Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR) Exception** - A few of our state's utilities using surface water are going to benefit from the new exception to the filtration requirement. The new amendments allow states, on a case-by-case basis, to set treatment techniques as an alternative to filtration (as required under the SWTR) for systems with controlled watersheds, if the alternative ensures greater public health protection than filtration and disinfection.

There are many more provisions of the new federal law DOH will be implementing over the next several years. We look forward to the opportunities it will present us to work with utilities and local governments to continue ensuring safe supplies of drinking water to the people of this state.

Sincerely,

B. David Clark, Director

---

## Drinking Water Program Develops 1997 Legislative and Budget Proposals

In conjunction with the Water Supply Advisory Committee (WSAC), the Drinking Water Program has developed legislative and budget proposals to submit to the 1997 Legislature. These proposals track the recommendations made by the WSAC in its report to DOH on structure and funding for a statewide drinking water program that addresses high priority needs. The key elements of the legislative proposal are:

- creation of a consolidated water system operating permit fee, which reorganizes the existing fee schedule and incorporates funding for other activities that are now charged on a fee-for-service basis;
- dedication of a portion of the water system utility tax to the DOH program to fund (1) the required state match for new federal funding, (2) drinking water programs at local health jurisdictions, and (3) new activities identified by the WSAC as high priorities;
- clarification of the respective roles of DOH, the Public Works Board, and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) in the operation of the State Revolving Fund (SRF) program;
- modification to the receivership statutes to allow a county acting as receiver to petition the Court to be removed as receiver after three years, provided certain conditions are met;
- modification of the Operator Certification program to expand the certified operator requirement to additional Group A systems as necessary to conform to recent changes in federal law;
- authorization for a voluntary consolidated source monitoring program to be administered by DOH; and,
- modification of reporting requirements to provide more complete and clearer information to homebuyers about the water system serving the home.

The Department has also submitted to the Governor's Office of Financial Management (OFM) a proposed budget that would increase the Program's funding by approximately \$5 million per year. Most of this is new

money available from the federal government. A significant amount of money would also come from the water system utility tax. The activities to be funded include (1) new or expanded programs under the reauthorized federal Safe Drinking Water Act, (2) administration of the SRF program, (3) high priority needs identified by the WSAC (e.g., data management and technical assistance), and (4) funding to local health jurisdictions' drinking water programs.

Program staff will set up a series of meetings with various groups and individual water systems throughout November and December to discuss the requests. If OFM approves the proposals, they will be forwarded to the Legislature in January as part of the Governor's budget.

For further information, contact Dave Monthie at (360) 664-9583 ☞

## Changes Coming to the Lead and Copper Program

In 1997, DOH will be "stepping up" the Lead and Copper Monitoring and Corrosion Control Program.

**Monitoring** - DOH will complete the "phasing in" of smaller water systems that have not monitored by sending monitoring reminders to those systems with a population of less than 250. The systems will be notified by one of four mailings scheduled for January, April, July and October.

**Reporting** - DOH is changing the method for submitting lead and copper monitoring results. In the past, systems were required to calculate the 90th percentile level for their results and then submit the calculated level to DOH. DOH now has the ability to make this calculation by entering lead and copper lab results directly into its data system. This method of reporting lead and copper results is now available to all systems. Systems should send lab results directly to Drinking Water Headquarters in Olympia (address on the back page).

**Corrosion Control** - In early November, EPA will release a document titled "Corrosion Control Manual for Small Systems". This document is intended to assist small systems (less than 3300 population) that exceed the Action Level for lead and/or copper. For more information contact Chris McCord at (360) 664-0010. ☞

---

## State Staff Developing State Revolving Fund (SRF)

Staff from DOH and the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) have begun development of Washington's Drinking Water SRF program, which was authorized and funded by Congress earlier this year.

The SRF will offer low-interest loans and other financial assistance to community systems, and non-profit non-community systems, throughout the state. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will provide annual grants to the state, which must provide a 20% state match to the SRF account. Loan repayments and interest returned to the program, will create an ongoing "revolving fund" that will provide for future loans.

In creating the program, Congress provided detailed direction as to how the program is to be administered, what types of projects or activities may be funded, and what projects are to receive funding priority. To the extent possible, 15% of the available money is to go to projects for small systems serving populations of less than 10,000 people. States may also provide special assistance, including extended repayments or loan forgiveness, to disadvantaged communities.

Congress also authorized states to use a small portion of their SRF allotment to fund current and new programs and activities under the Safe Drinking Water Act. These include source protection, system capacity, operator certification, wellhead protection, and technical assistance. Failure to have such programs could lead to a reduction in the state's SRF money. In its draft budget for the 1997-99 biennium, DOH proposes to use approximately \$1.9 million annually for these activities, or approximately 6% of the state's SRF allocation (see the article on agency legislative/budget proposals on page 4).

EPA currently plans to finalize its guidance to the states on administration of the program by February, 1997, and to make funding available at that time. Based on preliminary estimates, Washington will receive between \$25 and \$30 million during 1997. Future allocations will depend on Congressional appropriations and the formula used by EPA to divide the money between states.

In 1995, the Legislature directed the SRF program to be set up and administered by DOH and the Public Works Board, which administers the Public Works Trust Fund

staffed by CTED. The details of that arrangement are being developed. Affected parties--local governments, water systems, and other agencies--will be asked to assist. Both agencies hope to make funding available sometime in 1997.

For further information, call 1-(800) 521-0323 or contact Peter Beaton at (360) 664-9698. ☞

## Approved Satellite Management Agencies List Now Available

In an ongoing effort to implement the Satellite Management Agency (SMA) Program, DOH recently sent a list of approved SMAs, dated October 1, 1996, to all counties and Local Environmental Health Directors. The approved SMA list will be updated and redistributed whenever changes are made. Items tracked on the list include SMA contact person, type of SMA service (e.g., ownership or management and operations), service area (county-wide unless specified), and types of systems eligible for service (e.g., Group A only). If you would like a copy of the approved SMA list or have any questions about the program, contact Peter Beaton at (360) 664-9698 ☞

## IACC Updates Directory

The Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) is in the process of updating its "Directory of Funding and Technical Assistance." The Directory lists the contact persons for programs providing financial and technical assistance. DOH intends to reproduce the water resource section of the directory when available. If you would like a copy, please write and request a copy (address on the back page) or call 1 (800) 521-0323 or email to DWINFO@hub.doh.wa.gov ☞



**American Water Works Association (AWWA )**  
**Small System Operational Support Hotline**  
**1-(800) 366-0107**

---

## DOH To Begin Collection and Management of Water Use Data

DOH will initiate the collection and management of water use data from public water systems in mid 1997. The Water Facilities Inventory (WFI) form, mailed annually to all Group A systems, is currently being revised and will include a new section on water use reporting. The data collected will be entered into DOH's Drinking Water computer system.

Purveyors will be asked to supply water usage data by the summer of 1997. The information collected is part of the water use data collection and reporting element referenced in the "Conservation Planning Requirements" of March 1994, which is available from DOH regional offices. It implements the water use data reporting requirements contained in WAC 246-290-480.

DOH has worked with water utilities, the United States Geological Survey, state agencies, and local governments to identify the water use data elements to be collected and reported. The data collection requirements for Group A systems with fewer than 1,000 service connections will include source water usage, wholesale water purchased or sold to other purveyors, and residential population served. Systems with over 1,000 service connections will also report service meter related data, per capita water use from residential customers, number of service connections for various customer classes, and unaccounted for water.

The data collected will be used for a variety of public health, management, and operational purposes. Water usage data from public water systems is not currently collected, stored, or managed in any centralized data base. Accurate water use data has been identified by all stakeholders as an important data element needed for proper water resource and water system management.

Additional information and details on water use data collection will be provided in subsequent Water Tap articles. If you have questions, contact Erik Fairchild at (360) 586-5207. ☞

---

### *Do You Know . . .*

*Average indoor home use of water in the United States is approximately 80 gallons per person per day.*

## Drinking Water Program Revises Administrative Rules

Following a series of public workshops on water system design standards, staff are revising the relevant drinking water administrative rules. These rules apply to Group A water systems, and are found in chapter 246-290 WAC.

The new draft rule should be ready for public comment by the spring of 1997. The Drinking Water Program plans to conduct workshops throughout the state in late spring to take comments and explain the proposed rule changes.

The proposed revisions cover a variety of areas. They:

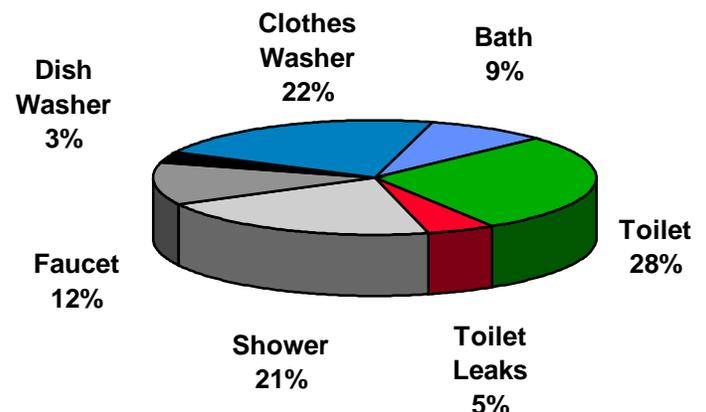
- clarify and simplify water system design standards and cross-connection control requirements;
- revise some planning requirements which reduce the water system plan review requirements for professional engineers, and add water conservation and financial viability requirements;
- revise enforcement and operator certification requirements to make them consistent with federal and state law; and,
- make miscellaneous changes, to correct errors, and bring the rule into conformance with federal law.

After the workshops next spring, staff will revise the rule taking into account comments received. Adoption of the final rule should occur in the summer of 1997.

For further information, contact Lisa Raysby at (360) 664-3951 on design standards, Richard Sarver at (360) 586-8123 on water system planning requirements, or Ronni Woolrich at (360) 586-1096 for general questions.

---

### *. . . Where You Use Water In Your Home*



"Water Efficiency for Your Home", 1991, Rocky Mountain Institute

---

## Interagency Committee Conducts Nitrate Assessment

An interagency committee recently conducted an assessment of nitrate contamination of ground water in Adams, Benton, Franklin, Grant, Lincoln, and Whitman Counties. The group had representatives from the Departments of Health, Ecology, Agriculture and the Conservation Commission. Local governments and stakeholder groups also participated. The assessment, released in September, concluded nitrate contamination of ground water does exist in localized areas within the mid-Columbia Basin. The primary source of the nitrate is thought to be agricultural practices, particularly irrigated agriculture.

Shallow wells (those less than 300 feet in depth) appear to be at much greater risk for nitrate contamination than deeper wells. Because most private (domestic) wells are shallow and vulnerable to contamination, a number of domestic well users in the areas may be exposed to elevated nitrate levels in their drinking water. The regional analysis indicates that of 631 domestic or public water supply wells in the area, approximately 20% had an average nitrate level above the drinking water standard of 10 mg/l.

The good news, from a public water system perspective is that the vast majority of people on public water systems have not been exposed to elevated nitrate levels.

Only about 1,700 people (or 0.6% of the total population in the study area) may have been delivered drinking water from a public water system at concentrations greater than the MCL. These people are served by systems which lacked, at least temporarily, treatment options. The primary known health effect of exposure to high levels of nitrates is Methemoglobinemia, a condition where a person's blood (hemoglobin) has a temporarily reduced ability to transport oxygen. The main populations considered at risk are infants under six months of age, pregnant women and individuals lacking a fully developed enzyme capability to restore hemoglobin to its normal state.

The committee's recommendations include increasing ongoing efforts and initiating new actions. Ongoing efforts include increased voluntary domestic well water testing and increased use of agricultural Best Management Practices. New activities include targeted educational outreach to health care providers and support for local efforts to establish and develop one or more Ground Water Management Areas within the mid-Columbia Basin.

Contact David Jennings, at (360) 586-9041, if you have any questions about the report or conclusions. ☞.

---

## Education/Training Calendar

---

### December 1996

Asbestos-Cement Pipe Work Practice Procedures	Auburn,	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
Backflow Assembly Testing Certification	Spokane	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
BAT Certification Course & Examination	Auburn -Spokane	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
BAT Professional Growth Refresher Course	Auburn	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
Cal-Valve Workshop (Instructor - Jack Boyd, GC Sys)	Quality Inn, - Spokane	Sharon Kimball	509/924-3655
Hydraulics, Taste and Odor - (AWWA SUBSECTION)	Kelso	Dennis Ripp	360/225-7800
Rebuilding America	Teleconf. various loca.	Event Solutions	541/928-5055
SRC4 Meeting	Chapter II	Denny Lopp	509/928-4540
Water Works Basics	Lynnwood	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369

### January 1997

Backflow Assembly Tester Professional Growth Exam		WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
BAT Certification Course & Examination	Auburn	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
BAT Professional Growth Examination	Auburn - Spokane	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
Cross-Connection Control Specialist Cert Review	Everett	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
Electrical Basics	Auburn	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext. 369
Waste Certificate Rev. III-IV	Vancouver	Robert Funk	503/650-8735
Water Certification Exam Review	Auburn	WETRC	206/833-9111, Ext 369
Wastewater Certificate Rev. I-II	Port Angeles	Robert Funk	503/650-8735

---

---

## Dear Dr. Drip

It seems that a year, or two ago the Department's Division of Drinking Water sent some forms to me to fill out to see if I could get out of sampling my two wells for some new contaminants (I think it was organocides, or weed killers - you know, pesticide kind of things). I sent them the forms and they sent back a letter saying that my Diddley Street well was of low risk and didn't need to be sampled, and that my Crud Street well was a moderate risk but didn't need to be sampled because it was in a good area (although I had to pay more for this decision since the state had done this big study, and I had to help pay for it). No, I'm not complaining, they saved me a bundle. What I want to know now, is will I have to sample these wells in the future, or can I get off the hook again?

Eyedew Want-Anno.

Dear Eyedew:

When I checked with the source monitoring staff regarding your question, they were very helpful. Seems that you are referring to the state's waiver program for Synthetic Organic Contaminants or SOCs. You received a waiver for SOC monitoring of your wells based on the "Susceptibility Assessment" information provided to the state in 1994. Your Diddley Street well was so well constructed, developed, and protected that it could be immediately waived from sampling (low susceptibility). The Crud Street well, however, was more at risk, and it was eventually waived based on the results of what the state called an "Areawide Waiver"

determination. This essentially says this well is located in a low risk setting and has had an acceptable sampling history. Now, from what I'm told, the state is about to begin the process for renewing waivers for wells and surface supplies. They will be sending a packet of information to you which presents your options (including costs) to either sample the wells, or seek a renewal to the existing waiver. You will be asked to return a form with your decision.

For questions about the waiver renewal activities now underway, please call the Regional Office for your area and ask for the Regional Water Quality Program Manager. ☞

### Changing of The Guard

After a five-year stint as editor of *The Water Tap*, Darlene Treece has moved on to concentrate on other aspects of the Drinking Water Program. During her five years as editor, Darlene has continued *The Water Tap's* mission of striving to inform purveyors and others of the importance of safe drinking water and facts about Washington's Drinking Water Program. Many thanks Darlene, and good luck in the future. I will do my best to carry on the tradition.

New editor, Judy Welch

In This Issue: The following individuals have contributed to the production of this issue of *The Water Tap*: John Aden, Peter Beaton, Erik Fairchild, Jim Hudson, David Jennings, Peggy Johnson, Jennifer Kropack, Chris McCord, Dave Monthie, Lisa Raysby, Carolyn Terry, Judy Turpin (WSAC Chair), Ronnie Woolrich, and Judy Welch, Editor.

Comments and questions are welcome. Please write: Editor, *The Water Tap*, Department of Health, Division of Drinking Water, P.O. Box 47822, Olympia, WA 98504-7822 or email to [DWINFO@hub.doh.wa.gov](mailto:DWINFO@hub.doh.wa.gov) 

---

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER  
PO BOX 47822  
OLYMPIA, WA 98504-7822  
1-800-521-0323

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Washington State  
Department of Printing



printed on recycled paper