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New Office Director

Mr. Jerrod Davis, P.E. is the new director for the Office of Shellfish and Water Protection. Jerrod steps into the vacancy created when Maryanne Guichard was appointed Assistant Secretary of Environmental Health in December of last year.

Jerrod comes to us from the Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water, where he was the Deputy Director for Field Operations. Prior to that, he was a Regional Engineer and the Assistant Regional Manager for the department's Southwest Regional Drinking Water Office. Jerrod's experience includes private engineering consulting in the areas of drinking water and wastewater. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Seattle University and a Master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from University of California at Berkeley.

Jerrod grew up locally and spent his early years fishing, shellfishing, and boating on the Puget Sound. During his college years he earned money by working summers in Alaska's fish canneries. After graduation Jerrod and his wife served as Peace Corps volunteers, where he worked to develop drinking water and waste management systems for area villages of the Slovak Republic.

Jerrod is passionate about protecting Puget Sound's water quality and shellfish, identifies with the long term benefits of good wastewater management, and is committed to protecting public health. He is excited to join our ranks as the director of the Office of Shellfish and Water Protection, and we look forward to the expertise and leadership skills he brings to this position.



EPA grants awarded to protect shellfish areas and swimming beaches

We were awarded two EPA grants in late 2010 that will help us protect and restore water quality in shellfish areas and at beaches where people swim.

One of the grants, about \$700,000, will evaluate the potential to reopen shellfish beds in Pierce County near Joint Base Lewis McChord that are now closed due to wastewater treatment plant outfalls and other pollution sources. Partners in this study include the Nisqually Tribe and the Department of Ecology. Mark Toy is the lead investigator for this grant. He can be reached at (360) 236-3321 or at mark.toy@doh.wa.gov.

The other EPA grant designates DOH as the lead organization to administer a grant program to implement part of the Puget Sound Action Agenda. Money would be spent on activities and projects that address "pathogens prevention, reduction, and control." Areas of emphasis include local pollution identification and correction and onsite sewage system management programs, and strategies for addressing manure management and vessel waste. We are coordinating the administration of this grant with the Department of Ecology. The funding is \$3 million for the first year and up to \$48 million over six years. Most of this money will be spent on competitive subawards. A coordinator for this grant is in the process of being selected. Applications for subawards should be available in May.

Introducing Ann Harvey, Public Health Advisor



Ann Harvey recently joined our Shellfish Growing Area Program to conduct sanitary surveys and assist with annual growing area evaluations.

Ann is a registered sanitarian with over 15 years of environmental/public health field experience. She pursued her “generalist” environmental health foundation while working for local health agencies, gaining practical experience in on-site sewage, drinking water, and food safety programs. She is a member on the National Environmental Health Association and the Washington State Environmental Health Association.

Prior to entering the EH/PH world, Ann pursued a Medical/Scientific Illustration degree but found that spending long hours in the lab and studio kept her from her favorite place: outdoors. A college summer job working for the U.S. Army Biomedical Research Laboratory in Frederick, MD changed her focus. There she helped to build and outfit a portable field water quality monitoring station, and studied the effects of TCE (trichloroethene) on freshwater aquatic organisms. This became a catalyst for Ann’s further study and career choices in environmental health and public health.

Ann is looking forward to utilizing her broad experience in environmental health and public health in her new position in the shellfish program.

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High levels of PSP in varnish clams

We have recently begun PSP testing on varnish clams and other popular clam species from some Whatcom County beaches. Lab results show that varnish clams tend to have significantly higher PSP toxin than butter or manila clams, in some cases up to 10 times higher. Varnish clams first started appearing in northern Puget Sound about ten years ago after being introduced through ballast water from Asia. We’ve updated our website to include information on the [varnish clam](#), along with a link to WDFW where the identification and biology of the varnish clam can be found. Hopefully, people will be able to identify them and leave them on the beaches where they are hot.



Varnish clam

‘Tis the season – for Norovirus

Every winter several viral gastroenteritis episodes are reported to us from consumers that have eaten raw and partially cooked oysters. Our [Norovirus Fact Sheet](#) explains the precautions you can take to help prevent Norovirus illnesses.

Recreational Shellfish Program reviewed

In December, a committee donated their time and expertise to review our recreational shellfish program. Participants represented local governments, Tribes, WDFW, Ecology, PARKS and volunteers. These are some suggestions the group came up with:

- Develop beach signs that speak specifically to Vibrio and how harvesters can cook oysters to avoid illnesses.
- Instead of using the term “Closed” to notify harvesters about shellfish areas affected by Vibrio, use the term “Unsafe” because recreational harvesting may still be allowed.
- Focus education efforts on varnish clams, which can retain biotoxins longer than butter clams.
- Develop training materials for State Park rangers, WDFW staff and volunteers that interact with the public on recreational shellfish beaches.
- Incorporate WDFW closures and openings on DOH’s heavily used clickable maps.
- Look for fairs and other events in May or June to educate recreational shellfish harvesters early in the season.

Contact:
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Shellfish area restoration successes

In 2010 we were able to upgrade the classification of over 3,000 acres of shellfish beds statewide because pollution problems were corrected. In all, eleven areas were upgraded. The most notable upgrades were the result of 10 or more years of efforts. They included:

- Henderson Inlet (Thurston County). This area has been impacted by on-site systems, hobby farm waste, pet waste, and urban stormwater.
- Spencer Cove (Mason County). This very valuable geoduck harvest area opened due to the removal of a wastewater treatment plant outfall.
- Port Susan (Snohomish County). The area had been closed for 25 years due to pollution sources from a large rural watershed.
- Similk Bay (Skagit County). This area was reopened after more than 40 on-site sewage systems were repaired or replaced.

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The only downgrade in 2010 was 33 acres in Burley Lagoon.

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Sub-contracting shellfish harvest sites

If you are a commercial shellfish operator, remember: If you are going to sublease harvest tidelands that are certified for another company, you must have that site added to your own Harvest Site Certificate before you harvest.

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New wastewater rules

We have been involved in two wastewater rulemaking efforts in recent months.

Greywater rule: We adopted a new greywater rule in December 2010, Chapter 246-274 WAC, that will take effect July 31, 2011. "Greywater" includes flows from showers, sinks, washing machines, and dishwashers. The rule allows use of greywater from these sources for subsurface irrigation during the growing season, and lays out a tiered approach for different volumes of greywater from different fixtures. The rule is optional for local health jurisdictions to adopt, and they have three years after the effective date to implement it. We are working on technical standards and training to assist local health jurisdictions that implement the rule.

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Proposed LOSS rule: We recently held a public hearing on the proposed rule for large on-site sewage systems (LOSS). We expect to adopt the rule by April. Among other things, the proposed rule applies to on-site sewage systems ranging from 3,500 to 100,00 gallons per day; consolidates all LOSS permitting at DOH; includes provisions to protect public health and the environment; and requires annual operation permits.

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Budget cuts may affect O&M program funding

Agencies continue to face the tough task of getting services and costs to line up with shrinking revenues. To date, our wastewater and reclaimed water programs have fared well and are largely intact because of their priority as front-line public health programs, and because of the cost saving measures agency managers and staff have implemented on all fronts. The most visible services cut for the wastewater program is a proposed half-million dollar reduction in pass-through funding to Puget Sound local health jurisdictions for their on-site sewage O&M programs in the 2011-2013 biennium. We won't know until the budget is passed by the legislature and signed by the governor exactly what budget reductions our program will face.



Technical Advisory Group replaces Technical Advisory Committee

In response to direction from the legislature, we eliminated our wastewater Technical Advisory Committee and replaced it with a less formal advisory body. We currently plan to convene the group annually but could call on it for additional work on rule issues or special topics of concern. The group met in November, focusing on the recommended standards and guidance (RS&G) for subsurface drip systems. Next up for the group is work on the Recirculating Gravel and Gravelless RS&Gs. For more meeting information visit www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/WW/WW-TAC.htm.

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Reclaimed water



Four reclaimed water facilities are under construction or nearing completion in Blaine, Belfair, Warden, and Airway Heights. We expect designs for two more will be submitted soon. The Department of Ecology has been working on a new rule for reclaimed water use. In response to Governor Gregoire's [temporary moratorium](#) on rule development, work on the rule has been suspended until January 2012. Information on rulemaking efforts to date can be found on Ecology's website at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/reclaim/.

OSWP Listservs

Get the latest updates via email by joining our office listservs. You must join each list individually, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

[Shellfish](#) – Notifications that impact commercial shellfish operations such as closures, rulemaking activity, vibrio illnesses, newsletters, etc.

[Wastewater](#) – General information such as updates on RS&Gs, proprietary product lists, TAG agendas, newsletters, and other general topics.

[Wastewater-Tanks](#) – Sewage tanks issues and updates.

[Wastewater-LOSS](#) – LOSS rule development updates.

[Wastewater-Greywater](#) – Greywater issues and updates. Staff

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Staff Contacts

For a complete list of staff and office addresses visit these websites:

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Shellfish: www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/sf/shellfish-staff.htm

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