

Public Health Performance Management Centers for Excellence

www.granthealth.org
35 C Street Ephrata, WA
(509) 754-6060
22 employees
91,734 residents



Grant County Health District

"Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Grant County"

PLAN

Identify an opportunity and Plan for Improvement

1. Getting Started

The Onsite Sewer program as a whole has been running at a \$30,000-\$40,000 deficit each year. The largest activity in the program is the New System permitting activity. Improvements in the New System permitting activity will likely have a significant effect on the bottom line budget. Simply raising fees to cover costs is not acceptable.

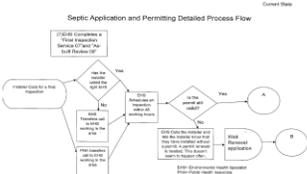
2. Assemble the Team

Ryan Brimacombe Accountant
Heidi Hawkins OSS PHA
Jeff Ketchel Administrator/EH Dir.
Jon Ness OSS Lead
Todd Phillips EH Facilitator



3. Examine the Current Approach

High level process flows were used to identify the major process steps of permitting a new septic system. Each major step was mapped with a detailed process flow diagram. Staff time tracking data helped define which steps consumed the most time and needed focus.



Septic System Permitting Process Improvement

4. Identify Potential Solutions

- Develop a consistent process to track permits pending, approved, and denied (required by RCW)
- Implement a design checklist as part of our application to reduce rejected permits
- Implement a review checklist for EHS's to ensure consistency among staff
- Standardize the order of Services in the review process
- Standardized communication to applicants (in writing rather than phone call only)
- Transfer final inspections to Designers/Engineers
- Increase application review time (from 10 days to 20 days)
- Eliminate identified time tracking mistakes

5. Develop an Improvement Theory

An improved system for tracking pending, approved, and denied permits would define what is done for the money and improve data collection. Implementing a design checklist will improve the quality of design submittals; Implementation of a review checklist will improve review efficiency and confidence; A standardized review process will eliminate redundant steps and potentially save time; Standardized communication would allow us to track permit status; Transferring final inspections could potentially save 77 minutes per application; Increasing the application review time would allow for more applications per trip to the field; Eliminating time tracking mistakes will improve data for future projects

6. Test the Theory

Establish a permitted, pending, denial process.
 Implement the checklists
 Implement the standardized process

- Includes communication
- Includes high level and detailed processes

 Explore a process for designer finals with our Stakeholder group and the Board of Health.
 Eliminate any time tracking mistakes.
 First stakeholder meetings do not favor extended review times.

STUDY

Use Data to Study Results of the Test

7. Study the Results

Continue to track time, and begin tracking reasons for pending applications (file documentation), to determine if there has been a decrease in average EHS time per application and consequent decrease in cost. Monitor customer satisfaction.

ACT

Standardize the Improvement and Establish Future Plans

8. Standardize the Improvement or Develop New Theory

Continue with the established process if our customers are still satisfied and we are seeing budget improvement. If we don't see budget improvements we will explore extended review times again. We will also look at ideas from our stakeholder group for improved processes.

9. Establish Future Plans

We plan to continue the QI project on the whole On-Site Sewer program, one activity at a time.

DO

Test the Theory for Improvement