



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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News Release

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Board to Hold Public Hearing on Onsite Septic Rules

Wednesday, March 9, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Department of Health, 310 Israel Road SE, Tumwater

The State Board of Health will hold two public hearings on proposed rule changes at its March 9 meeting in Tumwater:

- From 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., the Board will hold a hearing on proposed changes to the rules governing small onsite sewage systems. Given the complexity of the issues, the high level of public interest, the number of people expected to testify, and proposed legislation that would affect septic systems bordering some marine areas, the Board may postpone a vote until a future meeting.
- It will also hold a public hearing from 11:15 a.m. to noon on proposed language that would update and clarify the rules that require that children entering schools and child care be immunized against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. The Board is expected to vote on whether to adopt the proposed changes after taking public testimony.

The onsite sewage proposals would amend existing rules in view of new information on septic technology that has emerged since the last rule revision in 1995. Proposed changes to the onsite rule, which the Department of Health is to the Board, are intended to protect public health by updating the design, installation, and operation requirements for onsite sewage systems. The proposal would also move the specific criteria for registering the various types of products and technologies from guidance to rule and require local health departments to write plans for promoting proper operation and maintenance of onsite systems.

The proposed rule is based on draft language developed by the Onsite Rule Development Committee (RDC). Its 25 members and 14 alternates represent government agencies, the onsite

sewage industry, building and real estate, shellfish growers, environmental groups, academics and consumers. The RDC met 16 times between February 2002 and November 2003.

Copies of the agenda and related materials are available by contacting the Board of Health at (360) 236-4110 or by visiting the Board's Web site at <http://www.sboh.wa.gov/>. The emergency and press contact number for the Board during the meeting is (360) 701-2398.

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The State Board of Health serves the citizens of Washington by working to understand and prevent disease across the entire population. Established in 1889 by the State Constitution, the Board provides leadership by suggesting public health policies and actions, by regulating certain activities, and by providing a public forum. The governor appoints ten members who fill three-year terms. Visit the board's Web site at www.sboh.wa.gov.