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Revised

## Fact Sheet

# Operating permits for drinking water systems

*Information for Water Systems and Local Decision Makers*

State law requires all Group A public water systems to apply for an annual operating permit (Chapter 246-294 WAC). Group A water systems have 15 or more service connections or regularly serve 25 or more people 60 or more days per year.

The operating permit gives us a way to evaluate a system’s performance complying with drinking water requirements and presents the findings in a meaningful way to consumers, system owners and operators, permitting authorities, and lending institutions. The permit provides useable information about a water system’s adequacy to serve existing services or grow. We also use the operating permit as a tool to protect public health by ensuring drinking water is safe and reliable.

### Requirements for Group A water systems

Owners must get an operating permit each year. To do so, they complete and return an annual fee statement to us along with the appropriate fee. We process and issue operating permits throughout the year, based on system size and type.

### Evaluation and compliance

Operating permits serve as an enforcement tool and show the compliance status and adequacy of a public water system. To achieve this, we developed the following categories and recommendations:

Category	System is substantially:	We recommend you view this system as:
Green	In compliance with all requirements.	<b>Adequate</b> for existing uses and additional connections up to the approved number of connections unless it is already at capacity.
Yellow	In compliance with all requirements. But, it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was notified to submit a water system plan but hasn’t satisfied the planning requirement.</li> <li>Is under a compliance agreement for a state significant non-complier violation.</li> </ul>	<b>Adequate</b> for existing uses and additional connections up to the approved number, unless otherwise limited by a compliance agreement.
Blue	In compliance with requirements. However, the system does not meet design approval requirements or it has exceeded the number of approved connections we established.	<b>Adequate</b> for existing uses, but not adequate for adding new connections.
Red	In noncompliance with requirements.	<b>Inadequate</b> for existing uses and no additional connections be allowed. This may result in denial of home loans, building permits, on-site sewage disposal permits, food service permits, liquor licenses, and other permits or licenses for properties the system serves.



HELPING TO ENSURE SAFE AND RELIABLE DRINKING WATER

## **For More Information**

Visit us online at

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater.aspx> or call our regional office at:

Eastern Region, Spokane Valley 509-329-2100

Northwest Region, Kent 253-395-6750

Southwest Region, Tumwater 360-236-3030

Office of Drinking Water publications are online at

<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/dw/publications/publications.cfm>



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