



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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March 11, 2009

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Environmental Health Committee, State Board of Health—
Keith Higman, Karen VanDusen, and John Austin

SUBJECT: SEWAGE TANK RULE, CHAPTER 246-272C WAC

Background and Summary

Under RCW 43.20.050(2)(b), the State Board of Health has responsibility to “adopt rules and standards for prevention, control and abatement of health hazards and nuisances related to the disposal of wastes, solid and liquid...” The Board’s authority was modified by the Legislature in 2007 to apply only to systems with design flows of less than 3,500 gallons per day. The Board has adopted a set of rules in chapter 246-272A WAC for these small on-site sewage systems. The Board has also adopted a set of rules in chapter 246-272B WAC regarding systems with a design flow of 3,500 gallons or more per day. Authority for the large systems was transferred by the Legislature to the Department of Health in 2007. The Department is close to finishing a major revision of those large system rules.

The Department has guidelines (not rules) in place for the construction of the sewage tanks used in on-site wastewater systems. The Board filed a notice of proposed rule-making in 2004, which it revised in 2006, to update those standards and move them to rule status. The Department has worked with an advisory panel of technical experts to develop such proposed rules. The draft rules would require manufacturers to meet construction standards, meet testing requirements, and register with the Department. The draft rules would cover both pre-fabricated and cast-in-place tanks. The rules are not quite in final form yet. The Department expects to complete a proposal and develop the significant analysis for the proposal in the next few months with the intention of being prepared for a public hearing in July 2009. These rules would constitute a new chapter 246-272C WAC. The Department intends to include similar sewage tank standards in rule requirements for large systems.

Maryanne Guichard, Director of the Department’s Office of Shellfish and Water Protection, is here today to brief the Board on the status of proposed rules for sewage tanks. Please see materials behind Tab 05.

Recommended Board Action

No action recommended.