

Eastgate Environmental Health Services

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MEMORANDUM

November 5, 2015

TO: On-Site Sewage System Designers and Well Drillers

FROM: Lynn Schneider, On-site Sewage System Program Supervisor

RE: New Process for Reviewing Individual (Private) Well Proposals

The purpose of this memo is to specify the new process for reviewing applications for new individual wells, either as part of site application or as a stand-alone well site application. The King County Board of Health recently approved modifications to Title 13, 13.04.070 B.4.a and 4.b to comply with changes to the Department of Health WAC 246-291-320 and 246-291-170. WAC 246-291 is the Group B Public Water Systems regulations that were adopted on January 1, 2014. The amendments to the outdated King County Board of Health Code Title 13, update the King County code to comply with Washington State arsenic, nitrate, and coliform bacteria standards in WAC 246-291-170.

- WAC 246-291-170 as amended requires “**analytical test results from at least two raw water samples from the well indicating no presence of coliform bacteria**”.
- WAC 246-291-170 strengthens **the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic to 0.01 mg/l (milligrams per liter) or 10 ppb (parts per billion)**. The previous MCL was 0.05 mg/l or 50 ppb. That change was adopted to comply with the Federal EPA MCL for arsenic.

Based on these code amendments, especially for arsenic, the process for reporting water quantity and water quality data at the pre-installation inspection stage will be changed. It is not feasible to wait until the late stage of lot development to discover either water quantity or quality problems. **Please note that consistent with WAC 246-291, treatment for arsenic level exceedances will not be an option.** The new process for review will be as follows:

A. For OSS designs proposing individual wells as the drinking water source

- The designer or professional engineer will submit the site application in the usual manner with the same fees with the exceptions that well logs from neighboring properties will **not** be required and **covenant(s) should be submitted in draft form**. Critical Area Designation reviews from the building official are still required.
- Staff will sort out those site designs proposing individual wells for quicker review times as we will be reviewing these applications in a two-step process.
- Please review King County BOH Title 13.04.070 B.1.b. If the proposed well site is located within 10 feet of any lot line or potential source of contamination, a survey may be required.

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- If there are no issues with the proposed well site, a hold letter will be sent to the designer and applicant informing them that they may contact a well driller and proceed to well construction. The hold letter, unless otherwise specified will allow for a 6 month time frame for well construction. Once completed, the designer is to provide this office with recorded well covenant(s), **two (2)** bacteriological analyses (2 samples collected on the same day is acceptable), arsenic and nitrate analyses the well log, and the results of a **four (4) hour pump test**. Air tests and bailer tests are not acceptable. All documents must be legible. If water quality and quantity results are acceptable, the OSS design review will be completed.
- If minimum water quantity or water quality requirements cannot be met, the application may be disapproved.
- If there are critical well site or OSS design issues, the application may be disapproved.
- If there are well site or OSS design issues, those will be specified in the hold letter with an appropriate time frame for resolution.

B. For stand-alone well site applications

- The process will be the same but without OSS review issues.

We understand that these changes may have profound impacts for some property owners and developers, especially in those areas of the county with elevated arsenic levels or in low water attainment areas. However, the King County Board of Health Title 13 must be in compliance with all state regulations.

This new process will go into effect on November 14, 2015. All applications received prior to November 14, 2015 will be reviewed as normal. Wells applied for prior to November 14, 2015 with arsenic level greater than 0.01 mg/l (10 ppb) but less than 0.050 mg/l (50 ppb) will be reviewed consistent with the Industry Memo dated December 14, 2014. All industry Memos are available on the On-site Sewage System Program website at:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/ehs/wastewater/pros/memorandums.aspx> .

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