

Public Hearings on Wastewater/ Stormwater Discharge Permit Fees

Background

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) administers state and federal permits to regulate wastewater and stormwater discharges into Washington's surface and underground waters. In accordance with state water pollution control law (RCW 90.48.465), all permit holders are required to pay annual permit fees. Ecology uses the fee money to recover eligible costs associated with operating Ecology's wastewater discharge permit program.

Proposed Changes to the Fee Regulation

Every two years, Ecology amends the fee regulation, as needed, to continue funding the program. Accordingly, Ecology proposes to make the following changes to the permit fee rule, Chapter 173-224 WAC - Wastewater Discharge Permit Fees:

- Increase the annual permit fee for permit holders by the fiscal growth factor of 5.57% for fiscal year 2009 (July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009) as authorized by the state Legislature.
- Add language that will allow a fee increase by the fiscal growth factor of 5.39% for fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010) if authorized by the state Legislature.
- Define seafood processing and what permitted activities fit into that fee category.
- Increase the maximum extreme hardship fee reduction from \$100 to \$106 for fiscal year 2009 and \$112 for fiscal year 2010.
- Change current language to allow for proration of fees for aquatic pest control permits so they are treated the same as other permit holders.

Public Comment

Ecology will accept written comments on the proposed changes until 5 p.m., July 15, 2008. Send comments to:

Department of Ecology
Attn: Bev Poston
PO Box 47600, Olympia WA 98504-7600
Fax number: (360) 407-7131
E-mail address: bpos461@ecy.wa.gov

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE

Ecology will hold a short workshop, immediately followed by a public hearing at the following locations, dates, and times:

July 8, 2008 - Lacey

1 p.m.

Lacey Timberland Library
500 College Way S.E.

July 9, 2008 - Ellensburg

1 p.m.

Hal Holmes Community Center
201 N. Ruby St.

July 10, 2008 - Spokane

1 p.m.

Spokane Regional Library
South Hill Branch
3324 S. Perry

Special accommodations:

If you need this publication in an alternate format, call the Water Quality Program at 360-407-6700. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

Following the public comment period, Ecology will review and consider all comments. Ecology proposes to adopt the final rule on August 5, 2008. The rule would become effective September 6, 2008.

The proposed rule language is available for review on Ecology's website at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/permit_fees/index.htm

For more information

If you would like more information about the hearings or proposed changes, or would like a copy of the final changes mailed to you, please contact Bev Poston at 360-407-6425 or send an email to bpos461@ecy.wa.gov.