

What are the Surface Water Quality Standards?

Washington's surface water quality standards are the basis for protecting and regulating the quality of surface waters in Washington. The standards set limits on pollution in our lakes, rivers, and marine waters in order to protect beneficial uses such as swimming and fishing.

What activities are taking place?

Ecology will initiate two separate actions in fall 2010:

1. A rule making to make minor corrections and clarifications to the Water Quality Standards rule.
2. The triennial review. Federal regulations require that states hold public hearings at least once every three years to review applicable surface water quality standards and, as appropriate, adopt new or modified standards. This process is called a *triennial review*.

Ecology will begin a 45-day public review on the minor corrections and clarifications in October. A public hearing will take place during the public review period. Locations and time will be available online on the rule revision activities web page (link available at right).

To receive feedback on the triennial review, Ecology will hold workshops across the state later in fall 2010.

What are the minor corrections and clarifications proposed to the water quality standards?

The following are examples of the proposed rule changes:

- Missing references to a section of the rule.
- Clarifications/errors such as eliminating text pertaining only to fresh waters that appears in the marine section.
- Imprecise or erroneous latitude/longitude values or incorrect section-township-range locations in the use designation table (Table 602).

TO LEARN MORE

About the standards

The water quality standards are established to sustain public health and public enjoyment of the waters and the propagation and protection of fish, shellfish, and wildlife.

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/swqs/index.html

About rule revision activities

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/swqs/rule_rev-timeline.html

Timelines and public meeting announcements (times and locations) will be posted on this web site.

About the triennial review process

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/swqs/triennial_review.html

Contact information

Becca Conklin
360-407-6413
swqs@ecy.wa.gov

Special accommodations

To ask about the availability of this document in a version for the visually impaired, call the Water Quality Program at 360-407-6404.

Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

What is the triennial review?

Federal regulations require Ecology to hold periodic public workshops (approximately once every three years) to review the surface water quality standards. This process is called a triennial review. It is an opportunity for an open dialogue between Ecology, other government agencies, tribes, and the public on how to improve the standards and how Ecology implements the program.

Goals of the triennial review:

- Provide a forum to discuss issues regarding the surface water quality standards and their implementation.
- Ensure that the latest scientific information is considered.
- Examine the state standards as they relate to any new federal requirements.
- Provide guidance to understand or better use the standards.

Anticipated activity timeframe

Anticipated Activity Timeframe for Minor Rule Change	
Summer 2010	Outreach with interested stakeholders and tribes.
August 2010	File Pre-proposal Statement of Inquiry (CR-101) for minor rule changes.
October 2010	File Proposed Rule-Making Order (CR-102) with a 45-day public review.
December 2010	File Rule Making Order (CR-103) to adopt minor rule changes.
Anticipated Activity Timeframe for Triennial Review	
Summer 2010	Outreach with interested stakeholders and tribes.
Fall 2010	Host triennial review workshops around the state.
Winter/Spring 2011	Prioritize issues for action based on feedback from triennial review.

How can I get more information about these activities?

Information about the triennial review and rule revision activities is available on the water quality standards web site www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/swqs/rule_rev-timeline.html.

Where do I submit comments?

Email: swqs@ecy.wa.gov
 Mail: Surface Water Quality Standards
 Coordinator: Becca Conklin
 Washington Department of Ecology
 P.O. Box 47600
 Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Phone: 360-407-6413/Fax: 360-407-6426