

Focus on: Hiring a Certified Water Right Examiner



More information

[Certified water right examiner program webpage](https://ecology.wa.gov/CWRE)

<https://ecology.wa.gov/CWRE>

Contact information

Rebecca Inman
CWRE Coordinator
360-819-0772
CWRE@ecy.wa.gov

ADA Accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6872 or email at WRpubs@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.

The Certified Water Right Examiner Program

If you have fully developed your water use under a water right permit or change authorization, you may be required to hire a certified water right examiner to verify your water use. The water right examiner (CWRE) will do a proof exam, which includes a field visit to verify how much water you are using and that you have met all the conditions of your permit. The certified water right examiner then prepares a report, which is submitted to Ecology.

Once Ecology receives this verification of your water use and that you have met the conditions of your permit, we will issue a Certificate of Water Right. This certificate is the legal record of your water right, and is recorded at your county auditor's office. Once Ecology issues a certificate, the water right is considered appurtenant (attached) to the land on which the water is used.

Hiring the examiner

The water right holder is responsible for contacting and hiring a licensed certified water right examiner. Ecology maintains a list of those currently certified as water right examiners, which provides contact information and identifies their service areas. The [CWRE list](#) (Publication 20-11-087) is available on our website and directly from our offices. The water right holder negotiates and pays for the CWRE services directly. Ecology is not involved in the selection and hiring, and cannot recommend specific individuals.

Proof exams

The certified water right examiner reviews your water right file, visits your project site, measures water use, verifies the purpose and place of use, and confirms all other requirements of water use authorization have been met. The examiner summarizes the findings in a proof report of examination that is sent to Ecology.

Processing proof exam reports

Ecology has a total of 60 days to review the proof report of examination and issue a final decision. During the first 30 days, Ecology must review the CWRE proof report of examination for errors or deficiencies. If necessary, the clock stops while the certified water right examiner corrects and resubmits the report. Ecology then has another 30 days to review the report and issue a final decision.

Resolving issues

If you disagree with the information in the proof report of examination, you have the authority to withdraw the report during Ecology's review period if Ecology has not yet issued a decision. You must submit your request in writing to the regional office where the report is under review.

Each certified water right examiner must also adhere to a professional code of conduct. Ecology has the authority to temporarily suspend or fully revoke the certification of a water right examiner who fails to comply with the code of conduct or for performing inadequate or shoddy work. If you believe the work of the water right examiner was not done properly or have other complaints, you can file those with Ecology's CWRE Coordinator.

Assuring you're ready

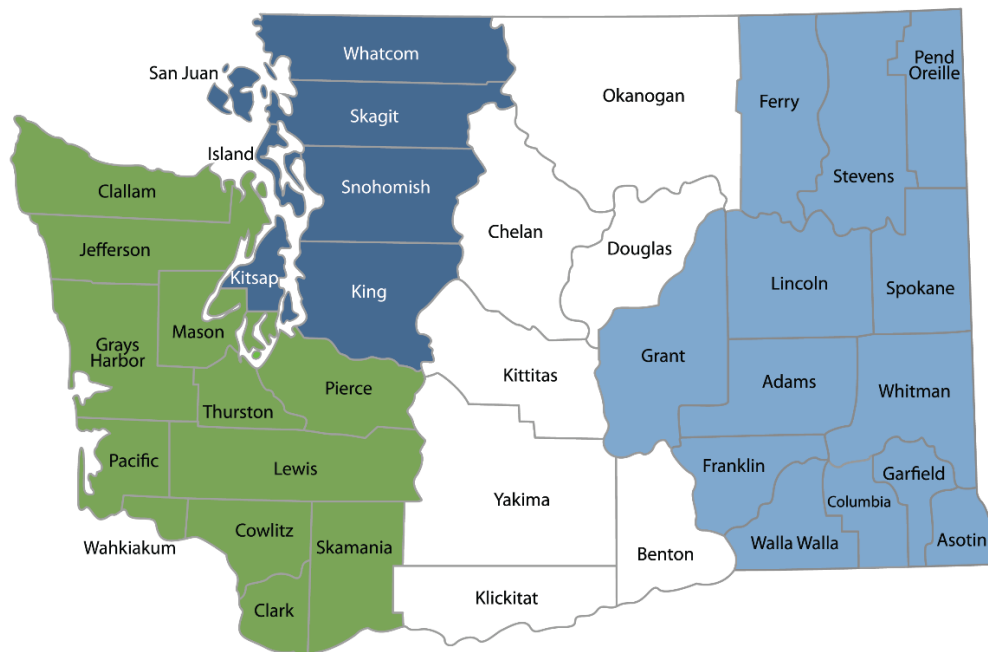
Before you hire a certified water right examiner you should ensure that your project is fully developed and that the authorization is consistent with actual use. Aspects you should consider include:

- If the permit or change authorization is not in your name, an Assignment of Application or Permit to Appropriate or Store Water (ECY 040-1-61) must be filed.
- If your project is not fully developed, you should file for an extension of your development schedule rather than submit your Proof of Appropriation form. For example, this would be appropriate in situations where only a portion of a planned housing development has been constructed and further development is likely; or you are irrigating only a portion of the acreage you intend to irrigate.
- Some time may have lapsed since you filed your proof of appropriation. Has your point of withdrawal or diversion changed? Is your place of use consistent with your authorization? Have you altered the purpose of use? In any of these cases, you may need to file a change application or modify water use to conform to the permit requirements before the proof examination is performed.

If your project is complete, but you are consistently using less water than originally authorized, no change or extension is necessary but your certificate will reflect your project's actual water demand. In no instance should you be using more water than authorized in your permit or change authorization unless you have a separate water right that covers it.

More information

The CWRE Program website and CWRE Coordinator contact information is listed on page 1. You may also contact Water Resources staff at the Ecology Regional Office serving the area where your water use project is located. Please see the regional map and contact information below.



Southwest Region 360-407-6300	Northwest Region 206-594-0000	Central Region 509-575-2490	Eastern Region 509-329-3400
----------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------

Region	Mailing Address	Phone	Counties Served
Southwest	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum
Northwest	P.O. Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133-9716	206-594-0000	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom
Central	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima
Eastern	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman