



**Cowlitz County
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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The Water Flows

Volume 2

Group B Public Drinking Water Newsletter

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Sentry Internet

The Washington State Department of Health has created an online database with information about all public water systems in the state. The database can be accessed at:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/sentry.htm>

Information available on the online database includes:

- General Water System Information
- Water Sample Results
- Owner/Manager Contact Information
- Water Source Information
- Type Of Treatment Used
- Water Facilities Inventory

Please note that it generally takes a couple of months after water samples are collected before results are posted on the online database.

If you notice any corrections that need to be made, please feel free to make a note on the annual water certificate application.

Nitrate Sampling

Nitrates from fertilizers, manure or sewage systems can be carried by rain or irrigation water down through the soil and into the groundwater that your well may draw from.

Nitrate levels above 10ppm can cause blue baby syndrome in infants under 1 year of age.

Nitrate samples are required every three years for each water source that serves a Group B water system.

Nitrate samples should be taken prior to the distribution system but after any treatment that might be on the water system.

Revisions To Group B Regulations Are Being Considered

In July of 2007 the Washington State Department of Health filed a proposal to revise WAC 246-291 Group B Public Water Systems. The purpose of this rule change is to address the following:

- Provide Clarity on Design Standards
- Provide Clarity on the Regulatory requirements for small businesses
- Revise the Arsenic Standard and other standards for known contaminants to be consistent with updated public health protection standards.

The current timeline for this rule development is:

- April 2008 Rule Development
- May 2008 Informal Review of Draft Regulation
- September 2008 Formal Public Hearings
- December 2008 Rule Adopted
- January 2009 Rule Effective

As more information is revealed about the proposed changes to the rules information will be sent to Group B water systems as they become available and as information about the Public Hearings is available.

Please note the Health Department no longer accepts water samples on Fridays

Coliform Sampling Location

After a review of this years bacteria samples, it was discovered that several systems were taking bacteria samples at the well house.

WAC 246-291 requires Group B water systems to collect bacteria samples annually from the furthest end of the distribution system.

If you are sampling from the well/pump house; a new location for routine bacteria sampling needs to be selected.

Since some sampling locations can cause false positive samples, be sure to select a spigot that is not considered a poor sampling site for bacteria sampling.

These bad sample locations include:

- swivel faucet
- hot and cold mixing faucets with a single lever
- leaky faucets
- janitorial sinks
- frost-free hose bibs
- faucets below or near ground level.

Water Sample Labs

Below is a list of locations that provide water sampling services in the area besides CCHD. Call ahead of time for schedule and prices.

- Addy Lab - 360-750-0055
2517 E. Evergreen Blvd, Vancouver
- Columbia Analytical - 360-577-7222
1317 S. 13th Ave, Kelso
- Hi-School Pharmacy - 360-225-9478
1365 Lewis River Road, Woodland
- Lewis County HD - 360-740-1231
360 NW North St, Chehalis
- Wahkiakum Health - 360-795-6207
64 Main St, Cathlamet

Water Samples

Cowlitz County Group B Water Systems who submit their samples to Cowlitz County Health Department in 2008 will be able to get the sample done at cost pricing:

- Bacteria \$18.00
- Nitrate \$18.00

Program Contact Info

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Protecting Your Well

The water system's well(s) should be inspected periodically to ensure adequate protection against vandalism, contamination and deterioration.

The wellhead(s) should be visually inspected to ensure:

- The ground around the casing drains away from the well
- Electrical conduits are intact and don't provide entry into the well casing for contaminants
- The top of the wellhead is at least six inches off the ground
- There are no cracks or excessive wear on the well structure
- Rodents are excluded from nesting near the well or in the well-house

- The screen on the vent is intact and is size 24 mesh

Activities that need to be avoided within 100 feet of the wellhead include:

- Parking or washing vehicles
- Vehicle maintenance
- Storing chemicals, fertilizers, cleaners, pesticides, etc.
- Applying pesticides, fertilizers, manure, etc. on the ground
- Housing or grazing animals (i.e. horses, cows, chicken, dogs, etc.)
- Allowing rainwater or runoff to pond or drain near the well
- Construction of buildings

Communication with residents living near the well should be done periodically to remind them of their responsibility to not engage in activities that could potentially contaminate the water.

If any road or driveway is near the well casing, a barrier should be installed between the driveway and the well to prevent the well from being damaged by a vehicle accidentally hitting the casing.

The well casing should be protected from vandalism by keeping it in a locked structure if it is not in a secluded area.

All equipment such as pressure tanks and treatment systems need to be kept locked in a pump room or other structure to prevent unwanted access.

Information for Systems That Use Chlorination as a Treatment

Systems that use chlorine are required to monitor free chlorine residuals daily and record the readings on a log. These records are required to be kept by the water system for at least three years.

When no free chlorine residual is detected during testing, the chlorinator needs to be adjusted immediately to establish a free chlorine residual. The recommended minimum free chlorine residual is .2 ppm, however this minimum may depend on the requirements of the individual water system.

Chlorine residuals are required to be taken using a DPD style field test kit with a range

that reads from 0 to 3.5ppm with a smallest reading increment of .1ppm.

You should be able to purchase a test kit from a water treatment company or from a lab equipment company such as Hach (1-800-525-5940)

Liquid chlorine supplies should be stored:

- To maintain a 15 to 30 day supply of chlorine in storage, storing for excessive lengths of time will degrade the chlorine solution
- With tight covers under cool, dark

conditions. Higher temperatures and sunlight reduces the strength of sodium hypochlorite.

Inspect chlorinators for proper operation including:

- Checking to see if the feeder is broken or plugged
- Inspect lines to make sure they are not clogged or kinked
- Inspect solution tanks to see if they are clean

Sanitary Surveys

The sanitary survey is a health department tool used to assess public water systems in Cowlitz County. Surveys provide guidance for water system operators in order to help provide safe water. The Cowlitz County Health Department intends to perform surveys on systems about every five to seven years.

Most systems have already had a survey within the last five years and the last of the systems without surveys should have a survey within the next year.

Scheduling for the next round of surveys

will prioritize systems that have had bacteriological problems, lack of water sampling, water quantity issues or other critical items identified during a previous survey.

Surveys are comprehensive inspections that look at:

- Water Sample History
- Water System Sources
- Sanitary Control Area
- Water System Security

- Pumphouse Equipment
- Water System Operations

If any corrections have been made as a result of a deficiency noted on a previous survey, please feel free to contact the health department to schedule a time to follow-up and verify any corrections that have been made.

Also, if you would like a new copy of the last survey for your water system please feel free to contact the health department and we will send a copy for your records.