

CLALLAM COUNTY ON-SITE SEPTIC WORK GROUP

Monday, September 24, 2007

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Board of County Commissioners' meeting room (160)

Clallam County Courthouse

Port Angeles, WA

MEETING SUMMARY

Work Group Members Present:

Andy Brastad, Clallam County Environmental Health
Mark Bowman, ShoreBank
Dale Brown, Arrow Septic
John Cambalik, Puget Sound Partnership
John Cerutti, Acme Septic/OMI / O&M Providers
Virginia Clark, Public Health Advisory Committee
Glenn Cutler, City of Port Angeles
Hansi Hals, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Jerry Jacobs, On-Site Services / Permit Advisory Board
Tom Martin, Clallam County PUD #1
Michael McAleer, Remax Fifth Avenue / Realty Interests
Randall McCoy, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
Jean Sigmar, Port Angeles Citizen Representative
Ken Warren, Soils Application, Inc. / Septic Designers
Roger Wheeler, RJ Services, Inc. / Septic Installers and Building Professionals

Others Present:

Iva Burks, Clallam County Health & Human Services
Dave Calloway, Citizen
Ron Garcelon, SoilTech
Susan Gulick, Sound Resolutions (*Work Group Facilitator*)
Bruce Gjertsen, The Meadows Inn
Roland Griffith, Citizen
Bob Hoyle, Citizen
Mary Kney, Citizen
Tom Lee, Citizen
M.J. Linton, Citizen
Liz Maier, Clallam County Environmental Health
Rod Normandin, Citizen
Janine Reed, Clallam County Environmental Health
Howard Siderits, Citizen
Charles Strickland, Citizen
Larry Tritshler, Citizen

1. Updates/Status Reports

- ❑ Andy Brastad reviewed the OSS plan requirements for County actions. He also reviewed the grants the County has applied for to receive funding for these actions.
- ❑ Grants were denied for water quality monitoring and for compliance actions (proposal was for a pilot project to educate homeowners to inspect their own OSS).
- ❑ A grant was approved that will fund continuation of the OSS Work Group and a feasibility study of the OSS assessment recommended by the Work Group. It will also fund enhancements to the County's database.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Susan Gulick of Sound Resolutions at (206) 548-0469 or by e-mail at Susan@Soundresolutions.com.

- ❑ The County will be submitting another grant proposal for MRA implementation. The County will also be submitting a Centennial Clean Water Grant for some septic-related activities.
- ❑ A draft letter of support for the Centennial grant will be circulated to the Work Group. Members are encouraged to modify the draft letter as desired and send to the State. A letter from the Work Group as a whole will also be developed.
- ❑ Organizations (such as the Realtors Association and other associations) are also encouraged to submit letters of support. This process needs to start soon because it takes time to get approvals from boards of directors.

2. Plan Implementation and OSS Ordinance

- ❑ Susan reviewed the implementation requirements in the OSS plan.
- ❑ The County is asking for Work Group input on two of the requirements: OSS maintenance providers' certification requirements and requirements for OSS inspections at the time of property transfer. These requirements are being addressed in the County's revised OSS code, which is currently out for public comment.
- ❑ In addition, Andy would like to discuss the MRA boundary with the Work Group.

3. Requirements for Septic System Maintenance Providers

- ❑ The Work Group reviewed recommendations from a 2004 ad hoc group which addressed certification requirements for professional OSS maintenance providers.
- ❑ The Work Group agreed that the continuing education requirements for O&M providers should be the same as for installers (currently at least 5 hours of approved classroom training time, or ½ CEU, each year). They also noted that fees recommended in 2004 should be reevaluated for 2007.
- ❑ The Work Group does not favor the two-tiered certification process recommended by the ad hoc group (where Tier 1 certification would be for conventional OSS, pump to conventional OSS, and tanks, and Tier 2 certification would include other alternative OSS). Instead, they favor a process where an O&M Technician must work under the supervision of an O&M Specialist for a period of time to qualify for O&M Specialist certification. Training requirements for the O&M Specialist would cover all conventional and alternative OSS except for proprietary devices (which require manufacturer's approval)..
- ❑ It was suggested that Peninsula College and/or the North Olympic Peninsula Skills Center would be good venues to provide training for technicians.
- ❑ County staff will put together an outline for these ideas and work with a sub-set of the Work Group to finalize draft language for the ordinance revision.

4. Inspection Requirements upon Transfer of Property

- ❑ Andy reviewed the current requirements in state law requiring septic inspections at the time of property sales. The WAC states: "At the time of property transfer, [the OSS owner must] provide to the buyer maintenance records, if available." The Work Group had recommended that the County adopt an ordinance requiring proof of a successful professional OSS inspection at the time of sale or transfer of property. The County is considering including requirements in the County's revised OSS code.
- ❑ The Work Group discussed the concern that there may not be enough inspectors in the area to complete the required inspections in a timely manner; the Work Group did not want to see a home sale held up because an inspection could not be scheduled.

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- ❑ It was noted that the first three years would be the most difficult; thereafter, most homes will have inspections completed in accordance with the new requirements in state law.
- ❑ The Work Group recommended that the requirement to complete an inspection prior to the sale or transfer of property go into effect in three years (2010). The County should inform the public and the real estate community that this requirement is coming and encourage them to begin complying now.
- ❑ It was suggested that the County should revisit this requirement in 2009 to assess the OSS industry's capacity to meet the demand for OSS inspections.
- ❑ The Work Group discussed the definition of a "current" OSS inspection report. The group decided that to meet the requirement for inspection at time of property transfer, the inspection must have been conducted within the year.

5. MRA Boundary

- ❑ Andy explained that there is part of Clallam County on Discovery Bay that is not currently included in the Marine Recovery Area. This area includes Diamond Point on the Miller Peninsula. Discovery Bay has recently had a shellfish downgrade. Because the MRA is supposed to include all areas where there are shellfish downgrades, Andy asked whether the Work Group would like to modify its recommendation and include Diamond Point as part of the MRA. The northeastern boundary of the MRA would be extended to the county line to pull in Diamond Point.
- ❑ Andy also explained that the Puget Sound Partnership, which is leading efforts to restore Puget Sound by 2020, is sectioning Puget Sound into seven management districts called Action Areas. The Strait of Juan de Fuca Action Area extends from Cape Flattery east to Point Wilson at Port Townsend and includes Discovery Bay. Clallam County and Jefferson County should be coordinating efforts in the Action Area, such as addressing water quality problems in Discovery Bay. Development on Diamond Point could affect water quality in Discovery Bay.
- ❑ If Diamond Point is included in the MRA, OSS owners there would be required to have an O&M professional perform the first inspection of their OSS.
- ❑ A Work Group member who used to live near Diamond Point commented that there are OSS issues out there.
- ❑ A Work Group member was supportive but pointed out that including Diamond Point would add hundreds of OSS to the MRA. There is a lot of work to do already, and this would just add more.
- ❑ A Work Group member commented that OSS owners on the Jefferson side of the county line should be held to the same OSS maintenance standards required of Diamond Point residents.
- ❑ The Work Group recommends that the MRA boundary be modified to include Diamond Point. However, the Work Group also believes that any requirements for homeowners on Discovery Bay should be as similar as possible for both Jefferson and Clallam County residents.

6. Public Comment

- ❑ There are concerns about how the County is going to pay for all of this. Grants will run out. Will the County charge tax-payers?

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- The State set up the MRAs, right? What are the boundaries? (*Response: The State did not set up the MRA boundaries. Determining MRA boundaries was left up to the local health jurisdictions.*)
- Why are inspection requirements different for conventional and alternative systems? (*Response: State regulations require different inspection frequencies for conventional and alternative OSS.*)
- Septic system maintenance providers should have a business license or be employees of a business.

7. Upcoming Meetings

- The next Work Group meeting will likely be in January. In general, the County expects to hold quarterly Work Group meetings (i.e. every 3 months) through 2008. The meetings will be targeted for Monday evenings from 6-8 p.m.