

Jefferson County Public Health Performance Measures

2012 Year End Report

DRINKING WATER PROGRAM

MISSION: The mission of the Drinking Water Program is to protect public health by assuring that residents and visitors to Jefferson County have access to a safe and reliable supply of quality drinking water and that it is reasonably available. By enforcing and monitoring laws regulating public and private water supplies, the Drinking Water Program minimizes the threat of waterborne disease.

GOALS FOR FY 2012:

1. Assure that all new wells are constructed in accordance with requirements established by the Washington Department of Ecology.
2. Provide technical assistance when requested so that individual water supplies are safe.
3. Limit public exposure to water systems with known deficiencies.
4. Integrate water adequacy review with compliance to the In-stream Flow Rule and Seawater Intrusion ordinance.
5. Work toward coordination with other permitting agencies to ensure consistence compliance with drinking water requirements. Those include DOH (in-stream flow rule and public water supplies), Washington State Department of Agriculture (food processing permit applications), JC food safety and onsite septic programs and JC Department of Community Development.

OBJECTIVES FOR FY 2012:

1. Inspect at least 50% of all new wells constructed with 25% of these with the well driller present and 90% of all wells being de-commissioned.
2. Maintain high rates of compliance with state well drilling regulations.
3. Review all building permits and project applications to assure that potable water supplies meet basic public health standards as well comply with state statutory and regulatory requirements.
4. Provide technical guidance to any residents requesting assistance with their individual or small water systems to deliver safe drinking water.
5. Establish appropriate policies for alternative water supply systems.
6. Continue contracting with Washington Department of Health for public water supply projects, as long as adequate funding is provided.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 Final
Number of well applications received & reviewed	126	127	76	83	61	56	36
Number of new wells start notification (drilled) (includes some well applications from previous years)	131	108	79	77	62	57	24
Number of wells decommissioned	13	16	17	8	13	12	12
Number of new wells inspected (start notification received)	70	67	48	53	32	31	12
Percent of new wells (starts) inspected	53%	62%	63%	68%	52%	54%	50%
Number of inspected wells with driller on site (includes new and decommissioned wells)	New Categories Added in 2010				25	28	9
Percent of inspected wells with driller on site					55%	65%	75%
Number of decommissioned wells inspected	13	16	17	8	13	12	12
Percent decommissioned well inspected	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

SUMMARY OF KEY FUNDING/SERVICE ISSUES:

- Updates and improvements to our database as well as shifting existing programs into Tidemark have facilitated data transfer across multiple departments for better coordination and efficiency.
- Future performance measures have been substantially modified to more accurately capture goals and objectives that relate directly to tasks. This will require new reporting processes in tidemark and additional features for accurate tracking. Focus must continue to be on maintaining consistent data entry, verify accuracy and determine ways to make information readily available for the public. Standard operating procedures must be completed to ensure processes are documented and consistent work is maintained regardless of future staffing changes.
- There continues to be a need to establish a consistent and adequate funding source to focus on water issues in Jefferson County. Water quality and quantity is a topic expected to be at the forefront of future economic and environmental sustainability for quite some time to come. Lacking appropriate resources directed to the issue, public health may be at a severe disadvantage to appropriately respond to the broad range of issues in this regard.
- Public outreach included two speaking events for business classes associated with future farmers through programs with WSU and two public meetings with a particular focus on permitting issues, also through WSU.

2012 STUDY/ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

- Applications for well inspections continue to be down substantially. There has been a roughly 50% decrease in the number of wells drilled in the county this year as compared to 2008. According to information from the Department of Ecology drilling activities have been declining across the State since 2008, basically mirroring economic conditions. The slight increase in well drilling activity in 2009 can be attributed to public anticipation of the pending WRIA 17 In stream flow water rule that was implemented on December 31, 2010.
- The number of well decommissioning can be directly attributed to septic permitting activities together with the expansion of public water service to areas previously not served. We are also tracking a decommissioning that occurs as a result of an initial attempt to drill, where the result is either dry or untreatable water (mostly chlorides) and the well is decommissioned, prior to the driller leaving the site. That process of tracking started approximately 2007.
- The economic downturn impacting application submittals, together with County general fund reductions are resulting in staff program reassignments toward grant funded projects. Staffing in the drinking water program has been reduced to approximately .3 FTE.
- As funding sources dissipate, issues related to drinking water become less preventative based and more complaint driven.
- In house expertise is being eroded with un-sustained funding. There are limitation on trainings/seminar attendance and multi-jurisdictional interaction related to water issues. These forums give rise to new and creative means to initiate policy development for alternative water supplies processes and conservation measures that minimize impacts of water shortages.
- Coordinated Water System Planning in the county has been disabled and water resource planning units have lost funding. These are not promising trends.