



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Rule Implementation Plan

Upper Kittitas Ground Water Rule

Chapter 173-539A WAC

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Publication and Contact Information

This report is available on the Department of Ecology's website at:
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cro/kittitas_wp.html.

For more information contact:

Barbara Anderson
Water Resources Program
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

E-mail: barbara.anderson@ecy.wa.gov
Phone: 360-407-6607

Washington State Department of Ecology - www.ecy.wa.gov

Headquarters, Olympia	360-407-6000
Northwest Regional Office, Bellevue	425-649-7000
Southwest Regional Office, Olympia	360-407-6300
Central Regional Office, Yakima	509-575-2490
Eastern Regional Office, Spokane	509-329-3400

Ecology publishes this document to meet the requirements of the Washington State Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.325)

To ask about the availability of this document in a version for the visually impaired, call the Water Resources Program at 360-407-6872.

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Table of Contents

Purpose.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Implementation and Enforcement.....	1
Informing and Educating Persons Affected by the Rule.....	1
Promoting and Assisting Voluntary Compliance.....	2
Evaluating the Rule	2
Training and Informing Ecology Staff.....	2
List of Supporting Documents that May Need to be Written or Revised.....	2
More Information	2
Contact Information	3

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Purpose

Ecology provides the information in this implementation plan to meet agency and Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.328) requirements related to rule adoptions.

Introduction

The purpose of this rule implementation plan is to inform those who must comply with Chapter 173-539A WAC the Upper Kittitas Ground Water rule about how the Department of Ecology (Ecology) intends to:

- Implement and enforce the rule.
- Inform and educate persons affected by the rule.
- Promote and assist voluntary compliance for the rule.
- Evaluate the rule.
- Train and inform Ecology staff about the new or amended rule.

Also included in this plan is information about:

- Supporting documents that may need to be written or revised because of the new rule or amended rule.
- Other resources where more information about the rule is available.
- Contact information for Ecology employees who can answer questions about the rule implementation.

Implementation and Enforcement

This rule meets our agency's priority for "Successful Water Management" by providing a regulatory framework that provides for responsible exempt groundwater well development and enhanced protection of water resources in the Yakima Basin, specifically western Kittitas County. The resources the department intends to use:

- A full time water master that provides technical assistance to the County's SEPA process and informational education and outreach materials and assistance to citizens, developers, and water right holders.
- Persons proposing to use groundwater shall apply to Ecology for a permit to appropriate public groundwater or, if seeking to use groundwater under the exemption, shall submit to Ecology a request for determination of that the proposed exempt use would be water budget neutral. Ecology will assign staff to review the applications and requests for determination.

Informing and Educating Persons Affected by the Rule

The communication strategy covers both the emergency rule and adoption of a permanent rule for the Management of Exempt Water Wells in Kittitas County, Chapter 173-539A. The rule provides a mechanism for Ecology to manage groundwater supplies in Kittitas County.

Ecology will notify interested parties of the proposed rule and timelines by doing a postal mailings or e-mail distributions and listserv notices.

Promoting and Assisting Voluntary Compliance

As part of a permit application to appropriate public groundwater or a request for a determination of water budget neutrality, applicants or requesters will provide the following information to assist with voluntary compliance:

- identification of one or more water rights that would be placed into the trust water right program to offset the consumptive use associated with the proposed new use of groundwater;
- a site map;
- the area to be irrigated (in acres);
- a soil report, if proposed discharge is to a septic system and the applicant or requestor proposes to deviate from the values in WAC 173-539A-040(1)(b);
- a property covenant that restricts or prohibits trees or shrubs over the septic drain field; and
- a copy of the sewer utility agreement, if the proposed wastewater discharge is to a sanitary sewer system.

Applications to appropriate public groundwater or requests for determination of water budget neutrality that do not include the information listed above will be rejected and returned to the applicant.

No new permit exempt withdrawals of groundwater under RCW 90.44.050 may be commenced unless Ecology has approved a request for determination that the proposed exempt use would be water budget neutral.

Evaluating the Rule

The rule will provide both enhanced protection of water resources in one of the State's most water short basins yet allow responsible economic growth through management measures for the use of the groundwater well exemption. Measures to assess progress will be a reduction in the misuse of the groundwater permit exemption to supply water to subdivisions, and creation and use of a water banking mitigation program to support responsible and fully mitigated growth in western Kittitas County.

Training and Informing Ecology Staff

Ecology's water resource management and staff will be briefed on the rule through direct communication of the Water Resources Management Team and subsequent staff meetings, Web site, email notification and regional office visits as may be necessary to educate and inform those staff dealing with applicants wanting to withdraw groundwater within their regional office jurisdictions.

List of Supporting Documents that May Need to be Written or Revised

Ecology's Water Resource Program Central Regional Office will add this rule and implementation measures to its current list of activities associated with processing water right change applications, conservancy board decisions and review of Kittitas County SEPA decisions affecting land use and the use of the groundwater exemption as may be applicable in the area identified in rule (western Kittitas County).

More Information

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cro/kittitas_wp.html

Contact Information

Bob Barwin
Ecology's Central Regional Office
15 W. Yakima Ave., Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902
Phone: (509) 457-7140
Email: robert.barwin@ecy.wa.gov