

Skagit County Public Health

Winter Water Table Review Procedure Options

January 2026



Purpose

- Seeking direction from Board of Health (BOH) on proposed written winter water table review procedures for Skagit County Public Health.



Agenda

- Background
 - State and local regulations for On-Site Sewage (OSS) permitting including winter wet season review
 - Examples from other Public Health Departments
- Initial draft procedure
- Direction from Board of Health



Background – OSS Regulations

Chapter 246-272A WAC, On-site sewage systems

- Permitting, construction & maintenance of OSS systems
- References various documents including
 - WA DOH Standards & Guidance documents,
 - Other State and Federal OSS manuals

Skagit County Code (SCC) 12.05 On-site sewage code

- Permitting, construction & maintenance of OSS systems
- SCC has some additional requirements for local issues



Background - OSS Regulation (cont.)

WAC 246-272A-0220, Soil and site evaluation

SCC 12.05.110, Soil and site evaluation

- Need to determine highest seasonal water table.
- If evidence of mottling less than 18 inches from surface, then measure water table during months of winter water table.
- Wet season review may show mottling is historical.
- Allows designer to design OSS which will work for specific site



Wet Season Review – written procedures

	Tacoma-Pierce HD	Kitsap HD	King CHD	Thurston HD	Clallum HD
Review timeframe	Dec. - April	Dec. - March	Dec. - March	Dec. - March	January - on
site visits	4 visits minimum	4 visits minimum	Duration of wet season	representative	representative
Frequency of visits				2 times per month	
Time after significant rain	48 – 72 hrs.	24 – 72 hrs.	24-48 hrs.		24 – 48 hrs.
Significant rain defined	≥0.5 “ rain in 24 hrs	0.15-0.55” in 24 hrs			
# soil test pits	2 – 4 test holes	Min. 3	Min. 6	Min. 3	
# monitoring ports	4-8 monitoring ports	Minimum 3			
Time between inspections		Minimum 14 days between inspections	Requires pre-approved monitoring plan specific to each site		



Draft proposal

	Proposed SCPH procedure
Review timeframe	December – March
Site visits	Minimum 3
Frequency of visits	Average 14 days
Inspection time after rain	24 - 96 hours
Significant rain	0.5 inches or more of rain during a 24-hour period, or 0.25 inches or more each day for two or more consecutive days.
# test pits	Minimum 3
# sample ports	At the designer's discretion.



Options & Next Steps

- Approve procedures as presented.
- Direct staff to make changes and return to Board of Health.
- Following approval, staff will make information available to residents and designers on the Public Health website.



Discussion & Direction from Board of Health

