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Appendix E
Group B Public Water System Guideline

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Group B Public Water Systems¹ Guideline

Basic Information – Group B Public Water Systems are currently regulated under WAC 246-291 and Skagit County Code 12.48. Additionally, in compliance with WAC 173-160 all Group B water system applicants must have the well site inspected and approved prior to drilling. The developer is assisted by the County Health department in meeting and understanding the necessary requirements of health and safety standards in compliance with State and Federal laws. For the purpose of maintaining accurate records and provide the necessary information for new systems, the Group B Water Systems Workbook must be completed. Section 1 of the workbook (Public Water System Approval) is to be completed prior to source development.

The Public Water System Coordination Act provides for Coordinated Water System Plans (CWSP) for areas designated as critical water supply areas and generally prohibits the development of new independent systems where an existing system is available to provide water service. The Skagit County Health Department will assist in identifying which utility to contact and encourages the developer to consider these alternatives in lieu of developing *independent* systems.

***delete* (Outside of the critical water supply areas, new independent systems may be developed provided that the water is obtain from a protected ground water source.)

**(add) All of Skagit County is included in a critical water supply area. PUD is recognized as the Satellite Management Agency (SMA) and is to provide water service to new developments in the County. New developments are designed and constructed consistent with PUD minimum standards and ownership is transferred to the PUD. PUD shall make a policy statement and establish criteria to use for determining feasibility and when satellite service verses extension is appropriate.*

**(add) New systems must be owned or operated by a DOH approved SMA where available. No new system may be created without SMA management unless the system has been determined to have good management and financial resources. (WAC 246-291-140) Limitations on land uses and development densities are to be considered in designated low flow stream corridors where necessary to limit ground water withdrawal and protect stream flows in compliance with Comprehensive Planning objective 10 that influences the use of water resources and is consistent with the existing character of the environment.*

¹ Source – Department of Health "Guideline for Group Public Water System Approval" – July 1994 (additions and/or corrections appear in italics)

Ownership and Management – Owners (Developers) of a Group B water system are to attach a statement of responsibility for costs of construction and maintenance and repairs to the application. A users agreement is to be included with information regarding easements, distribution lines and also should specify each customer's exact share of water available and meter requirements. Owners are to use legal and binding covenants to protect property from activities that could contaminate public water sources. A *"Notice to Future Property Owners"* is attached and information recorded on property titles.

Water Source Information –*(add) *A safe and reliable drinking water supply is of fundamental importance to our health and well being.*) As water is considered a public resource, a "water right permit" is required for all appropriations of public water as specified by the State Water Code. Exceptions are made for single or group domestic use provided the water used shall not exceed 5,000 gallons per day principally to single family dwellings (most Group B systems). In western Washington, the State will not require a water right permit in most cases serving six or fewer connections.

**(add) Skagit County Health Department shall enforce all county, state and federal laws regarding potable water and further address groundwater protection in its septic system, well head protection and the installation of water systems in compliance with GMA and County goals, policies and position. (CP 10.6)*

Sanitary Control Zone – Prior to drilling the well, site inspection and approval is required in compliance with WAC 173-160. Drinking Water Regulations require that public water sources be surrounded by a 100-foot sanitary control zone in which activities that could contaminate the water source are not allowed. *In addition, an inventory of potential sources of contamination within a 600-foot radius of the well must be completed.*

Group B Water System Design – The first consideration and potential limiting factor is the capacity of the well. *(delete – The purpose of this section of the workbook is to assist in the design of a small public water system to help size and select pumps, distribution lines, storage tanks and pressure tanks.)* The well must be capable of supplying enough water to meet the state peak *(delete – estimated daily)* demand for the number of connections in the system and the design rate cannot exceed the well capacity. *Capacity specifies the design of a small public water system size, pumps, distribution lines, storage and pressure tanks.* A copy of the Department of Ecology "Water Well Report" *(delete – the well log, which the Department of Ecology requires all well drillers to submit)* is included with the application for all new systems.

Establishing well and pump capacity is critical. Totalizing source meters are required on all new sources to accurately measure quantity of water produced to meet health and safety standards and to comply with water right requirements.

Water quality tests also must be included with the application for Group B water systems (WAC 246-291). Prohibited practices include cross connection of any portion or segment of the water system with any other source without prior written approval of appropriate governmental agency. Skagit County Health Department Code 12.48.130 specifies that a Group B public water system will be designed by a professional engineer (P.E.) unless the owner of the proposed system can demonstrate that he has expertise and plans to reside at and operate said system. Secondly, the system must consist of a simple well and pressure tank with one pressure zone and not provide treatment or have hydraulic requirements.

Fire flow requirements vary. (*delete - and may be prohibited in some areas and required in others*). For more information consult with the local county fire marshal (*delete - or code enforcement official*.) When fire flow is required, a professional engineer must be retained to perform a hydraulic analysis and design storage facilities. Restaurants, small businesses, churches, schools, government agencies, and resorts are examples of small public water systems with their own unique design needs.

BK0094 PG4242