Water Use Efficiency

Fulfilling WUE Requirements

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Guidance for Privately Owned Water Systems

On October 28, 2010, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the 2003 Municipal Water Law is constitutional. Any privately owned Group A community water system with 15 or more residential connections, such as homeowners' associations, will see the biggest change. These systems are once again considered municipal water suppliers. They will receive the benefits of the law—they also need to comply with the Water Use Efficiency (WUE) rule.

Water Use Efficiency Requirements

- **Distribution Leakage Standard and Meters**. Achieve 10 percent or less leakage from the distribution system. In order to account for water loss, source and service meters are required. If you don't have meters, you must include your meter installation plan with your first WUE report.
- **Planning Requirements.** Include a comprehensive WUE program within your Water System Plan or Small Water System Management Program.
- **Goal Setting and Online Annual Reporting.** Set WUE goals for your customers through a public process. Report annually on WUE performance to both your customers and the Department of Health.

WUE Program Explained

The WUE program is a comprehensive assessment located within your planning document that explains how you will achieve water efficiency within your water system. It covers all aspects of water efficiency including, but not limited to, how you intend to reduce leaks, install or replace meters, achieve your goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of the WUE program itself.

Most deadlines for complying with the WUE rule have passed.

What You Should Do

Don't feel pressured to fulfill all of the WUE requirements right now. Use this next year to do your best to get caught up. Since most deadlines have already passed, we recommend that you complete the requirements by December 31, 2011. No violations will be issued for missing past deadlines.

How to Prepare for Your Annual July Report

Your first annual WUE report is due July 1, 2011. Submitting this report tells us that you are making an effort to comply with the WUE rule, therefore it's very important that you submit it. Here are a few things you'll want to start right now:

- Collect data from your meters.
- Set up a meeting to talk about the WUE requirements with your customers.

- Develop a meter installation plan.
- Establish goals for your customers.

What to do if You Don't have a Source Meter

Source meters should be installed as soon as possible. You won't be able to comply with the WUE rule without this basic information. Develop a plan and budget to get one installed now.

How to Establish Goals Based on Your Source Meter

Your only option is to establish a goal based on your source meter. Consider a goal that may reduce seasonal outdoor water use. For example, "Reduce the amount of water pumped from our source well by 2 percent each year through 2017 during the months of July and August."

Available Training

We will not be conducting specific training for the WUE requirements. Evergreen Rural Water of Washington and the Partners for Water website conduct training events throughout the year. Please check their websites for training opportunities.

Rule Compliance

The third edition of the *WUE Guidebook* 331-375 (PDF) has up-to-date information that will help you create your WUE program. Please recycle any older editions of the guidebook you may have.

- For help setting goals, see our *Setting Goals to Use Water Efficiently* 331-402 (PDF).
- For help with educating your customers, see our *Stop Water Waste Brochure* 331-450 (PDF) or Appendix J in our *Water Saving Tips* 331-375 (PDF).
- You can fill out this form to post your goal-setting public forum to our Public Forum webpage.

For More Information

Find more resources on our Publications and Forms webpage.

Go to our Contacts and Office Location page where you'll find program email addresses, and an interactive map with county assignments. Our Staff Directory page lists staff by program.

Washington State Department of HEALTH

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