



Overview of BC Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation

Public Information Meeting
Village of Belcarra
30 May, 2005



fraserhealth

Better health.
Best in health care.

Purpose



1. Provide an overview of the new Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation,
2. Outline potential risks to public health from drinking water,
3. Reducing public health risks,
4. Questions and Answers

Introduction



- The amended *Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation* was brought into force on May 16, 2003.
- Provides a comprehensive legal framework for drinking water protection.
- Replaces the October 1992 *Safe Drinking Water Regulation* under the *Health Act*.

2002 Speech from the Throne



"British Columbians' health will be better safeguarded under new legislation to strengthen drinking water and ground water protection. As well, my government will be allocating more resources to the monitoring of drinking water quality."



Links

Drinking Water Protection Act

http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/D/01009_01.htm

Drinking Water Protection Regulation

http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/D/200_2003.htm

Sanitary Regulations

http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/H/Health/142_59.htm

Part 1 - Introductory Provisions



- The Drinking Water Officer (DWO) is established as statutory decision-maker.
- DWO for the Belcarra area is:
Dr. Nadine Loewen
- Most of the powers and duties of the DWO have been delegated to others.

Part 2 - Drinking Water Supply



- All water systems that provide drinking water to more than one single-family residence must comply with the new Act and Regulation.
- The DWPA/R includes the following requirements:

Section 6 (DWPA):



- *A water supplier must provide potable water to the users served by its water supply system.*
- A "water supplier" means a person who is the owner of a water supply system.
- "Owner" includes a person who is responsible for the ongoing operation of the water supply system or is in charge of managing that operation. For 2 or more "owners", refer to Section 17, DWPA.
- "**potable water**" means water that meets the water quality standards prescribed by regulation and is safe to drink and fit for domestic purposes without further treatment.

Section 7 (DWPA):



- A person must not construct, install, alter or extend a water supply system or works, facilities or equipment unless a **construction permit** for this has been issued.
- A person applying for a construction permit must include results of water quality analyses.

Section 8 (DWPA):



- In order to operate a water supply system, the water supplier must hold a valid **operating permit**.

Section 9 (DWPA) & Section 12 (DWPR):



- A person must not operate, maintain or repair a water supply system unless the person is **qualified**.
- A person is qualified if the person is **certified** by the Environmental Operators Certification Program (EOCP) for the class of system as classified under the EOCP.

Section 10 (DWPA) & Section 13 (DWPR):



- The water supplier must have a written **emergency response and contingency plan.**
- The water supplier must make this plan accessible to staff of the water supplier, and provide a copy to the DWO; and make a summary of the plan accessible to the users served by the water system.

Section 11 (DWPA) & Section 8 (DWPR):



- A water supplier must **monitor** its drinking water source, the water in the system and the water it provides for:
- (a) total coliform bacteria, and (b) fecal coliform bacteria or *Escherichia coli*.
- The laboratory must report the results of analyses to the DWO and to the water supplier.

*Sections 12-14 (DWPA) &
Sections 9-10 (DWPR):*



- A water supplier must immediately **report** and give **public notice** of threats to drinking water, i.e. water that is not or may not be potable.

*Section 15 (DWPA) &
Section 11 (DWPR):*



- A water supplier must prepare and make public an **Annual Report** on the results of the monitoring of water quality.

*Section 16 (DWPA) &
Section 14 (DWPR):*



- **Floodproofing** required for drinking water and other wells that are at risk of flooding.

Part 3 - Water Source Assessments and Plans



- Assessments must be done if required by regulation or ordered by the DWO.
- Purpose is to assess source, water supply system, monitoring and threats.
- Assessment response plan may be ordered if threats identified.

Part 4 - Drinking Water Protection



- Must not contaminate water or tamper with system.
- DWO may make abatement and prevention orders respecting drinking water health hazards.
- DWO may take action to remedy concerns if necessary, at owners expense.

Part 5 - Drinking Water Protection Plans



- Provincial Health Officer (PHO) may recommend minister designate area for drinking water protection plan.
- Plan must be reviewed by PHO and presented to Cabinet for approval.
- Plan must be made public.

Part 6 - General



- DWO can seek court injunctions and court order for compliance.
- Non-compliance with Act and regulations is an offence, punishable with fines up to \$200,000 and/or 12 months imprisonment.

Potential Health Risks:



- Microbial contaminants, such as bacteria, viruses and protozoan parasites (*Cryptosporidium*; *Giardia*)
- high levels of arsenic, nitrates, lead
- Pesticides, and persistent organochlorines
- Radionuclides
- Disinfection-by-Products



Reducing Health Risks:



Multiple Barrier Approach:

- **Source Water Protection** - by limiting or prohibiting wastewater discharges and other sources of water pollution.
- **Treatment** - adequate treatment such as disinfection and/or filtration
- **Water Distribution System** - safeguarding water quality during storage and distribution.
- At the user's tap - **Monitoring** the water quality of the distribution system and enforcement of water quality standards.

Questions / Answers

Marc Zobel, P.Eng. Manager, Drinking Water Program
Brian Standing, Drinking Water Public Health Inspector



fraserhealth

Better health.
Best in health care.