



**2023 Environmental Health
Annual Report**

August 2024

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Mission

The Clallam County Environmental Health Division's purpose is to assist in the protection of our community's health through the prevention and control of environmentally related communicable diseases and through the minimization of exposure to environmental health hazards.



Vision

1. Assessing the community's environmental health needs and developing quality, science-based programs in response to these needs
2. Monitoring the community's environmental health status and improving existing services based on changing conditions
3. Providing accurate information and quality educational outreach programs to our community
4. Advocating the principles and values of public health
5. Responsible and professional enforcement of public health regulations
6. Professional conduct that inspires excellence in communication, problem solving, cooperation, teamwork, and public health service
7. Making a positive difference within our community through coordination and collaboration with the public, industry and service organization

Executive Summary

Clallam County Environmental Health (CCEH) is proud to present the 2023 Annual Report. The purpose of the report is to provide information on CCEH and the descriptions of the specific programs and activities. It covers the Drinking Water Program, Food Safety and Living Environment Program, On-Site Septic Program, Solid and Hazardous Waste Program, Water Quality Program, and Administration. Each section provides information on staffing, routine activities, and 2023 highlights and challenges. Data is presented for each section.

The revenues collected for EH in 2023 were \$1,649,432. The revenues are a combination of program fees, grants, and general funds. The expenditures for EH in 2023 were \$1,681,051. The largest expenditure was for staff which accounted for 82% of the budget. There are fourteen staff within CCEH. There are Environmental Health Specialists, Customer Service Specialists, a Database Technician, and a Director.

Here is an overview of the CCEH work conducted over the past five years in CCEH and consistent information collected. The 2023 workload shows more samples processed in the lab, similar Onsite Septic (OSS) permitting, a decrease in reports, more inspections in the food program, and more complaints investigated than previous years.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Water Availability Requests Processed	229	222	261	275	287
Total Water Samples Processed	3,154	2,611	2,827	3,028	4,912
Food Service Permits (Permanent and Temp)	579	360	406	509	589
Food Service Inspections (Permanent and Temp)	435	165	119	117	248
Food Service Plan Reviews	48	23	29	47	52
Water Recreation Pool Inspections	5	1	0	12	4
On-site Permits	331	323	431	295	301
O&M Reports Received	3,359	3,762	4,024	4,290	3,337
Compliance for OSS Inspection-Countywide	27.3%	28.3%	32.0%	32.5%	29.2%
Solid Waste Permits Issued	13	13	13	13	13
Solid Waste Inspections	38	40	39	33	37
EH Complaints Investigated Combined	190	128	138	125	222

CCEH completed required regulatory work, complaint investigations, and public outreach and education in 2023 to protect public health and environment.

Clallam County Environmental Health

Clallam County Environmental Health (CCEH) is the local health jurisdiction (LHJ) in Clallam County who enforces environmental health laws and policies. CCEH programs include drinking water, food safety and living environment, onsite septic, solid and hazardous waste, water quality, and administration.

Environmental health is the science and practice of preventing human injury and illness and promoting well-being by identifying and evaluating environmental sources and hazardous agents, and limiting exposures to hazardous physical, chemical, and biological agents in air, water, soil, food, and other environmental media or settings that may adversely affect human health (*National Environmental Health Association, 2022, [link to page www.neha.org](http://www.neha.org)*).

Environmental Health (EH) staff work with the community to engage with professionals in the areas of drinking water, food service establishments, onsite septic, solid waste facilities, and water quality. The staff works with the public in providing information on onsite septic systems, restaurants, air quality, drinking water, and water quality. EH staff serves all residents of Clallam County, including the residents of incorporated cities of Forks, Port Angeles, and Sequim.

Environmental Health Authority

The authority to enforce environmental health regulations at a local level comes under the Health Officer's authority, [RCW 70.05.070, Local health officer-powers and duties](#) (Dr. Allison Berry, MD, MPH) and under the local Board of Health (BOH), [RCW 70.05.060, Powers and duties of local boards of health](#). There are eleven members of the BOH. The BOH is comprised of the three County Commissioners, a city representative, a provider, a consumer of public health, four tribal representatives, and one community stakeholder.

Clallam County Department of Health and Human Services and Environmental Health are funded through Clallam County. The County provides all funding, budgeting, and employee support. The County government is overseen by the three Board of Commissioners, with a County Administrator under authority of a County Charter. For more information go to, [Clallam County Home Rule Charter](#).

For enforcement of Environmental Health codes, we use established policies and procedures. When a case continues to escalate, EH works with the Clallam County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Regulation Information

CCEH enforces both Washington State and local environmental health codes. These codes are mandated by Washington State Legislature and the Washington State Board of Health (SBOH). The Washington State environmental health codes include Washington Administrative Code (WAC) in title 173 which are Washington State Department of Ecology codes, and in title 246 which are Department of Health codes. The WACs can be found, [Washington Administrative Code](#). WACs are specific laws. Local codes are Clallam County Code (CCC). Additionally, the rules that govern the laws are the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). The RCWs can be found, [Revised Code of Washington](#).

The table below outlines the major State and local EH codes.

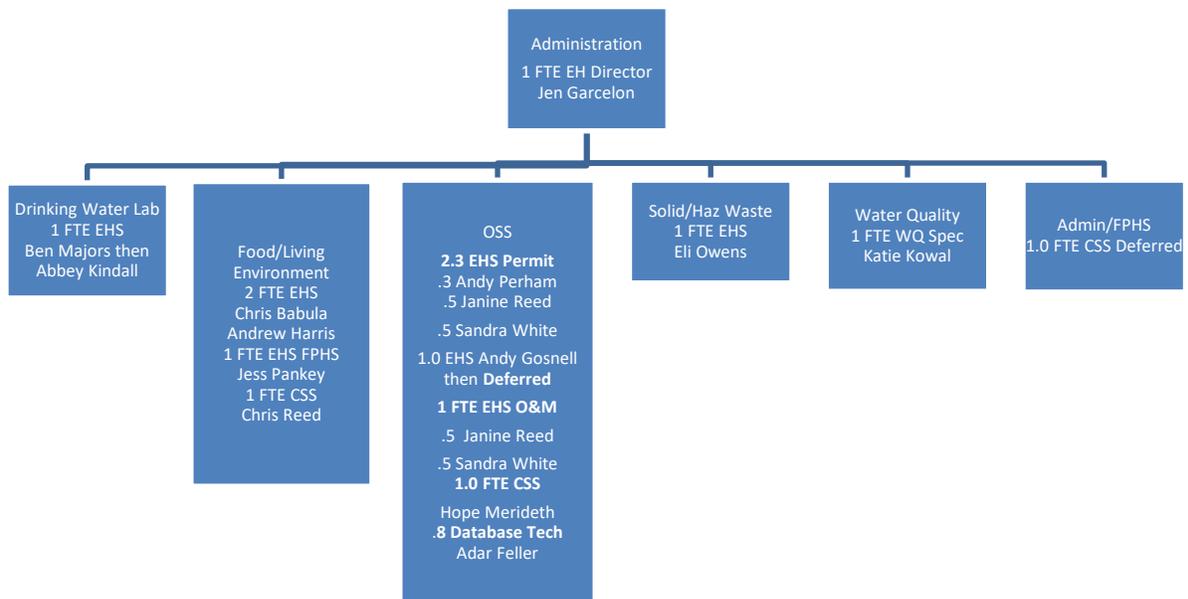
Environmental Health Regulations

Program	Code	Name
Drinking Water	WAC 246-290	Group A Public Water Supplies
	WAC 246-291	Group B Public Water Systems
Food Safety	WAC 246-215	Food Service
	WAC 246-217	Food Worker Cards
	CCC 41.40	Rules and Regulations Governing Food Service Establishments
On-Site Septic	WAC 246-272A	On-Site Sewage Systems
	CCC 41.20	On-Site Sewage System
Schools	WAC 246-366/366A	EH and Safety Standards for Primary and Secondary Schools
Solid Waste	WAC 173-304	Minimum Functional Standards for Solid Waste Handling
	WAC 173-350	Solid Waste Handling Standards
	WAC 173-351	Criteria for Municipal Solid Waste Landfills
	CCC 41.11	Solid Waste Regulations
Water Recreation	WAC 246-260	Water Recreation Facilities

Staffing

The Environmental Health section has a team of 14 staff, with 13.1 FTE. The team includes the EH Director, 8.3 FTE Environmental Health Specialists (EHS), 3.0 FTE Administrative/Customer Specialists, 1.0 FTE Water Quality Specialist, and 0.8 FTE Database Technician. During the 2024 budget planning process, in November 2023, two vacant Environmental Health positions were indefinitely deferred (1 EHS and 1 Admin).

Staff are in two separate locations, the main Courthouse Building at 4th St and at the Health and Human

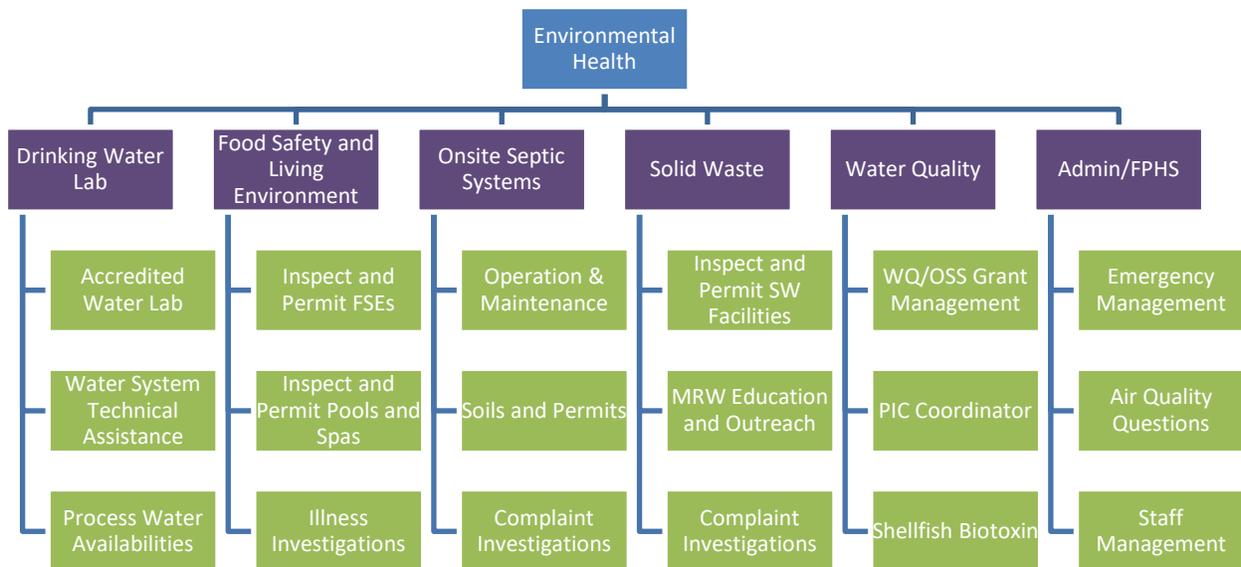


Services (HHS) Building on 3rd Street in Port Angeles. The drinking water laboratory is located within the Courthouse.

Clallam County Environmental Health Program Organization

Clallam County Environmental Health is divided into six program areas: the Drinking Water Lab, the Food Safety and Living Environment, the Onsite Septic System, Solid and Hazardous Waste, Water Quality, and Administration programs.

The Drinking Water Program includes an accredited drinking water lab for nitrate and bacteria testing maintained by an Environmental Health Specialist who also provides well siting and proof of potable water reviews, and water system surveys. The Food Safety and Living Environment Program permits and inspects food service establishments as well as pools and spas. The Onsite Septic System (OSS) Program is largely divided between the permitting and operation and maintenance programs. The OSS permitting program processes OSS permits. The O&M program works to normalize routine OSS inspections and provide outreach and education. The Solid Waste Program permits and inspects facilities and conducts outreach and education. The Water Quality Program oversees water quality monitoring, protection, and restoration projects; it is the main point for water quality grants in Onsite Septic Systems, Pollution, Identification and Correction (PIC). The Administration Program oversees all EH and emerging programs, like foundational public health services (FPHS), emergencies, and animal vectors.



Environmental Health Budget

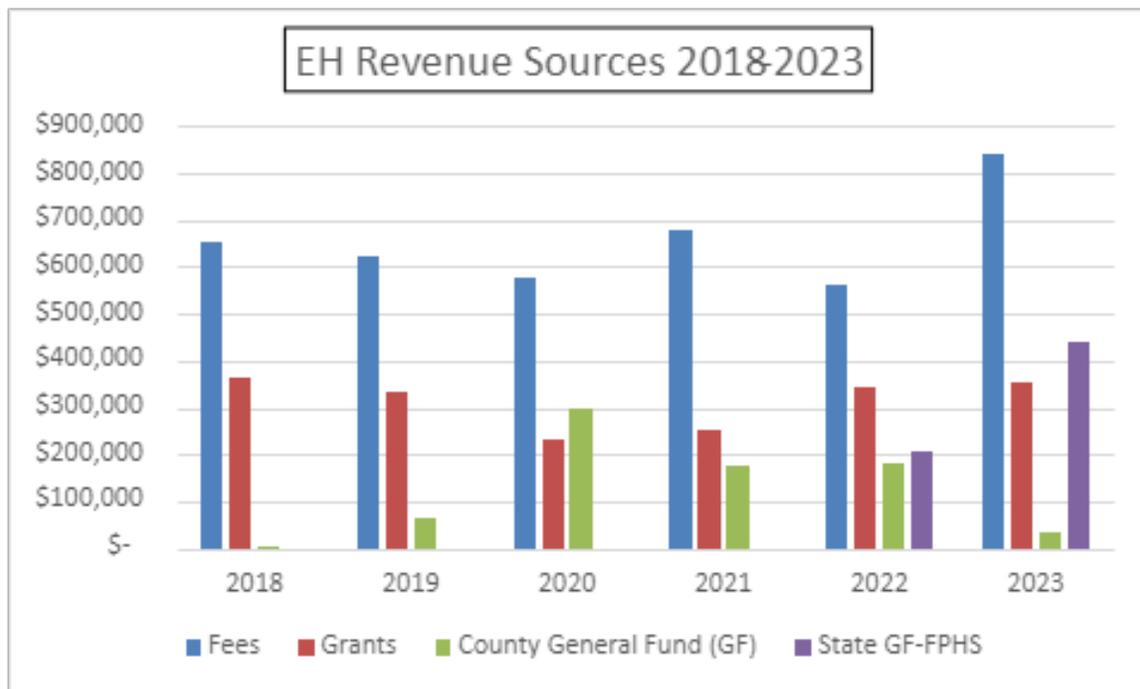
Environmental Health is funded through a variety of sources, including fee for service, grants, and Clallam County general fund. Since 2021, Washington State Legislature started to allocate Foundational

Public Health Services (FPHS) funds for Environmental Public Health programs; this adds an additional revenue stream.

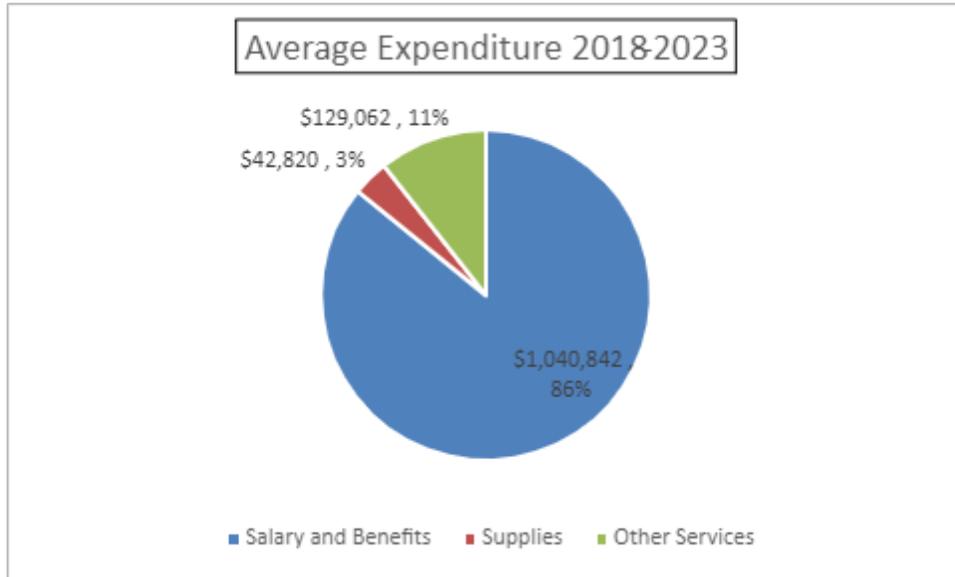
The program fees are categorized in four areas, in order of the amount generated per year. These include onsite septic, food safety and living environment, drinking water laboratory, and solid waste. EH manages 10-14 grants per year. In 2023, EH received 10 grants in total, 8 grants from Washington State Department of Health and 2 grants from Washington State Department of Ecology. The remaining revenue comes from the Clallam County General Fund and FPHS. A small percentage, <0.1% of revenue includes fines and other revenue.

There is variation in all revenue categories over the years. The program fees generated can vary based on the housing and building markets for onsite septic permits. The grant revenue is also variable since some of the largest grants are competitive, must be different scopes of work, and not guaranteed. Grant payments sometimes come in large amounts in the next fiscal year which accounts for some of the variation.

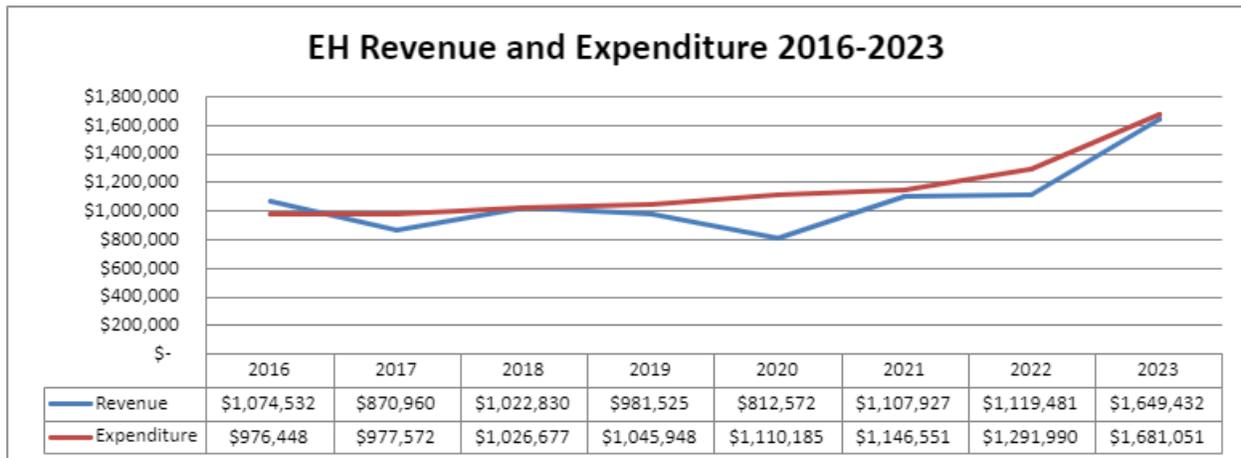
The graph below shows the revenue categories from 2018-2023. The largest revenue category for Environmental Health are fees for service, for example, onsite septic permit, food service operating permit, or drinking water sample. The jump in fees collected in 2023 is due to the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Fee being collected for the first time; the O&M fee revenue is ~\$260K. Grants have primarily been the second largest revenue category during the past six years. Starting in 2022, EH was allocated Foundational Public Health Service (FPHS) funds. These are funds allocated from the State Legislature for foundational public health services. The FPHS funds are expected to continue at a base level and steadily increase over time. FPHS funds are an important part of the EH budget.



The EH expenditures are primarily in three categories: salary and benefits, supplies, and other services. Supplies include general office and operating supplies and small tools for each program. Other services include contracts with other agencies, advertising, postage, training, registration, and license renewals. The graph below shows the average expenditure over the past five years in the county budget categories.



The chart below shows the past eight years' Environmental Health revenue and expenditure from 2016-2023. The expenditure figures do not show general fund contributions, so the gap between funding is covered by general fund.



The 2024 budgeted revenue is \$1,568,513 and the budgeted expenditure is \$1,599,707: a general fund contribution of \$31,194. These are direct program costs and do not include indirect costs from other general fund departments, like Human Resources, Information Technology, etc.

Drinking Water & Laboratory Program



Drinking Water Lab

The Clallam County Environmental Health Drinking Water and Laboratory Program is responsible for the regulation of drinking water sources in Clallam County through sanitary surveys, technical assistance, and complaint investigation. The program also operates and manages the County's accredited environmental health water laboratory to provide routine and investigative water testing for public and private water systems in Clallam County. The drinking water program operates under the authority from WAC 246-290, WAC 246-291, WAC 173-50, and RCW 19.27.097.

Staffing

The Drinking Water and Laboratory program is staffed by one Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) and supported by two administrative staff. Staff and the drinking water laboratory are in the Clallam County Courthouse in Port Angeles.



Ben Majors

Abbey Kindall

Ben Majors served as the EHS in the drinking water lab until September 2023, when he moved onto a water planning position with Washington State Department of Health (DOH). Thankfully, EH hired Abbey Kindall as a Customer Service Specialist in July. She was well-qualified and was able to accept the EHS position in the drinking water lab. Ben and Abbey had a few weeks of cross training. Hope Merideth and Chris Reed assist in answering general drinking water questions and accepting the drinking water samples and paperwork. Sandra White and Katie Kowal served as lab back-ups.

Routine Program Activities

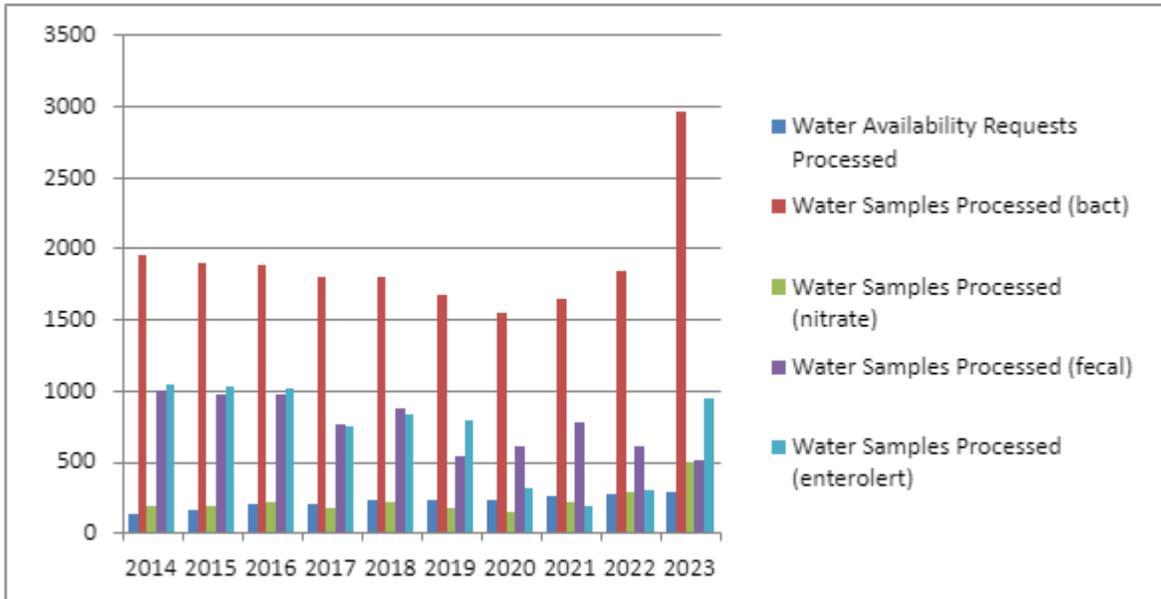
Hope Merideth and Chris Reed answer calls, answer questions, and receive water samples for and from the public in relation to public water systems and private wells. The Drinking Water Program EHS, Ben Majors (Jan-Aug) and Abbey Kindall (Sep-Dec), performs water tests for public and private water systems. They have worked hard to offer a 24-hour test result turnaround. The drinking water EHS also performs regular quality control measures to assure accredited, high quality water testing practices. In addition to lab work, the drinking water EHS regulates public water systems by verifying new connections and providing technical assistance for owners, operators, and consumers. Grant activities include conducting 8-12 sanitary surveys of Group A water systems for DOH's ODW Program.

Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, we work to sample and analyze water samples at Salt Creek, Hollywood Beach, and Cline Spit for Ecology's [BEACH program - Washington State Department of Ecology](#). The BEACH Program monitors the safety of saltwater swimming beaches. The Lab also analyzes the Makah BEACH samples year-round.

EHSs attends conferences, webinars, and meetings with Department of Health, Department of Ecology, and the Dungeness Water Trust to broaden knowledge, understanding, and learn new legislation and processes pertaining to state and local regulations for potable water to better service the people of Clallam County.

The table below shows the drinking water lab activities from 2013-2023.

Drinking Water and Laboratory Program Data



2023 Program Highlights

In 2023, the water laboratory acquired new equipment to replace old equipment that had an average age of 35 years. The laboratory acquired new nitrate testing equipment (DR 3900 Spectrophotometer), oven, and autoclave.

With the new nitrate equipment and accreditation to a new method, the lab was able to reduce the time it took to run nitrate samples from over two hours to a method that takes 20 minutes to complete. The lab was able to expand nitrate testing availability to from once every other Wednesday to every day the lab is open. Additionally, there was an expansion of the fecal test, total coliform/E.coli count, and Beach/Enterococci.

Lastly, with the expansion of the testing schedule, Abbey Kindall was able to secure direct invoicing accounts with multiple well pumping companies, well drilling companies, and public water systems owners and operators.

2023 Program Challenges

Having sufficient staff and having back-upstaff is a challenge. Thankfully, the EHS transition went well when Ben left at the end of August, and Abbey took over. The third back-up was Andy Gosnell, when he

left employment in October 2023. We have also lost volunteers for the summertime BEACH sampling. The [BEACH Program](#) monitors the safety of three saltwater beaches in Clallam County from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The drinking water program is working on the development of a Group B public water system ordinance. Group B water systems are systems between 2-14 water connections; there are 228 active Group B water systems in Clallam County. Group Bs are in regulatory limbo and most local health jurisdictions have a Group B ordinance. Staff have participated in the FPHS Drinking Water Workgroup. They are working on a model Group B code for LHJs to use as a template, allowing local changes and nuances.



Food Safety and Living Environment

The Clallam County Environmental Health Food Safety and Living Environment Program is responsible for working with the public, local and state organizations, businesses, community partners, food service establishments (FSEs), food service workers and owners or operators of water recreation facilities to protect public health. We work to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, including foodborne and waterborne illnesses through our education, inspection, plan review and permitting responsibilities.

Environmental Health's School Safety Program is in development. Our program currently responds to and investigates reports of illness and potential safety hazards occurring in public and private schools, kindergarten through high school. These reports involve issues such as air quality, playground safety and food safety. Environmental Health Specialists review plans of all new and remodeled school sites and provide a safety inspection upon request.

Staffing

2023 was a year of getting back to normal for the Food Safety and Living Environment Programs. The team consists of three Environmental Health Specialists, one primary Customer Service Specialist, and help from the Database Technician and the second CSS.

Chris Reed entered her third year with the Living Environment Program as the primary Customer Service Specialist for the program; she is typically the first person the public with contact.

Jess Pankey funded through FPHS worked to coordinate strategizing EH policy development, researching successful enforcement and compliance policies and programs that strengthen stakeholder engagement and participation, generating letter templates for consistent education and plan review documentation, generating enforcement letter templates, and assisting with the review of the HS Cloud database implementation. She also served as a liaison between Environmental Health and Public Health for communicable disease investigations. Jess is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS).

Andrew Harris, an EHS, worked within the Food and Living Environment Programs being the primary person for plan reviews, temporary permits, and inspections. Adar Feller helps in the Food Safety and Living Environment Program during database transitions. The HS GovTech Cloud database is in its third year of development in 2023.

Chris Babula is the most recent EHS hire in September 2022. He came to the department with lots of experience. Chris is a registered environmental health specialist REHS. He has worked in the environmental health field for over twenty years. His addition and experience are important for the success of the Food Safety program.

The three EHSs and CSS bring a combined total of over 40 years' experience as food safety professionals to the program, with another 30 years combined time spent in the industry. This experience brings together a team that adapts quickly to change, recognizes the importance of strategic partnerships and working relationships and prioritizes clear and consistent communication to promote health.

Jessica Pankey and Chris Babula have their registered environmental health specialist (REHS) certification from Washington State Board of Registered Sanitarians.



Jessica Pankey



Andrew Harris



Chris Babula



Chris Reed



Adar Feller

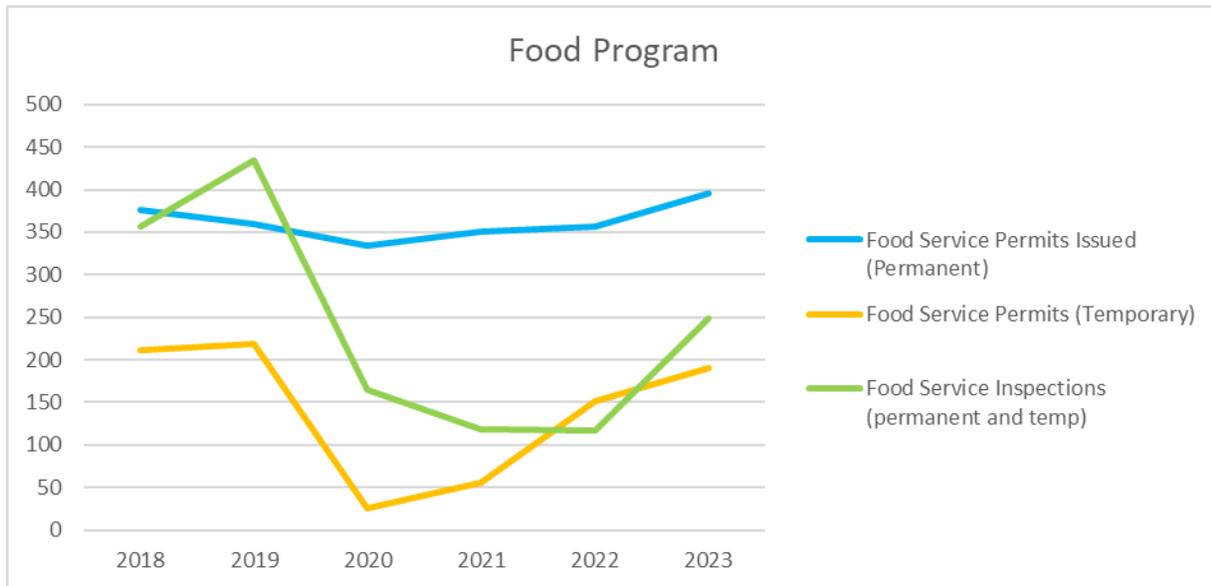
Routine Program Activities

Environmental Health Specialists Andrew and Chris B. take the lead with program plan review, routine FSE inspection and complaint investigation activities. They maintain communication whether in the office or in the field with HHS partners, local regulatory agencies, state and national technical experts, academia professionals and industry partners to provide evidence-based guidance relevant to the task at hand. They stay connected using cell phones, tablets, online resources and the FSE database. In April 2023, we went live using the HealthSpace Cloud to allow inspections using a Surface Pro to enable inspection reports to be entered in the field and emailed directly to the permit holder.

The Plan Review for new or changing FSEs requires multi-agency coordination and a high-level working knowledge of building, planning, zoning, plumbing, worker and customer safety, current best practices, and mitigation strategies relevant to the proposal. An application will begin the approval process after it is checked for completion at the time it is received and entered into the online database, HS Cloud.

Routine inspections or site visits incorporate regulatory compliance checks with education about current risk factors using scientific observation, educational resource distribution and WAC 246-215 to identify mitigation strategies and incorporate evidence based strategies to promote public environmental health. A large part of these visits includes time spent fostering stake-holder engagement and providing realistic solutions or corrective actions to change behavior associated with the spread of disease. Inspections are documented in the field with software using the state Inspection form designed to

prioritize tracking of the leading contributing factors associated with the spread of disease as identified by collaborative workgroups. These work groups include the CDC, FDA, academia, industry experts, regulatory authorities, and safety advocates. These groups work to analyze outbreak and illness data, regulatory observations of industry practices, and the research of academia and communicable disease epidemiologists to educate operators about effective strategies and focus on correction of the most critical issues to prevention of disease.



FPHS

Outlining Foundational Public Health Services for Environmental Public Health was the primary focus for Jessica Pankey’s daily activities in 2023, this included strategizing EH policy development, researching successful enforcement / compliance policies, researching programs that strengthen stakeholder engagement / participation, generating letter templates for consistent education and plan review documentation, generating enforcement letter templates, and assisting with the review of the HSCloud database implementation. She worked on communication improvements, steadily encouraging the discussion for team procedures, generating documents for the FSE application and guidance docs, incorporating check points in the approval process, preparing weekly program meeting agendas, responding to food safety planning and permitting questions, coordinating with public health and communicating with the public, food workers and health care workers. Learning about mitigation strategies, ingredient/product recalls, equipment or food source investigation with partners from multiple agencies and jurisdictions which highlighted the importance of information sharing. Identification of industry challenges, multi-level data and guidance implementation was integral to cultivating trust and offering evidence-based implementation strategies. Participating as a voting stakeholder representing Local Health Jurisdictions on Council III, Science and Technology, at the Council for Food Protection was an incredible experience providing insight and perspective into the process highlighting the adaptability of the evidence-based model food code.

2023 paved the way towards strengthening the partnership between Public Health and Environmental Health. The leadership of the Health Officer, the Public Health Nurse Manager and the Environmental Health Director in conjunction with the technical expertise of Department of Health Foodborne Illness, Healthcare Associated Infection, Environmental Health Food Safety, Laboratorians and Communicable Disease Epidemiologists gave the Environmental Health Specialists “on the ground” the ability to conduct investigations and report through WDRS to the Washington State Department of Health CD/Epi teams, as needed. Jess was also available during on-site Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) visits conducted along with Department of Health Infection Control & Prevention Specialists. Environmental Health Specialist experience with un-scheduled site-visits and matching communication styles while identifying possible factors contributing to disease transmission was an exciting part of the Clallam County EH FPHS response, reducing disease in the community.

2023 Program Highlights

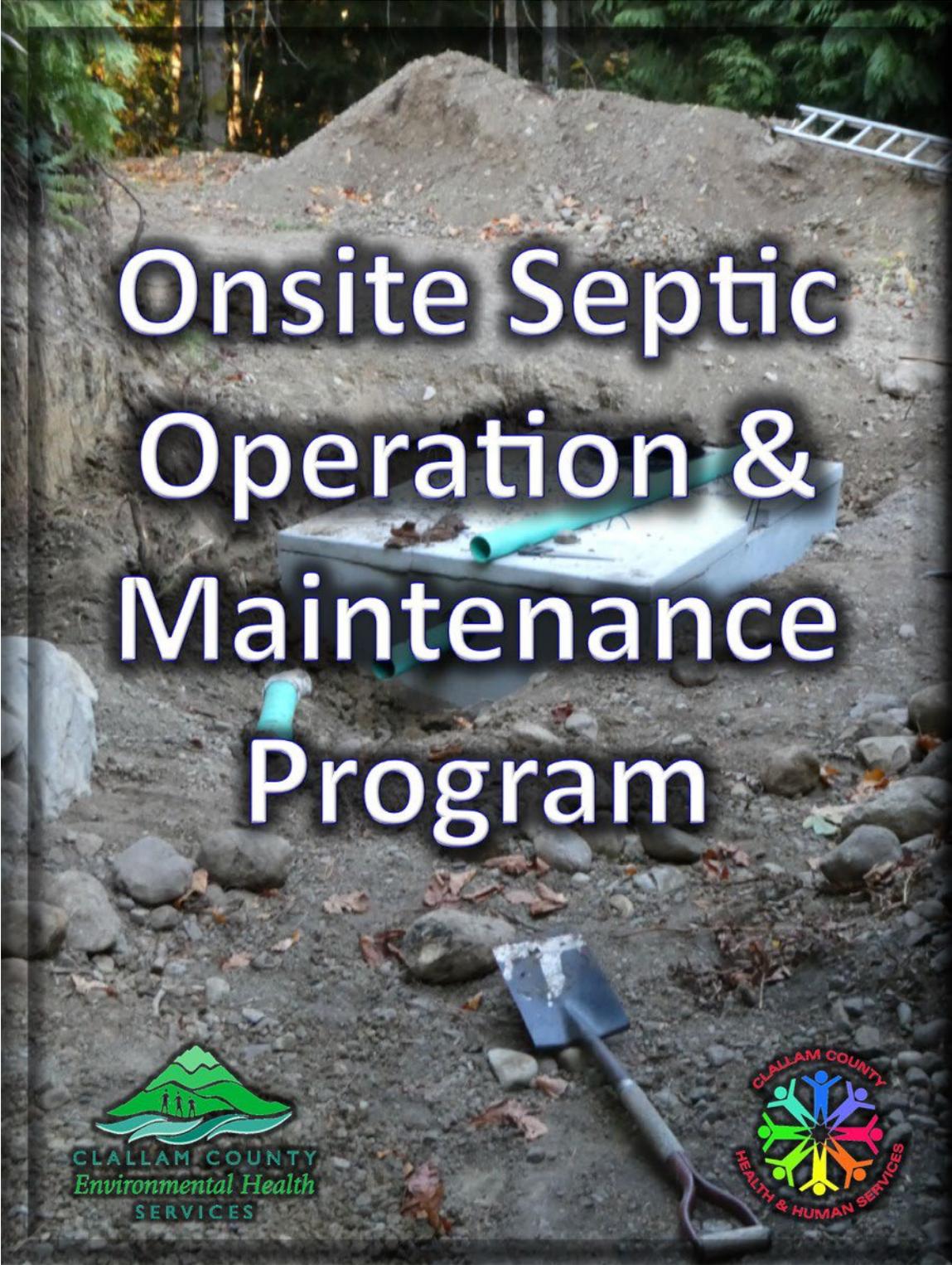
There were three most noteworthy highlights in 2023 within the Food Safety and Living Environment team. 2023 was the first full year with Chris Babula. Having a second team member to do routine inspections with his experience has been an invaluable resource for the Food Safety Program.

2023 was the first year with all festivals back at full capacity that resulted in a large increase in temporary permits. It was exciting to have more temporary food vendors

Jess attended the Certified Food Protection (CFP) biennial meeting in Houston, TX from April 25-27, 2023. She is a voting member representing local health jurisdictions as they review emerging food safety issues.

2023 Program Challenges

The HealthSpace Cloud database transition was a challenge in 2023. After going live in April, it was a steep learning curve using the new database in the field while continuing testing and development of HS Cloud and HS Touch functionality. Weekly meetings to chip away at all the fine details of functionality for the new database, field evaluating and testing data entry and reporting; it has been a long process.



Onsite Septic Operation & Maintenance Program



Onsite Septic Operation & Maintenance Program

The Clallam County Environmental Health Onsite Septic Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Program is responsible for preventing premature failures by normalizing regular inspections, tracking O&M activity including failures and assisting with various grant tasks. The O&M inspection program is required by WAC 246-272A-0270 and CCC 41.20.170. Each septic system must be inspected annually or every three years, depending on the system.

There are approximately 20,000 known septic systems in Clallam County. As of 12/30/23, there are 20,224 known OSS in Clallam County with 994 assumed systems for a total of 21,218. In the Marine Recovery Area (MRA) there are 12,730 known septic systems, with 171 assumed, for a total of 12,901.

The O&M inspection program is required by WAC 246-272A-0270 and CCC 41.20.170. Each septic system must be inspected annually or every three years, depending on the system.

Staffing

The O&M EHS position was filled by Sandra White in April 2023 after it had had an eighteen-month vacancy. Due to staffing needs, the position became ½ time O&M and ½ time permitting, with Janine Reed also ½ time O&M and ½ time OSS permitting.

Nan Furford moved into HHS Administration in April 2023 and Hope moved over to primary On-site Customer Service. Hope Meredith is our front and center personal contact at the counter and on the phone for the public and all providers, designers, pumpers, and installers for the entire county. Adar Feller is our Database Technician and creator for the department, any information needed is on her to find. Andy Perham is a master of failure tracking and is reliably constant for the department. Janine Reed who has been in the department for 25 years is the messiah of OSS knowledge. Andy Gosnell resigned in October and the EHS position was deferred in the County budget in late November, as well as the secondary data tracking projects CSS position that would have helped ensure a smoother database transition.



Hope Merideth



Adar Feller



Janine Reed



Sandra White

Routine Program Activities

The main priority of the O&M Program is to normalize routine septic inspections. Routine O&M program activities include mailing septic inspection compliance (SIC) letters to homeowners as well as friendly postcard inspection reminders, and lots of opportunities throughout the year for public outreach. Areas

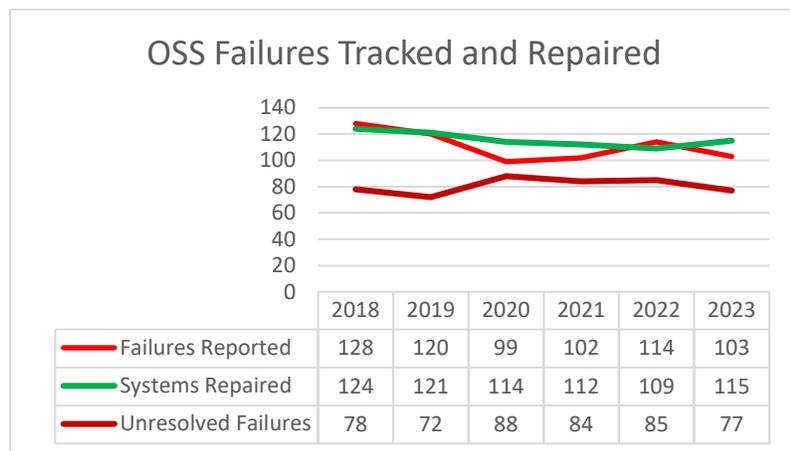
of SIC are currently targeted through a combination of pollution identification projects and sensitive locales of citizen and/or staff concern.

Due to limited staffing, there has been little time for enforcement of the SIC Program with only postcard inspection reminders sent, outside of the 15 Ennis Creek area resident letters. Postcards are just a friendly way to say “Hey! This is your reminder that your system needs an inspection,” instead of the fine oriented SIC multiple letter process.

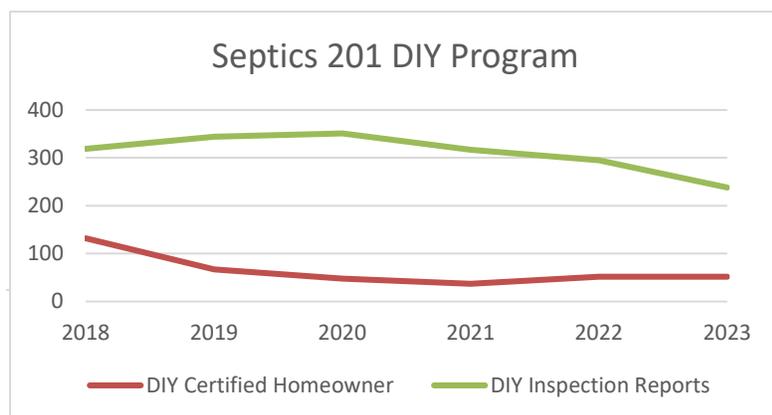
O&M Program responsibilities also include the implementation and management of the homeowner Do-It-Yourself (DIY) inspection program, public outreach on best practices of septic system ownership and inspection compliance along with the review and follow-up and tracking of deficiencies and failures reported on professional inspections.

Public outreach events and classes are held throughout the year. Spring and fall Septic 101/201 classes are held free of charge for the community. Septic 101 is a basic overview for the public to understand how their septic system functions and the reasoning behind state mandated inspection requirements as well as knowledge assistance for basic care of their systems. Septic 201 provides more in-depth information and allows the public to inspect their own systems. This DIY inspection program relays immediate in-class positive verbal feedback. Septic compliance is our goal, to obtain this the environmental health staff diligently work on inspection status, failure status’, code compliance, corrections and public outreach.

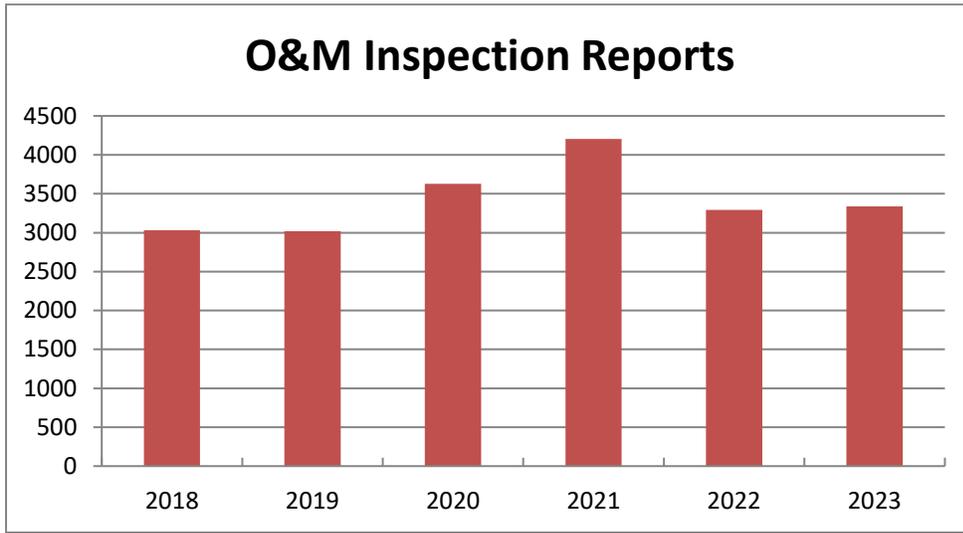
OSS Failures Tracked and Repaired:



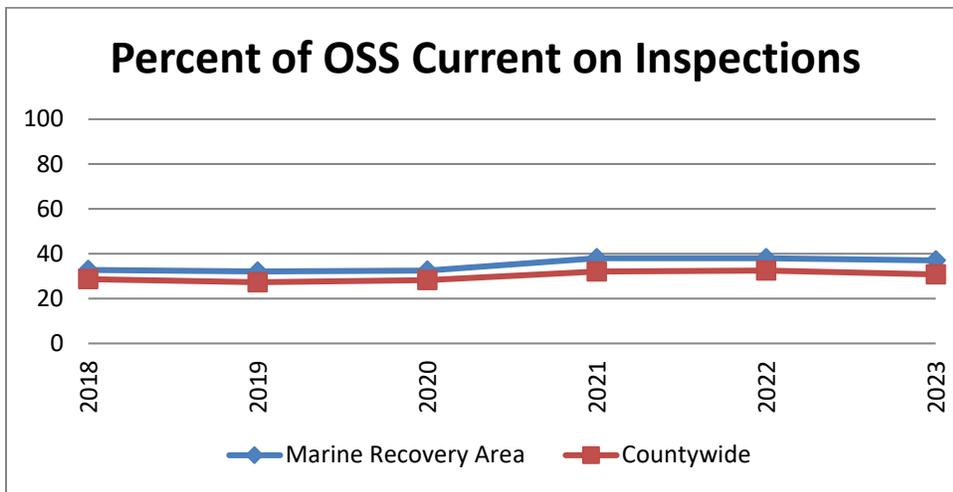
OSS Inspection compliance & DIY:



O&M Inspection Reports:



% OSS Current on Inspections graph:



2023 Program Highlights

Flauras Acres project

The conveyance piping to the existing drainfield of the homes in Flauras Acres Homeowners Association (HOA) has corroded over a period of 40 years. The piping allows groundwater and surface water to enter the piping system which in turn dilutes the wastewater that is no



longer reaching the septic system for treatment.

EH and the CCD was able to use grant funds to help pay for the piping design. The goal for 2024 is to get the community connected to sewer.

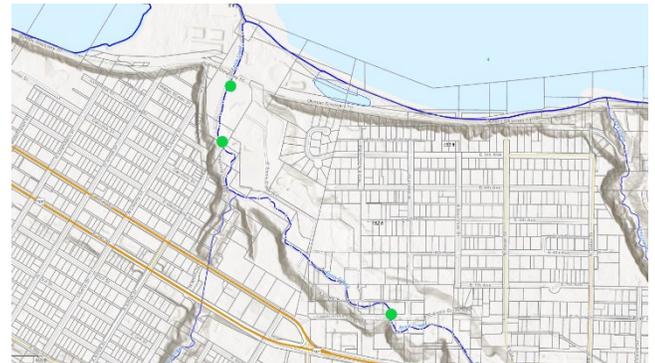
Ennis Creek study

The Friends of Ennis Creek contacted EH about concerns regarding septic systems along Ennis Creek and whether failures were impacting water quality in the creek. EH staff identified several properties that bordered the creek that had septic systems or were unknowns. As a part of that project, EH sent letters to property owners asking that they have their systems inspected and offered cost share money as an incentive. Sampling sites along Ennis Creek to test for fecals were added to the monitoring schedule as well.

Out of 14 properties, 11 landowners complied with the request for inspection of their system. Several systems were identified as needing pumping and locate drawings were submitted for properties where the septic location was unknown to indicate the septic systems. For the most part they are at least 100 feet away from Ennis Creek. All inspections reported that the septic systems were functioning, no failures were identified. 2 septic systems were abandoned, with one system in the process of being pumped and decommissioned.

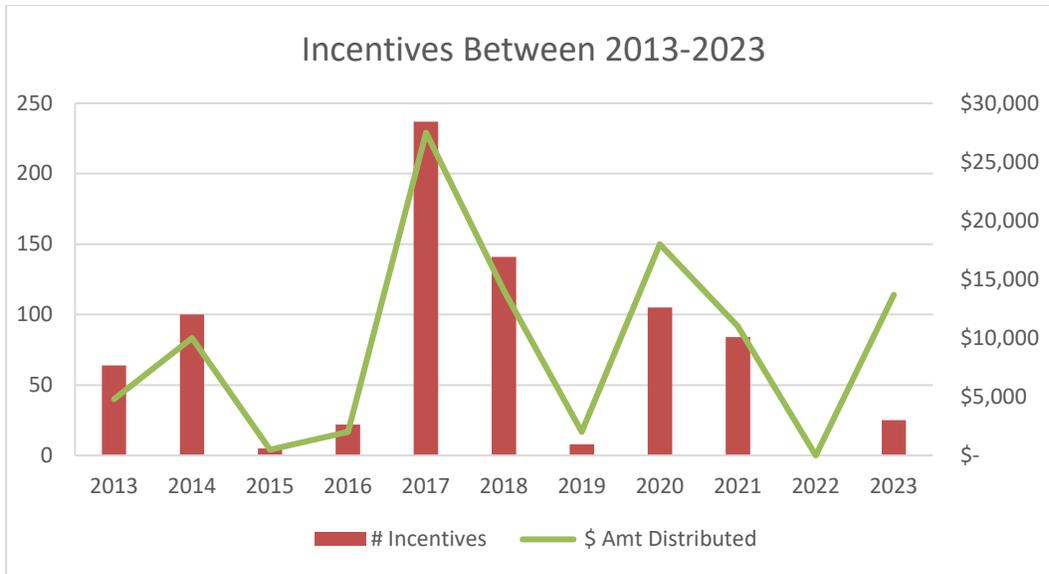
Ennis Creek Monitoring results:

3 water quality samples sets were taken at the lower Ennis Creek sites, on May 3, 2023, June 1, 2023, August 11, 2023. Results show Fecal Coliform samples (CFU)/100 ml) at background levels, with the highest sample having 70 CFU/100ml. EH concluded that at the time of the study septic systems are not impacting the lower Ennis Creek waterway.



Incentive / Rebate Program

The rebate/Incentive program ran by Janine Reed and Sandra White helped over 25 people in the year 2023. With additional staff available we were able to help 14 people in the months October and November. Within these two months alone we helped low-income families, and others get their septic systems inspected, brought up to code, and fixed. The OSS FEE allowed us to give back to our community a total of \$12,377 within a 60-day period. With a 2023 yearly total of \$13,689 in assistance for a total of 25 households impacted.



Public Outreach & Why is it Important?

Public outreach events such as Home and Building Shows, environmental events such as River Fest, as well as our Septic 101 and DIY 201 classes are a vital way of connecting directly in person with our community. These public outreach events not only allow us to get much needed information out into the community, but also help the public familiarize themselves with the people behind the program. These events provide the public with an opportunity to meet the Environmental Health staff in person, which provides a humanitarian connection. This face-to-face interrelation helps feed the need for knowledge and assistance, creating an understanding of why our department does what it does and the importance behind it.

SEPTIC 101 & 201 CLASSES

The new Rainshadow Hall classroom at the Dungeness River Center is a great space to host in-person classes with plenty of room for folks to spread out.

During the staffing transition back into public events after the impacts of COVID-19 in 2020-22 EH did not yet have advertising ready to go for the 2023 classes and relied mainly on flyers, word of mouth and boosted Facebook ads.

Outreach events

EH had booths at several outreach events. The 2023 Spring Builders Expo, The Spring 2023 Home Show as well as 2023’s River Fest which is



geared towards classrooms for the local schools. During the Builders expo and the Home Show, Janine Reed talked to many septic system owners. Janine taught a special in- prompt-to in person Septics 101 at the 2023 Builder Expo. The flush/don't flush game was a hit at each event.

Realtor Meetings

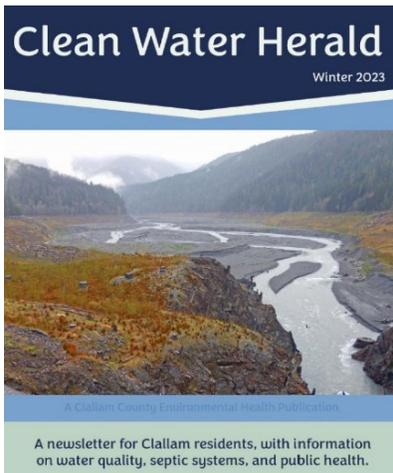
Sandra, Jen, and Janine attended the Port Angeles Realtor Association meeting and the Sequim Realtors meetings and presented “The Case for Septic System maintenance” to local realtors advocating that regular inspections prevent failures. The presentation was well received at each event and Sandra distributed her business card to local realtors encouraging them to see her as their EH contact for any future questions or concerns. An effort was made to reach out to Forks Realtors to schedule a meeting but staffing constraints at the end of 2023 did not allow staff to move forward with attending a Forks Realtor meeting. A goal for 2024 is to find time to attend one of their Association meetings.

Industry Meetings for O&M providers

OSS Industry Meeting held on June 29, 2023, focusing on O&M inspections, introducing Sandra and the rebate program. The meeting was well attended with much discussion about the upcoming database transition and clarification for providers on how to submit reports. Attendees asked EH to modify the SIC postcards going out to folks with bolded wording about PUMPING IS NOT AN INSPECTION. More outreach is needed from EH to notify the public of the difference between just pumping and an inspection. There was a great deal of concern regarding the City of Port Angeles not accepting septage for the month of August 2023 and EH researched alternative sites for disposal for pumpers at the time.

Resurrecting the Clean Water Herald

In December 2023, the OSS Fee covered the cost of a Clean Water Herald every door delivery mailer to all Clallam County residents with a dual purpose on-site & sewer message.



2023 Program Challenges

Staff shortages and the transition to new technology were the biggest challenges in 2023 for the O&M program. Lack of staff in the latter part of the year made it difficult to complete projects and give full attention to all duties of existing staff laid out in their job descriptions.

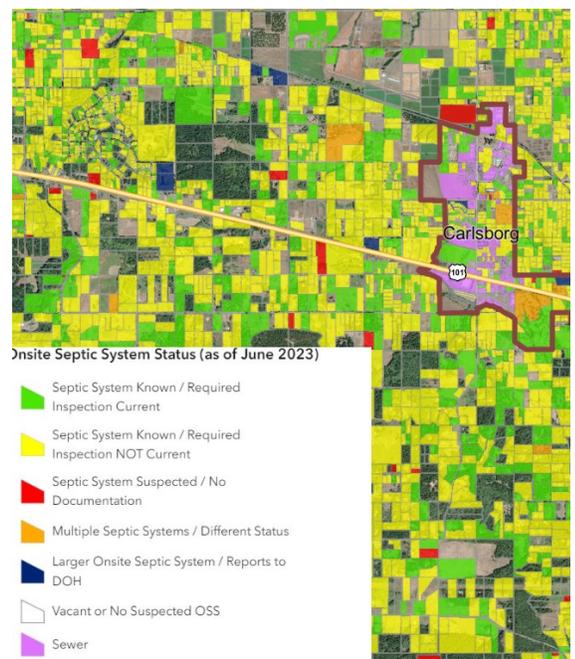
The onlineRME inspection data submitted by professionals online is no longer brought into our database automatically and must be entered manually for failing tracking. Attempts at mass updates via IT tools produce a high number of errors and still require a lot of manual manipulation and staff time.

The Draft O&M Manual requires metric development in 2023 for collecting baseline data with plans to report to BOH in 2025, 2027 and 2033. The property sale inspection compliance metric is not feasible at this time and the “percent of premature failures prevented” metric was never sufficiently defined.

Septics 201 DIY Homeowner Inspection Program website continues to fail (no longer imports into Permit Plan and located on an outdated server that needs to be shut down) requiring multiple meetings with IT and GIS staff on how to rescue, move or rebuild it in the future but it is waiting for the Tyler EPnL online database to launch before a decision is made. This process will require hiring a consultant to develop a new website or API or additional Tyler contract funding to resolve.

The Health Module for Tyler’s permit tracking system was not added in 2023 and will now require a separate contract. Tyler EPnL will launch sometime in 2024 after multiple delays and will not include a way to update or track O&M inspection and failure data, instead relying exclusively on Kitsap County’s onlineRME septic system inspection tracking database.

In 2022 the County GIS department was going through a major overhaul that required us to shut down our automatically updated OSS Inspection Status Map for the public. Given the fact that our database could no longer display current inspection data that seemed like the best solution. In 2023 multiple attempts were made to redevelop something to replace that map with the new GIS tools available but the lack of staff time and level of importance has kept this project on the backburner. A version of the OSS Inspection Map was updated twice in 2023 by GIS staff using the Experience Builder layout which can be slow for something this data intensive, so Eli Owens spent time learning how to simplify a faster version of an ESRI map app for the public. This map app is currently in development, as we are trying to find ways it can be updated more frequently from mass data exports directly from online RME since the new database will not house inspection data.





Clallam County Onsite Septic Status

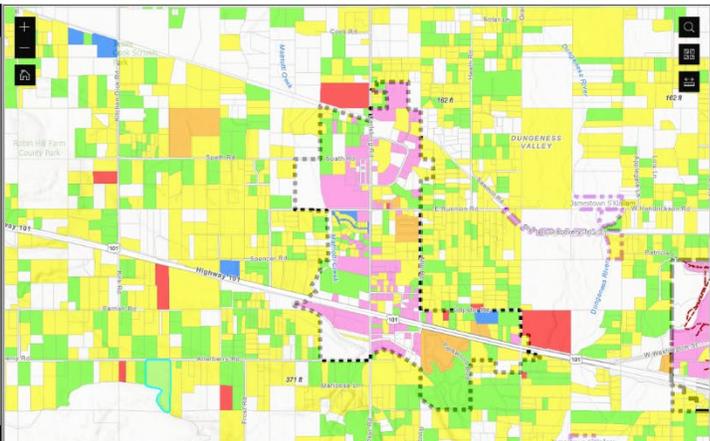


PROPERTY DETAILS

1706 ATTERBERRY RD is owned by STAN AND BARBARA LESIAK
Their septic status is Septic System Known / Required Inspection NOT Current

Parcel Number	043021430000
Owner Last Name	LESIAK
Owner First Name	STAN AND BARBARA
Property Address	1706
Property Road	ATTERBERRY RD
Property City	SEQUIM
Assessor's Page	View
Permit Page	View
System Type	Pressurized Deep Trench
Inspection Interval	12 months
Next Inspection	09/03/2021
Marina Recovery Area	Yes
Parcel Septic Status	Septic System Known / Required Inspection NOT Current

NAVIGATION QUICK LINKS



LEGEND

Parcel Septic Status Filters
(septic system data current as of 1/2/2024)

- Septic System Suspected / No Documentation
- Septic System Known / Required Inspection NOT Current
- Septic System Known / Required Inspection Current
- Larger Onsite Septic System / Reports to DCH
- Multiple Septic Systems / Different Status
- Sewer
- Vacant or No Suspected OSS

Other Map Features

- Sewer Lines

Onsite Septic Permitting Program



Onsite Septic Permitting Program

The Clallam County Environmental Health Onsite Septic Permitting Program is responsible for assuring that septic systems are designed, installed, and maintained in ways that meet State and local standards. Staff receives permits at the EH counter, performs data entry of all permits, soil reports, waivers, complaints from professionals and the public. We enforce Washington State Administrative Code (WAC) 246-272A and Clallam County Chapter 41.20 onsite septic codes by conducting soil evaluations in field and reviewing and approving septic permit designs. We also investigate complaints of sewage surfacing and will send correspondence regarding failures and onsite permitting requirements.

The Onsite program is also tasked with regulating septic system failures which come to our program either through public complaints or industry inspections. Our in-house enforcement protocol is followed during compliant investigations and failing septic system investigations. The protocol includes guidance on site visits, enforcement correspondence, and the use of administrative penalties. On rare occasions and after our enforcement efforts are exhausted, an enforcement case will be referred to the Prosecuting Attorney's office. Time spent on any given enforcement case may vary and is primarily based on the cooperation and motivation of the violator. A lengthy case may involve multiple written letters, phone correspondence, emails, site visits, and working with septic industry on the best solutions for repair. Financial assistance programs are available for low-income property owners that need assistance with funding for a repair septic system. Craft 3 offers low interest loans, and the Clallam CCD offers cost share assistance. Our program is diligent in making these programs aware to the property owner, and our staff are eager to assist in getting financial assistance when needed.

Staffing

On-site staffing took some big hits in 2023. EH Administrative Specialist, Nan Furford, who was primarily in On-site as the main point of contact for customers and professionals for the past 4 years, was reassigned back into the HHS Administrative group. Relatively new employee Hope Merideth became the main customer service representative for the On-site Program with a large amount of learning on the job required since it can take over 2 years to learn all the nuances of such a technical program. She has shown aptitude at managing a fast-paced work environment with high customer and professional expectations, helping to keep the On-site Program well organized.

Thankfully, in April 2023, Sandra White was hired as part time On-site permitting and part time O&M. She's had a crash course in everything septic. Sandra became the primary field OSS permitting EHS in late 2023 focused on soils analysis for site registrations, installation inspections of septic systems and complaint investigations. She is extremely motivated to help members of the public resolve their septic system issues from new development limitations to failures and complaint resolution.

After 5 years with CCEH, Andy Gosnell left as the only full time EHS in the On-site program in early October 2023. His good humor and flexibility at taking on whatever came his way, with WAC binder in hand, will be missed even if his practical jokes may not be. 😊 In late November 2023, and with a candidate who had made it through a 2nd round of interviews and was ready to accept, a position deferment was announced, so that position sadly remains vacant. A second open CSS position left from Nan Furford's reassignment in responsibilities was also deferred.

Janine Reed has remained ½ time in On-site Permitting in 2023 working primarily to approve and finalize septic permits & Planning projects (Lot Alterations and Conditional Use Permits) along with code & policy update projects. Janine also has the main responsibility in training new On-site staff like Sandra & Hope on the details and history of Clallam County’s On-site program. Janine is a Registered Sanitarian (RS) and is the only full-time EHS with an Onsite Inspector Certificate of Competency.

Andy Perham continues to work part-time as an EHS with an Onsite Inspector Certificate of Competency. He often works on failure enforcement and some septic system permitting processes. He has been assisting Hope and Sandra learn some of the ways of researching state codes and procedure guidance.

Adar Feller tried to keep the numbers and data rolling for reporting as best as she could while infrastructure continued to be unsupported. She assisted with training new employees on data entry and Quality Control (QC) to keep the data wrangled but it has been very difficult during this time of technology and database transitions. She has had multiple challenges to face and is invaluable to the EH team in her willingness to be the main person to facilitate our data needs and communicate our needs to IT and GIS staff.



Janine Reed



Andy Gosnell



Andy Perham



Hope Merideth



Adar Feller



Sandra White

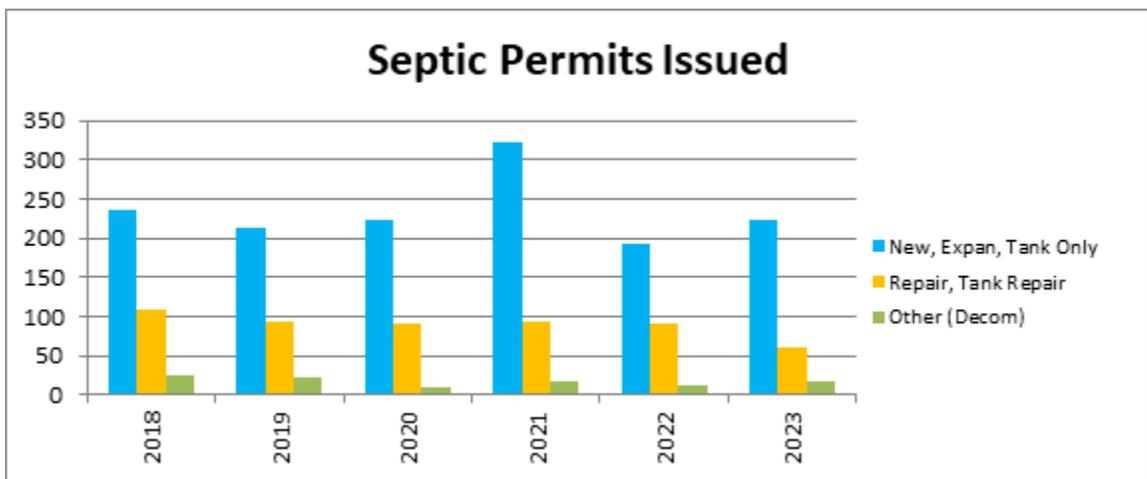
Routine Program Activities

Routine program activities include, complaint and failure investigations; septic code compliance inspections, priority is sewage on the ground and pursuing correction of the failure; OSS permitting and the extensive process that goes with it; soils evaluations; septic system install inspections by EH staff increased in 2023 as a result of training opportunities for Sandra; DCD collaboration in Project Review, LDV, BLA and other governmental actions; licensing of pumpers, installers & O&M Providers; writing policies and regulations-Updating policies from draft to final form to take to BOH. Updating CCHR to reflect new WAC 246-272 update that goes into effect in 2024.



In 2023 the septic permitting section saw a decrease in site registration requests compared to 2022 as new projected development continued to stagnate. There was a slight increase in the total number of septic permits issued.

There were fewer repair permits issued in 2023 likely due to less staff time available to focus on inspection enforcement (see O&M Report).



The On-site Program has continued to be able to meet the 30 day requirement for permit issuance for the most part with an average of 19.4 days.

Septic Permits/Site Surveys Received between January 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024

Printed: March 1, 2024

(Excludes training cases and unassigned cases)

Cell Values: Number of Applications received in that month

Average days from received to decision (pending permits not included in average time)

Median days from received to decision (pending permits not included in median calculation)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Decommission	3 0.0 0.0	1 0.0 0.0	1 0.0 0.0	1 0.0 0.0	5 2.5 0.5	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	1 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	2 10.0 10.0	2 4.0 4.0	16 2.5 0.0
Expansion	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	1 2.0 2.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	1 14.0 14.0	0 0.0 0.0	2 8.0 8.0
New	13 88.3 28.0	15 39.8 12.0	21 23.4 19.5	10 22.7 22.0	28 15.6 8.5	9 13.2 12.0	19 21.6 14.0	19 22.7 13.0	20 14.7 12.0	19 31.4 22.0	18 16.3 15.5	11 18.9 12.5	202 25.7 13.5
Repair Permit	1 0.0 0.0	2 8.0 8.0	7 2.4 0.0	8 7.0 6.0	6 1.0 0.5	9 12.2 1.0	4 6.3 6.5	6 2.2 1.0	4 2.3 2.5	7 12.7 12.0	4 1.8 1.0	3 22.0 13.0	61 6.8 2.0
Tank Placement	3 28.3 19.0	0 0.0 0.0	3 9.7 8.0	1 14.0 14.0	2 6.5 6.5	4 2.0 1.0	3 21.0 13.0	1 4.0 4.0	3 7.7 6.0	1 2.0 2.0	2 13.0 13.0	3 40.0 52.0	26 14.9 8.0
Total	20 60.3 19.0	18 33.4 11.5	32 16.6 13.0	20 14.4 14.0	41 11.7 8.0	23 10.4 2.0	26 19.0 12.5	27 16.6 8.0	27 11.9 9.0	27 23.8 15.0	27 13.1 13.0	19 21.3 13.0	307 19.4 10.5



The On-site Program added a process for reviewing alterations proposed during the septic system install phase to catch problems ahead of time. The number of newer technology septic systems of the OSCAR drip drain field type continue to increase with options to meet higher treatment levels but are currently not sufficiently separated in our database for tracking. The new EPnL septic permit tracking database will include more system component details that will also help better mesh with the onlineRME inspection reporting online tool developed by Kitsap County.

[PERMIT DETAILS](#) [TANK DETAILS](#) **[PRETREATMENT COMPONENTS](#)** [DRAINFIELD DETAILS](#) [LEGACY S](#) >

N/A

MicroFast

NuWater

RetroFast

WhiteWater

Additional Pre-treatment Types

N/A

Aquaworx

Chlorine

Denitrification

Nibbler

Ozone

TRD

UV

Other (details in notes)

Pre-Treatment Filter Types

N/A

LOWeFLOW Filter Unit

Nibbler

Recirc Gravel Filter

Sand Filter

TRD

Other (details in notes)

Glendon Biofilter systems continue to be most common type of proprietary septic system installed in Clallam County but also one of the most expensive.

Septic Permits Installed between January 1, 2023 and January 1, 2024.

System Type \ month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Aerobic Treatment Unit	3	0	1	3	4	3	0	3	1	0	1	0	19
Biofilter	3	1	1	2	7	7	10	2	8	2	3	0	46
Conventional	3	1	1	4	2	1	2	3	2	4	0	0	23
Drip System	2	2	1	4	3	5	2	2	4	2	1	1	29
Mound	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	0	8
Pressure	8	3	3	1	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	34
Pressurized Deep Trench	2	3	1	1	1	4	0	1	2	1	1	1	18
Pump to Gravity	1	0	2	1	1	3	1	1	0	1	0	1	12
Recirculating Gravel Filter	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sand Filter Pressure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sand Line Pressure	4	1	2	3	3	4	5	1	2	2	2	3	32
Tank Only	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	17
Tank Repair	1	0	1	0	1	3	1	2	0	1	1	0	11
Total	29	13	15	21	27	37	24	19	27	18	13	8	251

2023 Program Highlights

Staff worked on difficult projects and collaborated with other local health jurisdictions. A permit was submitted for a larger onsite (LOSS) RV Park design. EH reviewed the design(s) which were split into 8 different septic systems to avoid being a LOSS (>3,500 gal/day). The capacity of the entire project is 13,000 gal/day but due to splitting flows EH had to honor the permits. To minimize issues with such a larger influx of effluent into one area, EH staff had the designer arrange the septic systems around the

area so that the flows are spread out over a larger acreage. In addition, EH required that a Hydrogeological Study be submitted per Method II requirements found in WAC 246-272A. A hydrogeologist who works for Island County reviewed the proposal, and ironically his only comment was that the system should be a LOSS. Staff mitigated the issues as much as possible with requirements of pre-treatment, separating some of the systems, requiring extra protection of reserve areas and having a 3rd party oversee maintenance.

Three failures at McDonald Creek repaired

Staff identified 3 failing septic systems that were potentially discharging sewage over the bluff at McDonald Creek in 2023 and worked hard to get those sites permitted (repairs happening in 2024). CCD was able to help two of those property's owners obtain funding through the CCDs cost share program.



CCD was able to expand the cost share program for septic failures to include all of Clallam County. This has enabled Clallam County to offer more options to those who have failed septic systems on the West end. Cost share money was not available until 2024 but EH expects that some low-income folks on the west end will benefit from having that money available to them for septic system repairs.

2023 Program Challenges

Lack of permitting staff was a huge challenge for continuity of the program, for morale, for burnout, for back-ups when a staff has planned vacation time or is sick.

The Permit Plan database was used throughout 2023, even though it's been unsupported since 2012. During this time, staff worked on the development to Tyler EPL. Most of this work fell upon Adar, who had a full plate already.

Complaints

A long-standing OSS complaint case on Youngquist Road was resolved. Here is a photo of the existing tank that was under a shed.

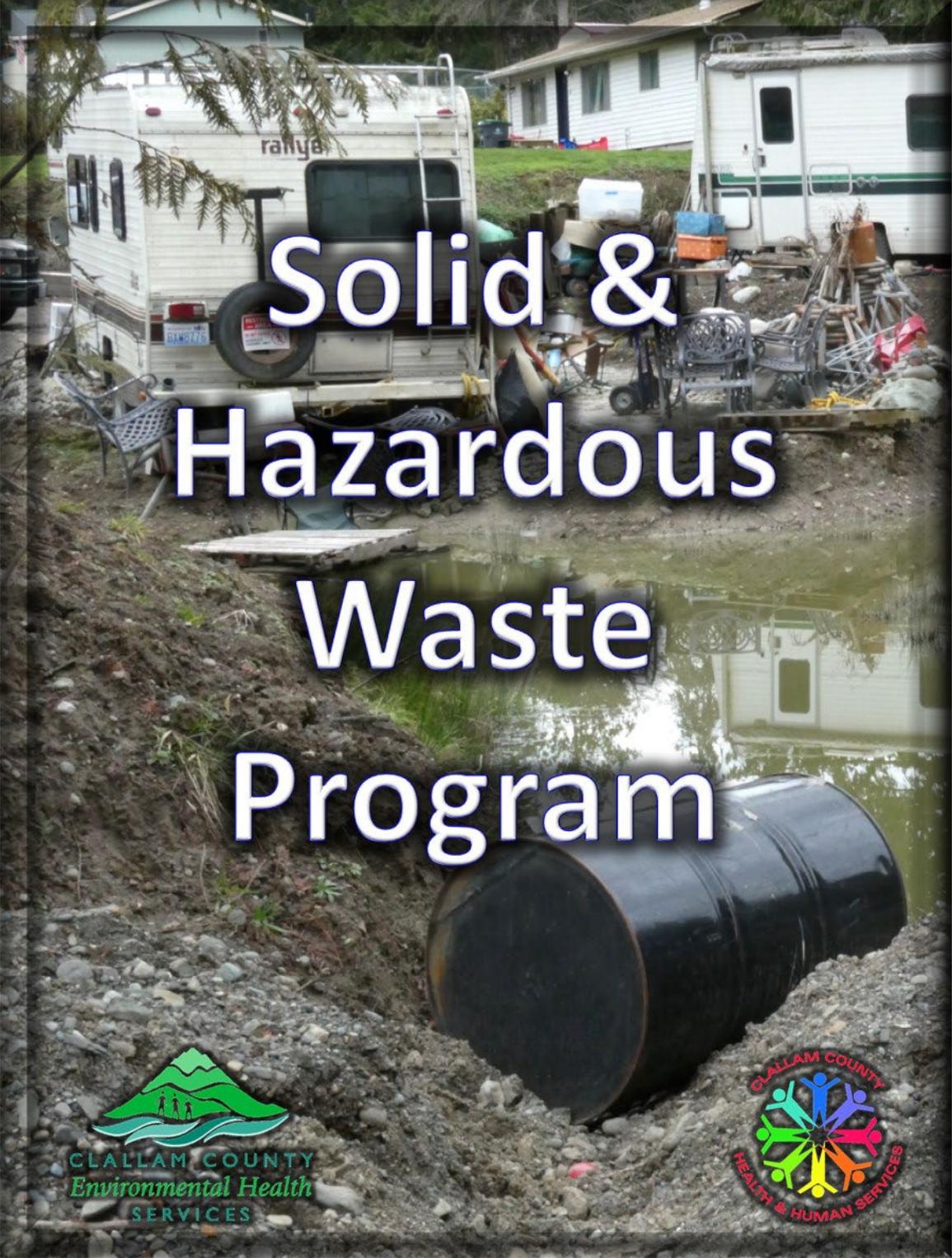
The tank was uncovered (it was under a concrete foundation), inspected, determined that it needed to be pumped, and the drain field was located and jetted and was functioning as of September 11, 2023. This site remains on our watch list.



Adventures in Tiny Home Placement Enforcement

EH received multiple complaints of Tiny Homes being placed and occupied on properties. All residences where people reside must have approved onsite septic system. CCEH sent letters to those property owners to have septic system installed or upgraded or remove the home. Some of those properties are still in enforcement, but local code changes in 2024 will require reevaluation. EH worked with DCD in helping to establish a Tiny Home Ordinance.





Solid & Hazardous Waste Program



Solid and Hazardous Waste Program

The Clallam County Environmental Solid and Hazardous Waste Program is responsible for assisting with, and responding to, solid and hazardous waste issues within Clallam County. There are 13 permitted solid waste facilities in Clallam County. EH enforces solid waste codes with authority by WAC 173-304, WAC 173-350, WAC 173-351, and CCC 41.11.

Staffing

Hope Merideth and Chris Reed are the Environmental Health Administrative and Customer Service Specialists who receive calls, answer questions, and log solid waste complaints brought in by the public. Eli Owens is the Environmental Health Specialist who investigates complaints, enforces violations, issues facility permits, reviews environmental reports, and inspects permitted facilities.



Eli Owens



Chris Reed

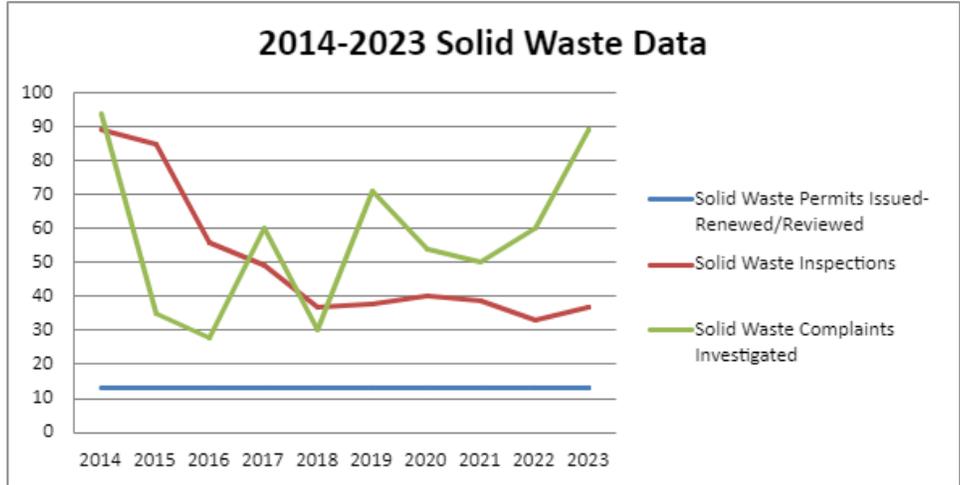


Hope Merideth

Routine Program Activities

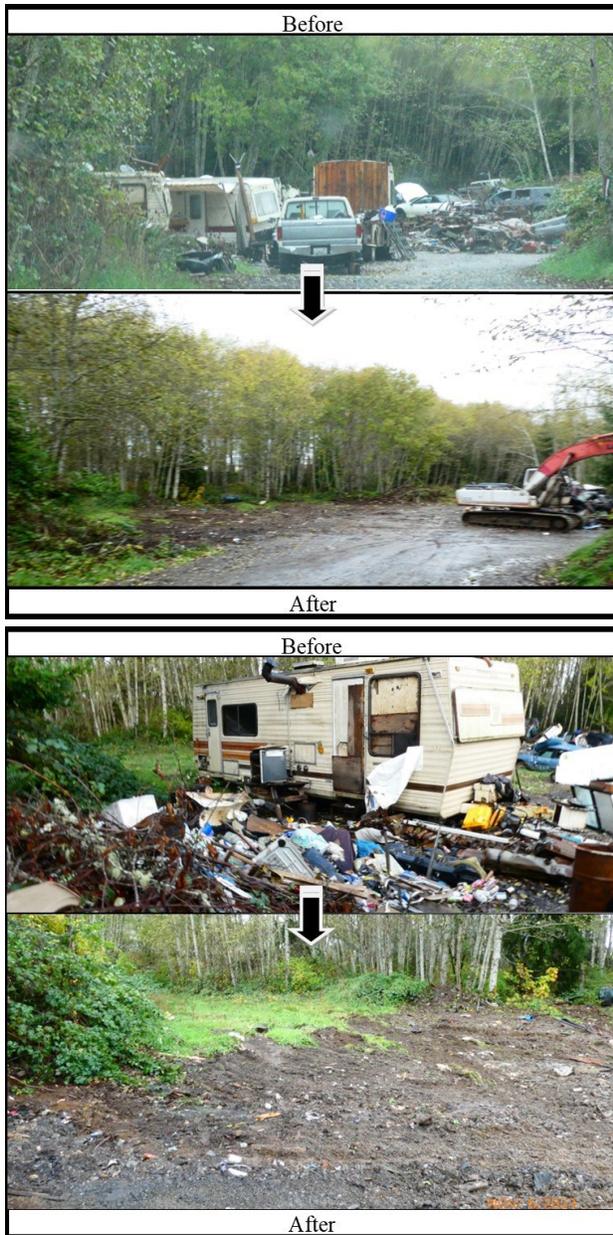
Routine program activities include, but are not limited to; business assistance, resident assistance, facility inspections, complaint investigations, complaint enforcement, issuance of permits, review of permits, review of new facilities or modification of existing facilities, updating the County website, public outreach and education, working in partnership with DCD's Code Enforcement, working in partnership with the septic team, working in partnership with the Sheriff's Department, working in partnership with the Cities of Sequim, Port Angeles, and Forks, and contributing to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

The table below shows the number of solid waste permits, inspections, and complaint cases investigated from 2014-2023. The graph on the next page shows the number of solid waste permits, inspections, and complaint cases investigated from 2014-2023.



2023 Program Highlights

Working collaboratively with DCD’s Code Enforcement to help clean up nearly 50 tons of solid waste at the Weel Rd property.



Participation in DCD's community cleanup events in both Port Angeles and Forks where all members of the community were welcome to bring solid waste for proper disposal.

Developing coordination with DCD and the Sheriff's Office through joint investigations and working together to solve difficult community problems.

Over 4,000 people reached through social media, 89 complaints investigated with 46 cases getting closed, 13 Facility Permits renewed, and 37 Inspections of permitted facilities.

2023 Program Challenges

Finding solutions for the disposal of unusual wastes (such as carcasses contaminated with bird flu) was both a huge challenge and a great opportunity for learning. This will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future.

The Weel Road cleanup project was a case with many obstacles and difficulties which required the involvement of many different departments and people.

Finding solutions for abandoned RVs continues to be a challenge and will likely remain so for many years to come.



Water Quality Program



Water Quality Program

The Clallam County Water Quality Program is responsible for managing reporting and deliverables for several grants, coordinating current work and future steps for the Clallam County PIC program, and for responding to public inquiries and providing guidance related to local water quality concerns, primarily due to pollution. Current grants within the Water Quality Program include the DOH Recreational Shellfish Biotoxin Program, which monitors Clallam County beaches for biotoxin pollution in support of safe recreational shellfish harvesting, the DOH and DOE Pollution, Identification, and Correction (PIC) grants, which work to identify and correct sources of fecal coliform pollution in the Dungeness and Sequim Bay watersheds in support of reopening commercial shellfish acreage, and the DOH OSS LMP IMP grant, which supports the management of an internal septic record database, as well as internal and public facing tools for data accession, and septic education and outreach.

Staffing

The Water Quality Program is staffed by Katie Kowal, the Water Quality Specialist, and receives staffing support from the On-Site Program (PIC field sampling, DOH Biotoxin Program) as well as the Food Program and Solid Waste Program (DOH Biotoxin Program). This program also relies on four volunteers to conduct sampling for the DOH Biotoxin program.



Katie Kowal



Andrew Harris



Eli Owens



Adar Feller

Routine Program Activities

The Water Quality Program supports the DOH Biotoxin program, coordinating and participating in sampling at several sites along Clallam’s northern coastline, and providing pollution related safety guidance to the public in the form of press releases and posting closure signs at beaches commonly used for recreational harvesting. Support for the Biotoxin program also includes coordination and support for four volunteers throughout the year.

The Water Quality Program also acts as lead for the Clallam County PIC program, working in partnership with Clallam Conservation District, the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Clallam County Environmental Health On-Site team, and Streamkeepers. As lead, the program coordinates PIC focus area and sampling site selection, sampling efforts, quarterly Clean Water Work Group partner meetings, and referrals to appropriate entities regarding potential impacts to water quality related to agricultural, septic, or property/land use concerns.

Other routine activities include writing quarterly grant reports, working with Accounts Payable and the Fiscal Specialist to review invoices and grant charges, developing and monitoring grant budgets, writing Personal Service Agreement contracts and monitoring related subrecipient work, scheduling and

completing deliverables in a timely manner, and identifying future program needs and applying for grants that support future program work.

The Water Quality program in 2023 also provided staffing support to the O&M Program, including training of new staff, assisting in budget planning, developing the Incentive/Rebate program, development and publication of the Clean Water Herald newsletter, contract coordination, event planning, development of educational materials for education and outreach events, namely Septic Smart Week, the KONP Home Show, NPBA Building EXPO, and Dungeness River Nature Center’s Riverfest.



2023 Program Highlights

In 2023 the Water Quality Program worked with the Manchester Environmental Laboratory (MEL) (EPA Region 10) to implement a new method for identifying non-point bacterial pollution sources within the Clean Water District, in the form of a Microbial Source Tracking (MST) study. Matriotti Creek was chosen as the focus water body for this study, as high levels of fecal coliform bacteria have been noted across multiple studies spanning the past 20 years, as well as during monthly PIC sampling from 2021-2022. Matriotti Creek was sampled monthly between May and October in tandem with PIC sampling, and samples were hand delivered to MEL for preservation and analysis. Samples will be analyzed at MEL for

the presence of four types of DNA: cow, dog, human, and ruminant (e.g. elk, deer, sheep, or goat). Data analysis will be completed and available in early 2024.



As part of the PIC program, the Water Quality Program held two “Open House” public meetings in June and September at the Sequim Prairie Grange, with support from the PIC Team. These events gave the PIC Team an opportunity to connect with residents in the PIC area, discuss current

findings, provide a history of our work and water quality issues within the Sequim-Dungeness Watershed, and provide homeowners with resources for septic systems, wells, and riparian plantings. Attendees at these events spurred great discussions on the necessity of septic inspections and discussed how to increase knowledge of and interest in the PIC program in the general community. In support of this they provided detailed suggestions on ways to advertise PIC meetings and made plans to invite their neighbors to future meetings to help raise community awareness of local water quality issues.

The Water Quality Program also supported the Clallam Conservation District's Cost-Share Program, by facilitating communication with and coordinating funding from the WA Dept. of Health. Two projects were supported, Flaura's Acres HOA, a LOSS within the city of Sequim that supports 55 low-income senior residents, upstream of Bell Creek, and 750 Sherburne, a single-family residence bordering McDonald Creek.

Lastly, the Water Quality Program took point on resurrecting the Clean Water Herald Newsletter (CWH) in late 2023. The CWH was a quarterly publication originally developed and distributed in the 2010's. Due to staff turnover and lack of funding, the CWH has not been produced for several years. With stable funding provided by the OSS Assessment Fee, it became a combined goal for the Water Quality and O&M Programs to again begin distributing the CWH. This publication allows CCEH to directly communicate with residents across the county about OSS care and maintenance and water quality stewardship. It is a friendly, approachable way to build positive relationships with the community we serve, and ultimately supports a healthy public and a healthy environment.



2023 Program Challenges

The Water Quality Program has one staff member, whose time in 2023 was divided among grant management, the PIC Program, the O&M Program, the Cost-Share Program, and county-wide water quality work (Recreational Shellfish and limited scope lake/creek studies outside of the MRA). This limited the ability to devote time to identifying county-wide water quality needs, conducting deeper work with the PIC program, determining needs for future work, applying for grants, and the overall long-term growth of the Water Quality Program.

Environmental Health Administration Programs



Environmental Health Administration and Other Programs

The Environmental Health Administration Program oversees the Environmental Health staffing management and program activities. The Environmental Health Director coordinates EH staff and programs. Other Environmental Health programs include emergency preparedness, FPHS, and vector surveillance.

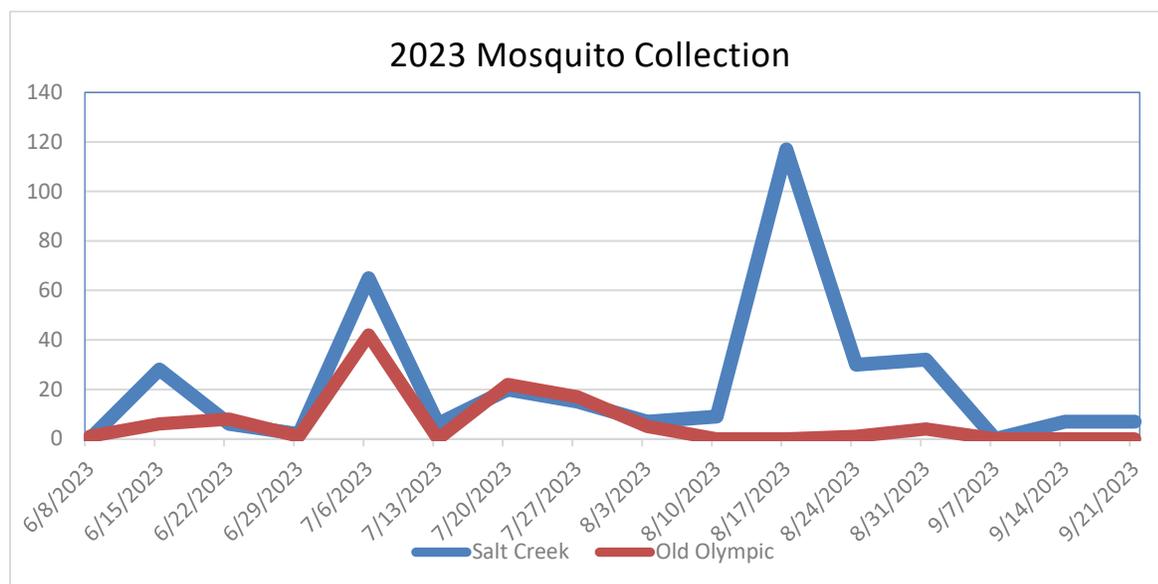
Staffing

The primary staff in the EH Administration Program is the Environmental Health Director, Jennifer Garcelon. She has a REHS and master's degree in public health.

Routine Program Activities

The Environmental Health Administration program consists of supporting Environmental Health staff and programs, and budget oversight. There are thirteen EH staff, excluding the EH Director. The EH Director is responsible for program staff hiring, staff support, and annual evaluations. The EH Director works closely with the Health Officer, HHS Director, HHS Deputy Director, and Fiscal Specialist. The EH Director is responsible for presenting any Environmental Health local ordinance, program updates, or policy changes to the Board of Health.

Other EH programs include FPHS planning, emergency preparedness, and vector surveillance. In emergency preparedness, staff works with Clallam County Department of Emergency Management on planning and response on disasters including windstorms, wildfire smoke, floods, landslides, or power outages that affect drinking water, onsite septic systems, food safety, or solid waste systems. With vector surveillance, EH works with Public Health when there has been a rabies exposure. EH will work with the State Public Health Laboratory (PHL) for shipment of animals that require testing. During the summer 2023, Eli collected mosquitos for West Nile Virus (WNV) surveillance. There were two collection sites that are collected weekly. The mosquitos were shipped to the PHL where they are speciated and tested for WNV. There was no WNV detected in any of the 2023 mosquitos submitted.



The EH Director works closely with the statewide EH Directors' (EHD) group coordinated by Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials. The group meets monthly to discuss emerging issues, regulations, and coordination with state agencies like Department of Health, State Board of Health, or Department of Ecology. The group meets in person in June and October annually. Jennifer is the chair of the EHD solid waste and workforce development subcommittees. In October 2022, she was elected as on the EHD Board and is the current president. It is a three-year term.

2023 Program Highlights

Program highlights in 2023 include the central files/archive project, moving office areas, and building the onsite septic O&M program.

Two of EH's long term goals have been, 1) to digitize central files, and 2) to provide more physical room for the Courthouse staff. In November 2022, and using FPHS funds, the scanning project began. Throughout 2023, paper records from central files were scanned and stored for archival retention project. All central files were placed in 437 storage boxes and the physical cabinets were removed. The program was implemented to open more office space for staff and archive all historic permit records to the Washington Secretary of State standards. In July 2023, EH moved into the area previously held by central files and DCD-Building. Seven new workstations were created. The workstations were divided with four private contained work areas, and three workstations for Customer Service Specialists where they can see the front counter and work with the public. There was an air quality issue with the materials used with the new furniture panels, and eventually, they were replaced.



Another 2023 highlight was building the onsite septic O&M program using the assessment fee. After being passed in 2021, the fees started collection in 2023. In April, Sandra White was hired to work in the OSS O&M program. We are building a program with sustainable programs like incentives and rebates, and education and outreach.

2023 Program Challenges

Staffing continues to be the biggest challenge throughout Environmental Health. There were two resignations, one EHS in the Drinking Water Lab Program and one EHS in the OSS Permitting Program. Additionally, Nan Furford, the Administrative Specialist for EH was transferred to HHS-Administration. The EHS in the drinking water program was filled, but the EHS OSS permitting position, and the vacancy left after Nan transferred, were deferred in November 2023.

Another challenge includes database transitions. As we move into the 21st century and away from paper files, there are different electronic databases available for workflow and programs. In 2023, Clallam County departments worked with Tyler Enterprise Permit Licensing as the database to replace Tidemark Advantage (a.k.a. Permit Plan). EH uses Permit Plan for onsite, drinking water, solid waste, and complaints. It is exciting to have these new databases, but it requires 10-20 hours per week to work on database transition. This requires staff to delay other projects since the staff time requirement was not planned. In April 2023, the food program transitioned into HSCloud, a cloud based food program inspection database. Throughout 2023, the food team held bimonthly meetings with HealthSpace to troubleshoot and work on items. The long term plan is for food program applications, permits, and inspections to all be electronically submitted and issued.

Conclusion

In 2023, the Clallam County Environmental Health team worked on mandated environmental health programs. They worked together as a team to accomplish a lot. The drinking water, OSS, and solid waste programs maintained service levels. The food program adapted to new industry needs and different service levels. The water quality program worked to fulfill grant requirements and work with partners on water quality projects. The administration program worked on new foundational public health service funding and public health emergencies.

Environmental Health followed their mission to protect the community's health through the prevention and control of environmentally related communicable diseases and through the minimization of exposure to environmental health hazards. EH implemented their vision to work together to provide responsible and professional enforcement of public health regulations, advocated the principles and values of public health, conducted themselves to inspire excellence in communication, problem solving, cooperation, teamwork, and public service. They worked to make a positive difference within the community through coordination and collaboration with the public and industry.

The team should be proud of what they accomplished in 2023!

