The image shows a large, multi-story brick building with a prominent red dome on top. The building is partially obscured by a large tree with pink cherry blossoms in the foreground. In the bottom right corner, there is a large green bush with small red flowers. The entire scene is set against a clear sky. The text "2022 Environmental Health Annual Report" is overlaid in a white, serif font at the top of the image.

2022 Environmental Health Annual Report

April 2023

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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 2022 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 2022 highlights and challenges. Data is presented for each section.

The revenues collected for EH in 2022 were \$1,119,481. The revenues are a combination of program fees, grants, and general funds. The expenditures for EH in 2022 were \$1,291,990. The largest expenditure was for staff which accounted for 85% 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 2022 workload shows some recovery from COVID-19 in the food program as well as some slowdown in the housing market as seen in a reduced number of new on-site permits.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Water Availability Requests Processed	226	229	222	261	275
Total Water Samples Processed	3707	3154	2611	2827	3028
Food Service Permits (Permanent and Temp)	587	579	360	406	509
Food Service Inspections (Permanent and Temp)	357	435	165	119	117
Food Service Plan Reviews	17	48	23	29	47
Water Recreation Pool Inspections	10	5	1	0	12
On-site Permits	367	331	323	431	295
O&M Reports Received	3369	3359	3762	4024	4290
Compliance for OSS Inspection-Countywide	28.6%	27.3%	28.3%	32.0%	32.5%
Solid Waste Permits Issued	13	13	13	13	13
Solid Waste Inspections	37	38	40	39	33
EH Complaints Investigated Combined	118	190	128	138	125

CCEH completed required regulatory work, complaint investigations, and public outreach and education in 2022 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 goes into the community to work with professionals in the drinking water, food service establishments, onsite septic, solid waste facility, and water quality areas. The staff works with the general 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 currently seven members of the BOH. The BOH is comprised of the three County Commissioners, a city representative, a hospital representative, and two at-large positions.

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. 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 the 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](#).

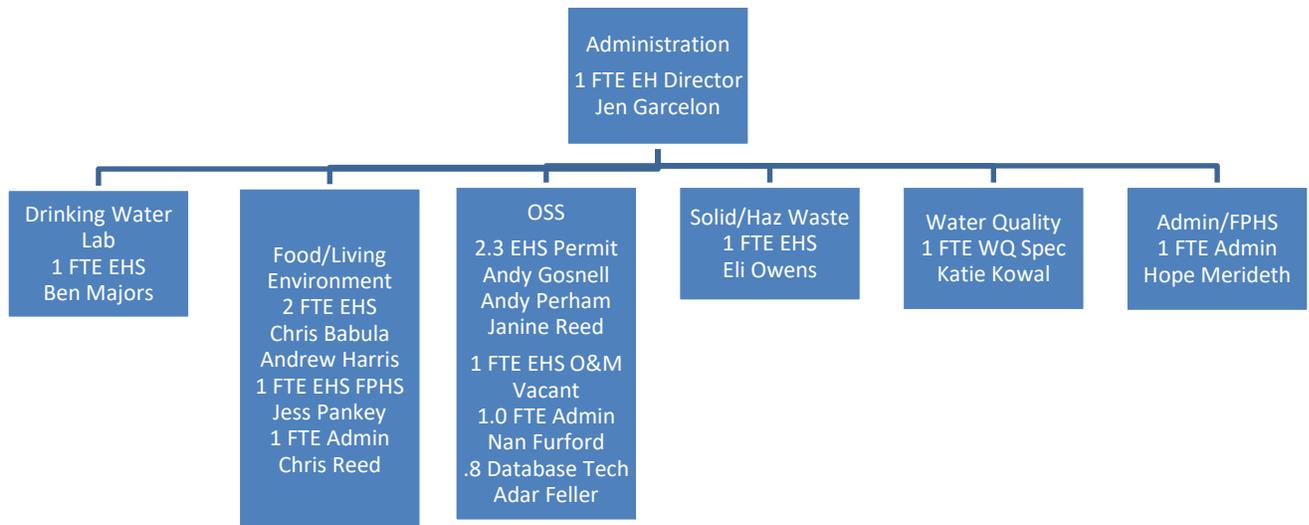
The table below outlines the major State and local EH codes.

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

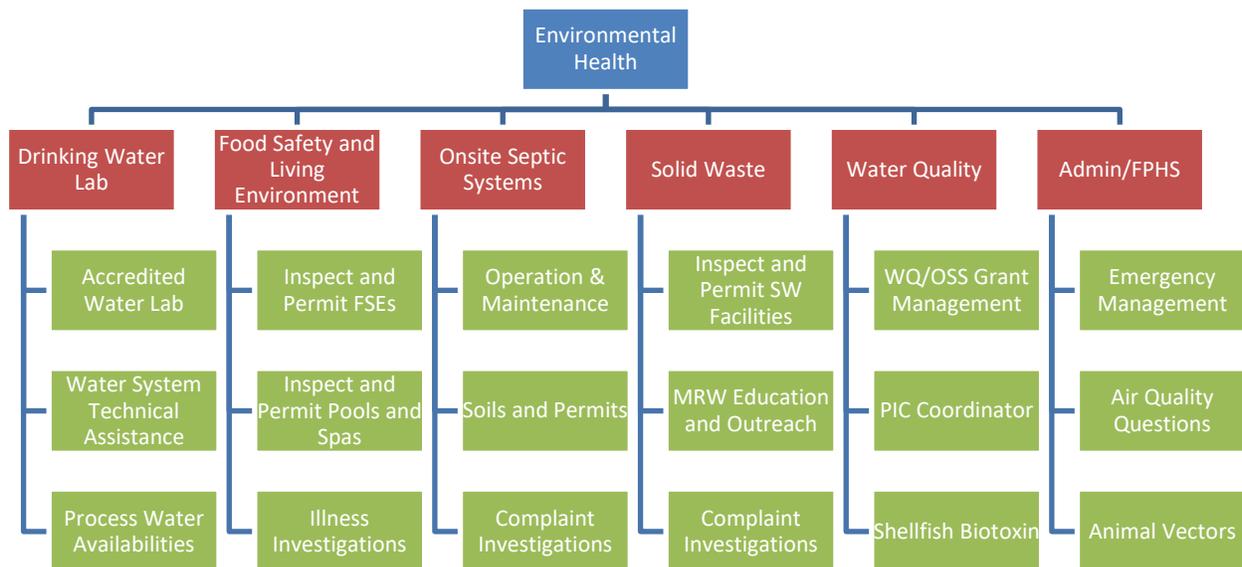
The Environmental Health has a team of 14 staff, with 13.1 FTE. The team includes the EH Director, 8.3 FTE Environmental Health Specialists (EHS), 3.0 FTE Administrative/Customer Specialists, 1.0 FTE Water Quality Specialist, and 0.8 FTE Database Technician. Staff are located in two separate locations, the main Courthouse 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 of EH and emerging programs, like foundational public health services (FPHS), emergencies, and animal vectors.



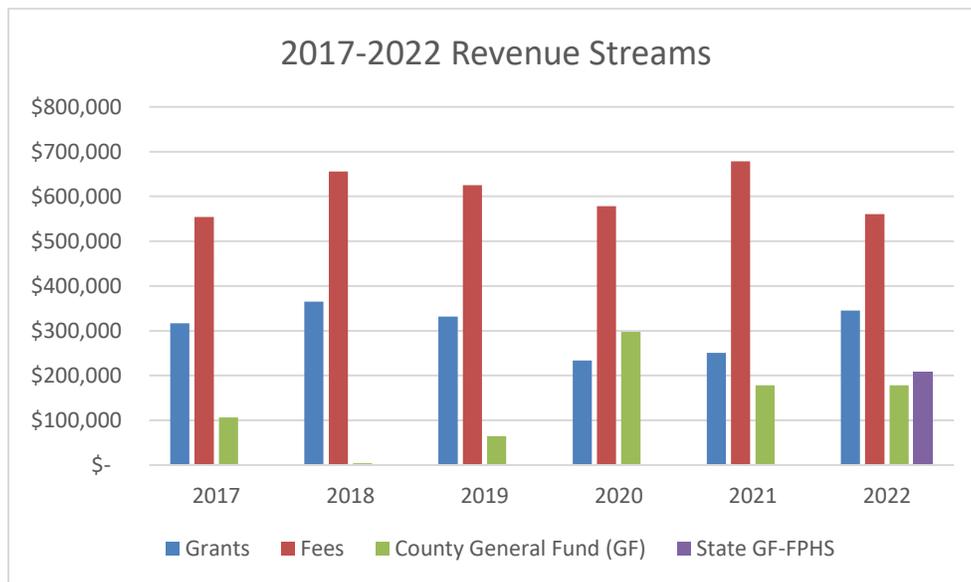
Environmental Health Budget

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.

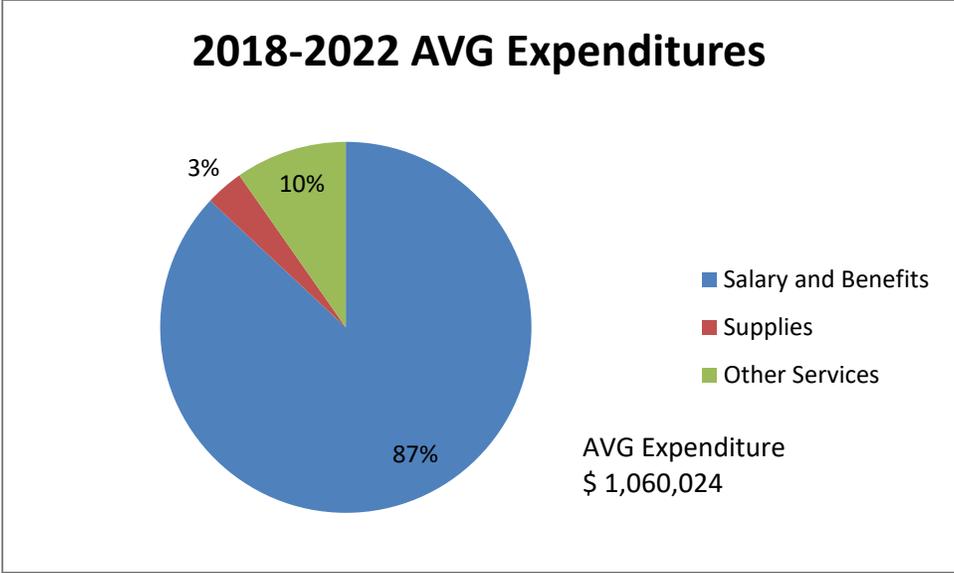
The program fees are categorized in four areas, in order of the amount generated per year. These include onsite septic, food safety and living environment, drinking water laboratory, and solid waste. EH manages 12-16 grants per year. In 2022, EH received 13 grants, 11 grants from Washington State Department of Health and received 2 grants from Washington State Department of Ecology. These numbers do not include the COVID-19 grants. The remaining revenue comes from the Clallam County General Fund. 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 fees are also variable since some of the largest grants are competitive and not guaranteed. Grant payments sometimes come in large amounts in the next fiscal year which accounts for some of the variation.

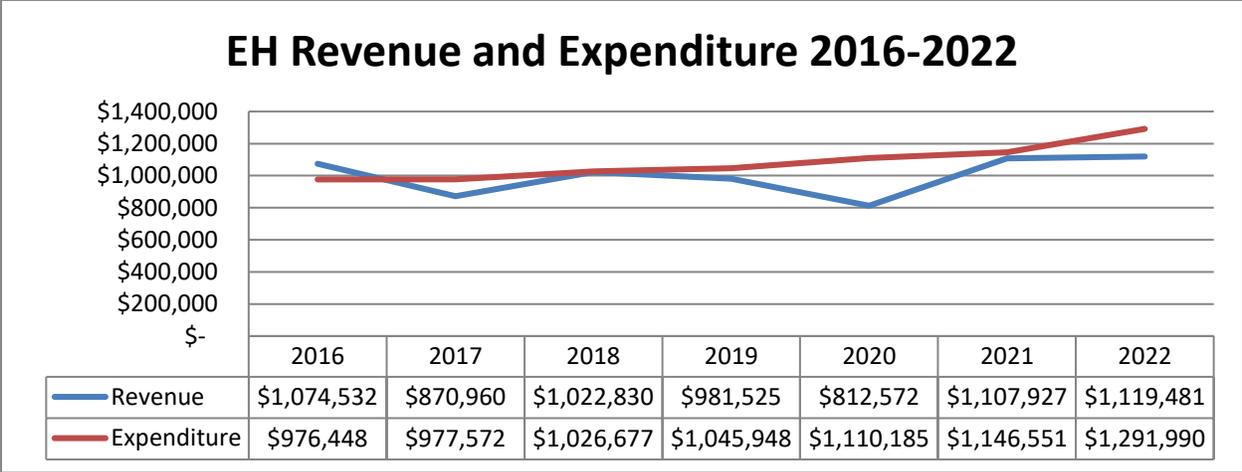
The graph below shows the average revenue categories from 2017-2022. The largest revenue category for Environmental Health are fees for service, for example, onsite septic permit, food service operating permit, or drinking water sample. Grants have primarily been the second largest revenue category. 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.



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.



This chart shows the past seven years' Environmental Health revenue and expenditure from 2016-2022.



The 2023 budgeted revenue is \$ 1,470,308 and the budgeted expenditure is \$1,693,308.

COVID-19

COVID-19 continued to impact the Environmental Health team in 2022. In March 2020, Washington State and Clallam County declared a public health emergency due to the emergence of COVID-19. There were mandated government shutdowns in schools and businesses. Environmental Health services were kept open to receive drinking water samples and septic repair permits. Environmental Health staff continued to be available in person, by phone and email. The Environmental Health counter was open during the entire response.

Environmental Health shifted staffing to help in the COVID-19 response. Jess Pankey, one of the food program EHS, moved into COVID infection control and outbreak response. She continued to work in this role through the first six months of 2022, then has been transitioning out of the role as Public Health

increased capacity. Jess continues to work on outbreak response with Public Health with a focus on illness investigations with a potential Environmental Health connection.

As a result of increasing COVID-19 cases from the Delta variant, in September 2021, a Public Health Order (PHO) went into effect requiring vaccination verification to eat indoors at restaurants and bars. The food program staff spent most of their time in the first quarter of 2022 on the response to the PHO until it was lifted on March 11, 2022.

Internally, EH staffing was affected by COVID. After not having a team outbreak since the start of COVID, staff was hit hard with COVID and other respiratory illnesses at the end of November 2022. More than half our staff were out ill for a two-week period. For over a week and a half, all three of our public customer service team were out. Additionally, a few of our EHSs were out. Andy Gosnell was the public face for EH during that time. He was at the front counter most of the time with the public as well as the only OSS staff person.

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 primary staff and supported by two administrative staff. The staff includes 1 FTE Environmental Health Specialist (EHS). Staff and the drinking water laboratory are in the Clallam County Courthouse in Port Angeles.



Ben Majors



Chris Reed



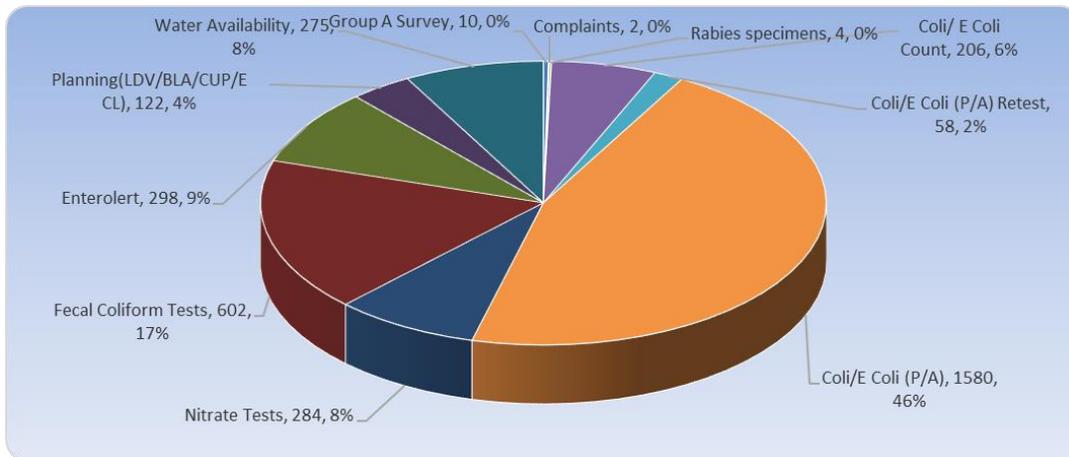
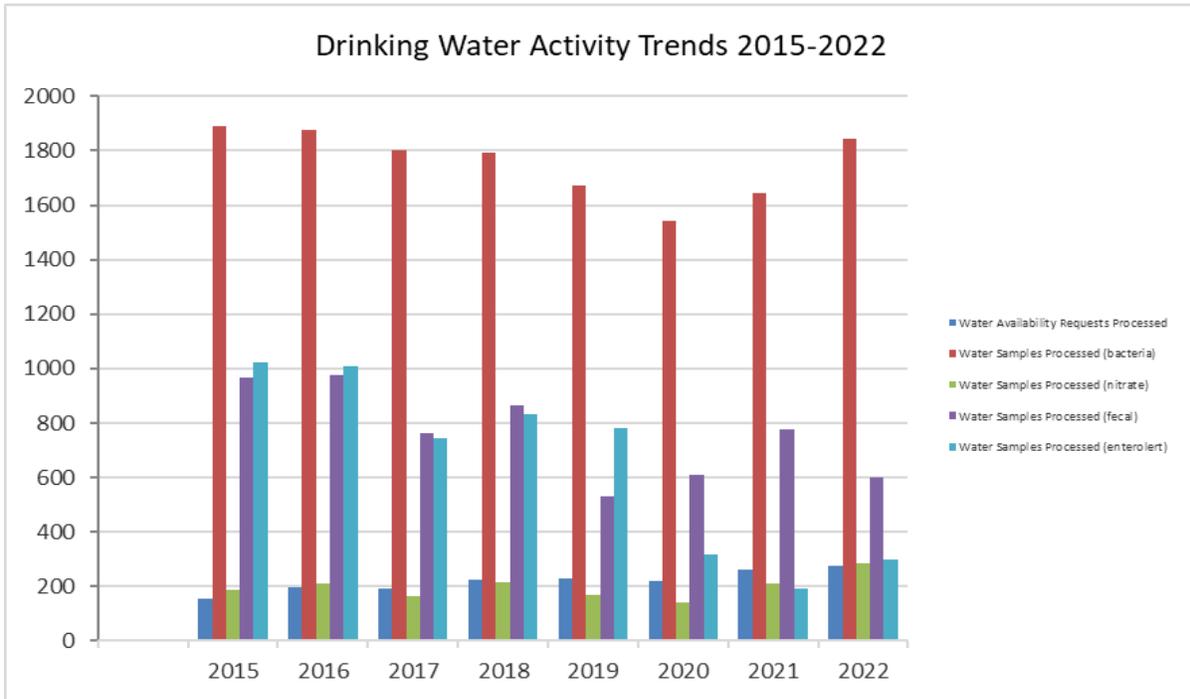
Nan Furford

Routine Program Activities

Nan Furford and Chris Reed answer calls, answer questions, and receive water samples for and from the public. The Drinking Water Program EHS, Ben Majors, performs water tests for public and private water systems. 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.

The table below shows the drinking water lab activities from 2013-2021. The graph on the next page shows the drinking water activities from 2013-2021.

Drinking Water and Laboratory Program Data



2022 Program Highlights

Our program was able to expand our water testing schedule. We extended Thursday sample acceptance hours that was previously cut off at Noon has now been extended to 3:30 pm just as any other weekday. Nitrate testing was previously conducted twice a month. We now offer nitrate testing Monday-Wednesday every day. As a result of these expansions, in addition to outreach to water system and tribal partners, we surpassed pre-pandemic numbers of water tests performed onsite.

2022 Program Challenges

Aging equipment has been a challenge, as the average age of equipment is 35 years old. Equipment failed at drastic times that required creative alternatives. In addition to failing aged equipment, supply chain issues that plagued every industry took a toll on lab materials. Prices was increased by vendors by on average 8%.

Ben worked with the management team on developing an equipment list and pricing to replace old equipment. County capital funds were allocated in 2023 for equipment replacement.



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 (FSE's), 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

2022 was a year of recovery for the Food Safety and Living Environment Programs. The team consists of three Environmental Health Specialists, one Customer Service Specialist, and help from the Database Technician.

Chris Reed entered her second 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. As an EHS, Jess Pankey continued working primarily with Public Health, focusing on Infection Control and Prevention, providing guidance, and interpreting best practices specific to the various community centers. Her responsibilities included reporting, testing and seeking guidance and education as part of Clallam County's outbreak response for more than half of 2022. 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; she has been a ninja with juggling new databases that are in development.

The biggest staffing event was the hiring of Chris Babula as an EHS in September. He came to the department with lots of experience (YAY!). 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. Chris and his family relocated from southern California to be part of the EH team.

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

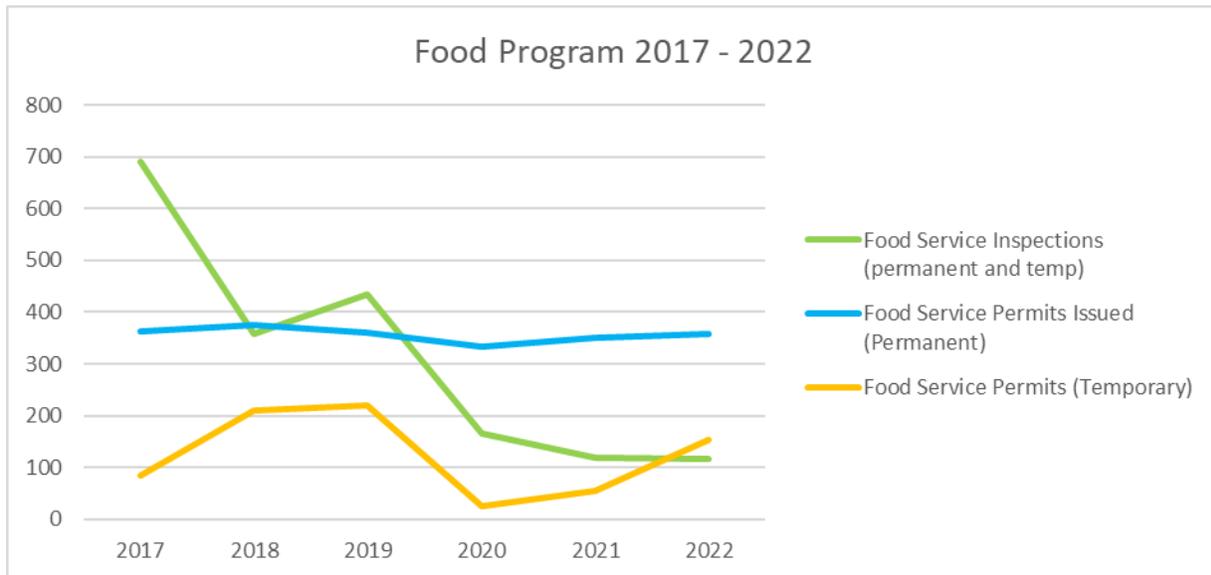
Routine Program Activities

Washington State Department of Health, Department of Labor and Industries and Clallam County Covid mandates required focused, individualized guidance/education/outreach, investigation and enforcement efforts for our team. National and Washington State outbreak data identified Food Service Establishments as some of the most commonly identified settings linked to COVID-19 transmission and infection among staff as well as visitors. Owners and operators of Food Service Establishments faced challenges with mandates and guidance affecting their local customer base, the tourist season and their ability to safely and consistently coordinate staff to meet the demands of providing these services. They navigated new ways to operate, often finding it necessary to modify the style of service with variable staffing levels and simultaneously adjusting to an unpredictable, lower volume of customers. Mandates were lifted, but COVID was still very active in the community and the return to routine operations is still underway as we find a “new normal” for day-to-day operation.

COVID-19 situational awareness brought out skills in problem solving, finding and sharing technical guidance and clarification, coordinating and learning alongside partner agencies. 2022 was a year of learning to listen to the needs of Food Establishment operators, support staff, school administrators, leaders of local churches seeking guidance and working with event organizers wanting to create a safe place for members of our community. We were able to encourage residents and staff at health care facilities, listen to customers, communicate the concerns of patrons and connect with the people of our Clallam County community. As time passed, we learned more about how to keep our community safe and through careful efforts of Public Health staff tracking community transmission, the data clearly showed that what we were doing was working. Our community continued to seek support and encouragement and we met them where they were, encouraging them with education or by just listening if they needed to process the changes of the last few years. We remained surprisingly busy, in person and tele-working, as our team worked at proficiency with internal and external customer service.

We steadily received Plan Review Applications for new owners, planned and attended pre-opening inspections, followed up on notifications from concerned citizens, employees, managers or participants representing numerous groups in our community, not only our food establishment partners. We continued to re-assure hesitant members of our community who called us seeking guidance and support and worked with organizers of community celebrations, fairs and festivals. We operated at the highest level possible within our limited capacity. We felt honored to function as a team and together, we experienced myriad inquiries about education/guidance, exposures and public and environmental health recommendations that we saw protecting our community in the way we learned we were needed. Environmental Health publicly represented our Public Health partners and with our newly

formed team, and the direction of great organizational leadership, we began rebuilding our capacity to re-establish face-to-face working relationships.



2022 Program Highlights

We have had three, most noteworthy highlights in 2022 within the Food Safety and Living Environment team. First was the breath of relief as the results of the difficult, yet effective of Covid Mandates along with continuous education, outreach and compliance monitoring paid off. The second was the hiring of a new Environmental Health Food Safety Professional and Clallam Environmental Health team member, Chris Babula. Chris's communication skills and years of experience and expertise grounded in food safety culture is invaluable to the program. The third was solidifying the partnership between Public Health and Environmental Health. The three components integral to disease identification, investigation and reduction include the epidemiologists and public health nurses, the laboratorians verifying communicable disease diagnosis and the environmental health professionals taking that information back out into the field to promote change. The EH component involves closing the loop of disease transmission using education and specific, verifiable examples of infection prevention to present science driven, risk-based assessments and share data supported adjustments to processes resulting in behavior change.

2022 Program Challenges and COVID-19 Program Effects

The most obvious challenge was shifting our skill set into what our community and our emergency operation leadership dictated what was needed. We learned how to incorporate public health messaging and practices into the heart of our community through education, challenging outreach and compliance assessment with a lean and willing team. Adapting our skill set to include becoming a resource for a pandemic was a natural shift for us and we have been updating our roles to include new responsibilities in addition to our professional expertise in food safety. Getting back up to speed at the pace and demands of our community is something that still feels like it is coming in slow, steady waves but we are right there and ready for 2023. Staffing/Training, HealthSpace.

FPHS

The Foundational Public Health Services designation as an Environmental Health Specialist provided time to review a training plan for Chris, create Environmental Health Newsletters for our Food Establishment operators, for Jess to participate as a guest speaker for the Sequim School District meeting with staff and educators, support Donated Food Distributing Organizations in Plan Review and Food Safety recommendations, present a poster at the National Association of City and County Health Organizations at the Annual Education Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, review Temporary Food Establishment permits for applicants qualifying for fee waivers and create templates for standardized Plan Review Approvals as well as Conditional Approval letters sent to Food Establishment operators in Clallam County.

Regular coordination with Public Health and on-the-job training in Infection Control and Prevention gave us the opportunity to respond to outbreaks, provide critical guidance, interpret regulations, deliver on-site N95 respirator Fit Testing, supporting safe environmental controls for front line care-takers as part of required respiratory safety programs, attend on-site infectious respiratory disease testing of staff, residents, students and family members, and finally, reporting the results into the Washington State Disease Reporting System.

Jess learned about Infection Control Assessments from CDC and Association of Professionals in Infection Control. She was a Local Health Jurisdiction representative functioning in a non-regulatory capacity, available to coordinate with professionals from the Washington State Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, Long Term Care Facility Executives, health care staff and residents in response to outbreaks. She observed and then performed Infection Control Assessments and Recommendation (ICAR) visits to extend protection to some of the most susceptible members of Clallam County and the staff that cared for them. It was an incredible opportunity for an environmental health professional utilizing over 16 years of experience in food and school establishment support shifting focus to adapt and meet the needs of Clallam County's emergency response. She began observing new infectious disease challenges and seeking critical solutions and assisting with distribution of testing materials and Personal Protective Equipment. This role was cultivated through participation in regular state-wide Health Care Associated Infection Community of Practice groups, connecting with experts operating within partner agencies, and the dedicated encouragement and leadership from our Health Officer, our Public Nurse Supervisor and our Environmental Health Director.

Regular team meetings as part of the Clallam County Outbreak Response team solidified the recognition of what Environmental Health and Public Health team could accomplish together. As a result, we formed an Enterics Team made up of Environmental Health Specialists (Jen, Jess, Andrew, Chris and Ben) and the Public Health Communicable Disease team. We learned what each team member brought to the table in order to review and then respond to Clallam County cases of enteric disease. We were given the opportunity through Foundational Public Health support to utilize the framework identified as part of the COVID-19 community support response in Clallam County.

Washington State groups focusing on Outbreak Management, Homeless Services COVID-19 Outbreak, Corrections COVID-19, Outbreak Detection, Childcare COVID-19, and Schools Community of Practice

conducted routine meetings with guidance updates and local data to create a wide base for learning about and sharing best practices from experts in Public and Environmental Health services. Investigating outbreaks, testing individuals at outbreak locations and reporting Notifiable Conditions through the Washington State Disease Reporting System gave our Environmental Health team a new way to update illness investigation observations and provide a service to our community. Participating in case interviews and learning case management for Clallam County residents and then connecting them with invaluable resources, like food, financial support, education and individualized strategies to keep themselves and their loved ones informed and safe was the most rewarding part of the expansion of responsibilities.



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 January 1, 2023, there are 20,104 known septic systems and 1,192 assumed – or unknown - septic systems in Clallam County, for a total of 21,453. In the Marine Recovery Area (MRA) there are 12,692 known septic systems, with 181 unknown, for a total of 12,753.

Staffing

The O&M EHS position remained unfilled for most of 2022; this was a vacancy since October 2021. In October 2022, EH hired Samantha Harik as the new O&M EHS. She was in the job for about six weeks before taking another position. While in EH, she helped with some processes including inspection reminder postcards and inspection report.

Karenann Mygind retired in June and the inspection reminder postcard mailing went on hiatus without her assistance. Hope Merideth was hired in December, and she helped Adar with inspection report review, data entry and permit plan issues. Janine Reed moved over into the O&M program to work part time in both O&M and On-site late in 2022.



Hope Merideth



Adar Feller



Andy Perham



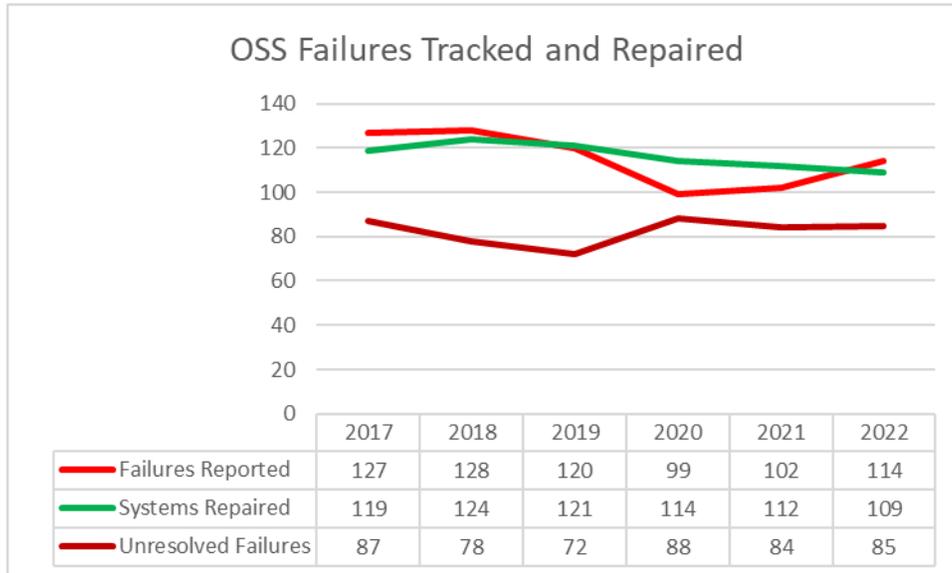
Janine Reed

Routine Program Activities

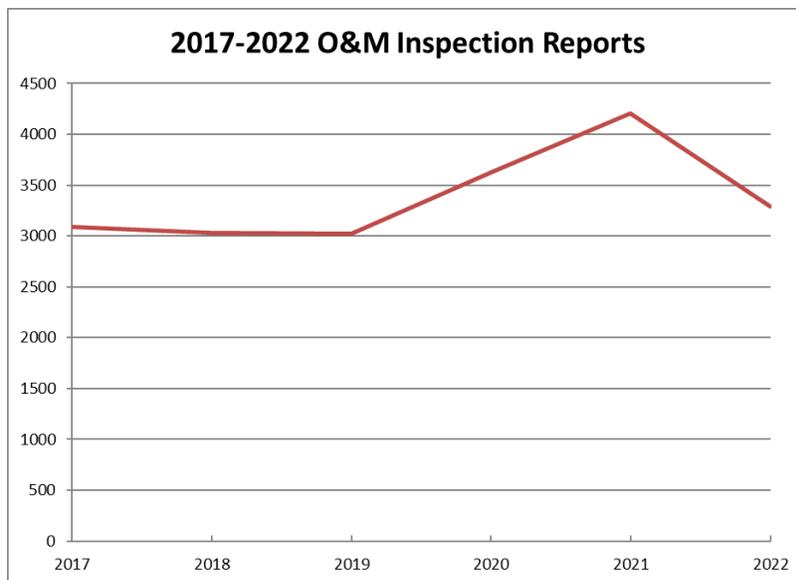
The main priority of the O&M Program is to normalize routine septic inspections. Routine O&M program activities include mailing septic inspection compliance (SIC) letters to homeowners. Areas of SIC are currently targeted through a combination of pollution identification projects and sensitive locales of citizen and/or staff concern. O&M Program responsibilities also includes 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.

Due to staffing issues and continued COVID precautions O&M was limited to mostly sending out some reminder notices and failure tracking in 2022. Failure tracking of inspection problems reported on inspection reports is part of the O&M programs work but the enforcement of those failures to be

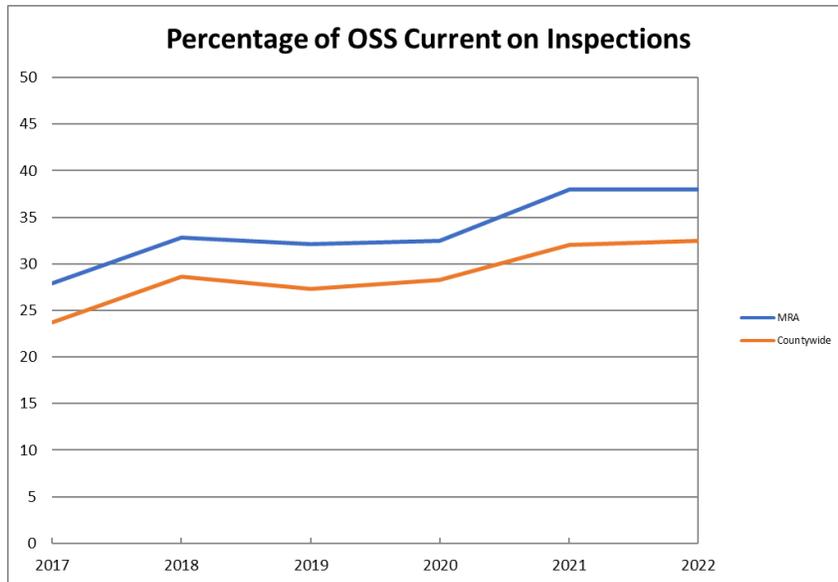
repaired falls under the general On-site program’s purview. In 2022 we added D-box replacement to the failure trackable problems to be resolved which can be corrected without needing a repair permit.



The number of inspection reports in 2022 dropped off without regular SIC letters and postcards going out and due to a slowdown in the housing market. Our manual methods of avoiding duplication between Permit Plan and OnlineRME while automated database communication remains inactive was also improved so that 2021’s over-estimation may now appear more abrupt.



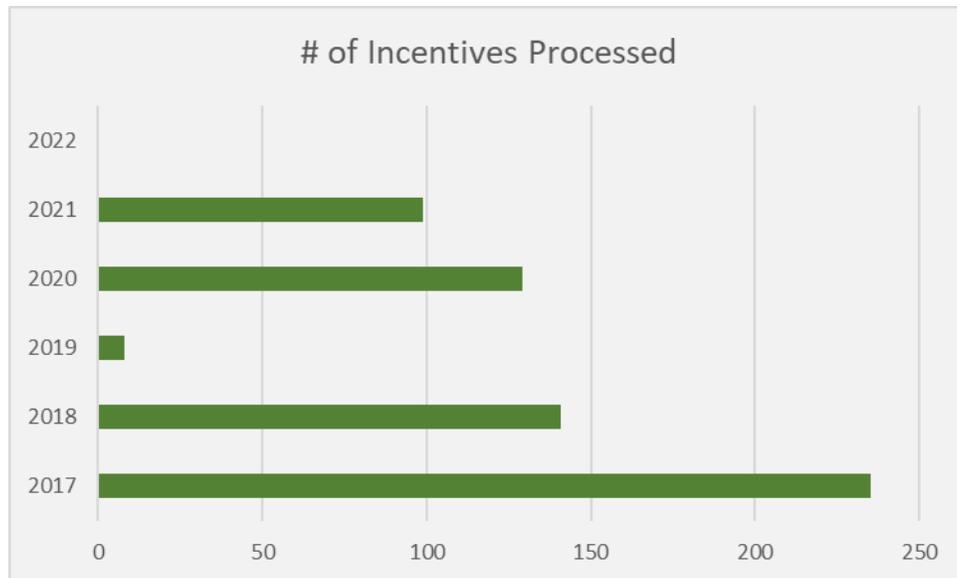
As per the graph on the next page, in 2017, the MRA had a septic inspection compliance percentage of 27.9% and in 2022 it is now at 38.0%, the same it was in 2021. The two major improvements in inspection compliance levels over the past 6 years have coincided with strong Septic Inspection Compliance campaigns in 2017 – 2018 and 2020 – 2021 where staff was available to focus on inspection compliance.



The annual O&M fee to sustainably fund the program was passed by the BOH in August 2021 and has been assessed on 2023 property tax statement. All properties with an SOM case in October 2022 were assessed the fee \$13 per OSS. The data was reviewed to remove groups determined ineligible. 19,918 properties were assessed this fee. The work to make this fee assessment in 2023 possible was completed in 2022.

Year	Statement ID	Taxing Jurisdiction	First Half Base Amt.	Second Half Base Amt.	Penalty	Interest	Base Paid	Amount Due
2023	24559	ST SCH - STATE SCHOOL	\$991.05	\$991.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1982.09
2023	24559	CC-GEN - CLALLAM COUNTY	\$336.03	\$336.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$672.03
2023	24559	CC-RD - CLALLAM COUNTY ROADS	\$339.56	\$339.56	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$679.12
2023	24559	SD #323 - SCHOOL DISTRICT #323	\$561.50	\$561.49	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1122.99
2023	24559	PORT - PORT OF PORT ANGELES	\$46.64	\$46.64	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$93.28
2023	24559	FIRE #3-#8 - FIRE DISTRICT #3 CLAL-#8 JEFFCO	\$621.06	\$621.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1242.10
2023	24559	NTH OLY LIB - NORTH OLYMPIC LIBRARY	\$127.97	\$127.97	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$255.94
2023	24559	HOSP #2 - HOSPITAL DISTRICT #2	\$138.31	\$138.31	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$276.62
2023	24559	CON FUTURES - CONSERVATION FUTURES	\$7.81	\$7.81	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.62
2023	24559	OSS O&M - CC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ONSITE SEPTIC FEE	\$6.50	\$6.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13.00
2023	24559	WEED - WEED CONTROL	\$0.82	\$0.81	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1.63

There was no incentive/rebate program running in 2022 due to lack of funds and staff to administer the process so there were no incentives processed in 2022. The table on the next page shows the number of incentives processed each year between 2017-2022. The variation between the years is due to the amount of staffing and grant funds available each year.



2022 Program Highlights

Two major failures which were potentially affecting Dungeness Bay were assisted with cost share money through the Conservation District and repaired in 2022.

One major failure had a large pond of sewage in the backyard and with winter approaching needed to be repaired quickly. The owners were referred by On-site staff to Craft 3 and with the help of Craft 3 and the on-site industry professionals working on the property the failure was repaired in 3 weeks, which is relatively a very fast turnaround.



At the end of 2022, Janine transitioned from full-time OSS permitting to into part-time O&M work and part-time permitting. Janine started Clallam’s O&M program in the early 2000’s. With Janine’s participation, the program will be ready to be fully implemented in 2023 with the additional staff hired to be ½ O&M and ½ Onsite.

Adar was able to help manually track failures since the database is currently disconnected from OnlineRME and Andy P sent out failure notices which kept addressing failures on track.

The new CivicPlus county website launched in October and required major revamp of On-site pages to help the public more successfully access information about their septic system.



Let's get started!

Find my Septic System	Find my Inspection Status
Find a Licensed Professional	Become Septics 201 DIY Certified
File a Sewage Complaint	Submit my DIY Inspection Online

Looking for something else? Choose a topic below:

 <p>Codes and Regulations <i>It's the law.</i></p>	 <p>Permits <i>File, track and find permit-related documentation</i></p>
 <p>Homeowner Assistance <i>Rebates, grants and loans</i></p>	 <p>Professional Resources <i>Let's get to work!</i></p>
 <p>Homeowner Resources <i>Find all kinds of information on taking care of your system.</i></p>	 <p>Projects <i>What else have we been working on?</i></p>
 <p>OSS Inspections <i>Either by a professional or DIY, all systems must be regularly inspected!</i></p>	 <p>Become Septic Smart <i>Educational info from the EPA!</i></p>

- Codes and Regulations +
- Complaints
- Homeowner Assistance +
- Homeowner Resources +
- Inspections +
- On-site Septic Professionals Licensed in Clallam County
- Other OSS Projects +
- Permits +
- Professional Resources



The third week of September is known as Septic Smart Week. Locally, EH adds septic inspection messaging to social media and street banners were placed in Forks and Sequim to remind people to take care of their septic and get it inspected.

At a federal level, the US Environmental Protection Agency sponsored a septic photo challenge for Septic Smart Week. Across the whole US, Janine Reed's I heart sewage photo won 1st Place!

2022 Program Challenges

Staffing and technology transitioning were the biggest challenge in 2022 for the O&M program. Finding staff to stay in the program has been the biggest challenge. Losing Sam after only six weeks was a blow and then having to go out to find another applicant (after multiple tries in 2022) set the program further back.

The main goal of the program is to encourage maintenance and regular inspections. It was mainly addressed through social media and outreach in



The screenshot shows the EPA website page for the 2022 SepticSmart Photo Challenge. It lists the 1st Place Winner as Janine Reed with the photo 'Protect It and Inspect It! Tree roots love sewage and travel far! Clallam County Environmental Health Ordinance Program's "average heart" of tree roots removed from a septic tank traveled over 60 feet to drink the effluent from a septic tank and sewage pipe!'. The 2nd Place Winner is Samantha Russell with the photo 'Septic Sam(artha) of Skagit County Environmental Health, Washington demonstrates a model of a septic system as part of their educational classes for homeowners about septic systems and maintenance!'.

2022, but there were not many opportunities available for in-person outreach with COVID still being a consideration.

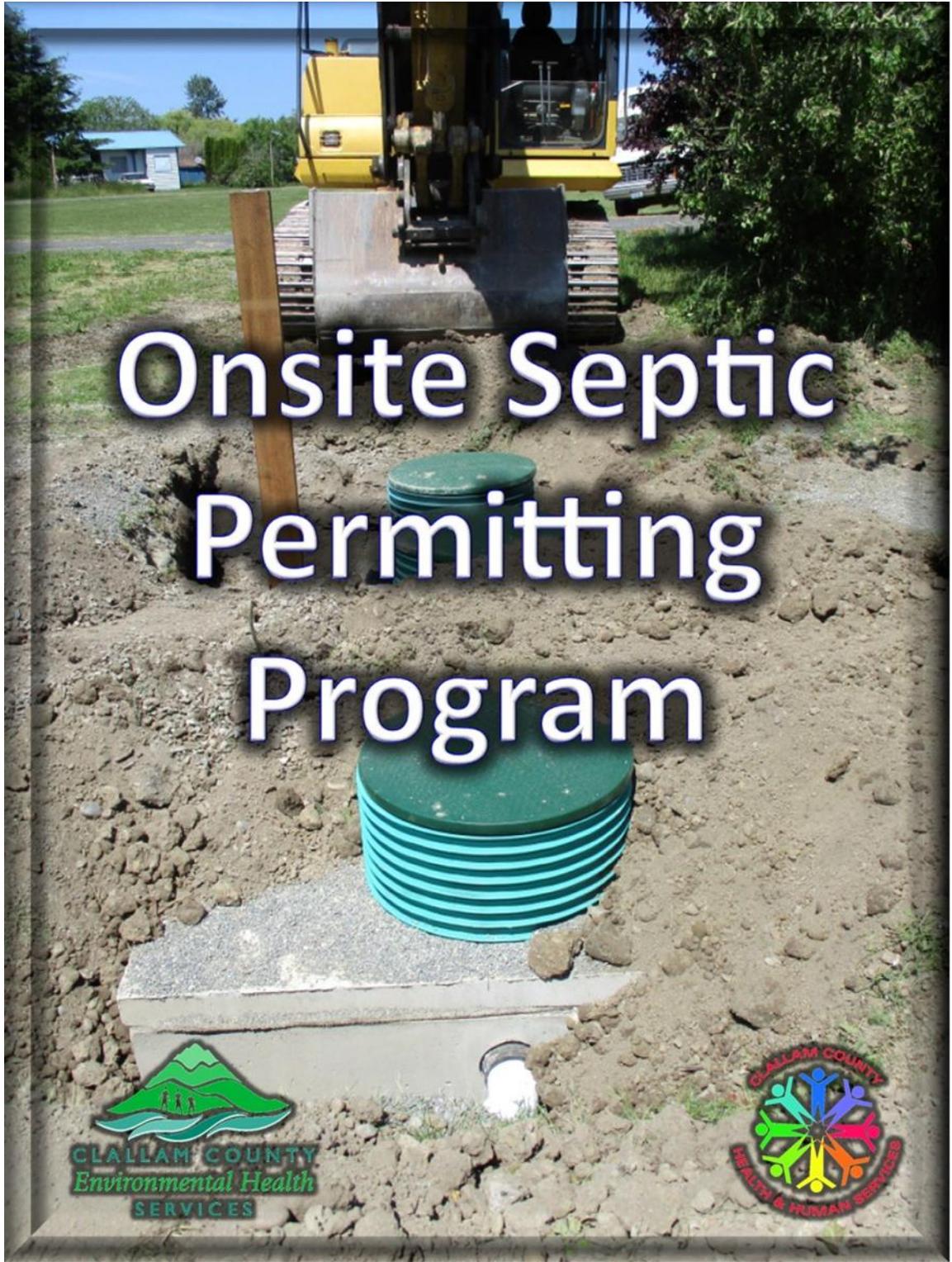
OnlineRME, the inspection database used by most Maintenance providers in Clallam County to submit inspection reports, remains disconnected from our old permit tracking software (Permit Plan) so it requires manual intervention to maintain relatively accurate reportable numbers. The upgrades to county technology resources caused considerable problems in accessing backend exports of data from Permit Plan which further complicates the manual process of bringing outside data sources into our system.

The online Septics 201 DIY Homeowner inspection report database lost connection to Permit Plan in August and has not yet been restored by IT. DIY inspection reports and certified users can no longer be reported without both this connection and the backend user access to Permit Plan. In general, DIY participation has gone down in 2022 without any major inspection enforcement or education/outreach activities. The OSS Inspection Status map lost functionality during the GIS Portal upgrades in October and was taken down from public view but inspection status was only being updated 2 to 3 times a year from onlineRME since May 2021 due to all the previous issues discussed above.

The implementation of Tyler's EnerGov cloud-based permit tracking system requested 80% of Adar Feller's staff time (also not a full-time employee) but limited staffing availability across EH prevented a successful completion of that project as planned by IT and the Tyler consultants. This project is currently delayed through May of 2023 with the majority of database communication structure between departments, permit types and public interface yet to be built.

The *enforcement* of inspection compliance has its limits due to the moderate administrative penalty, and the bottle neck during referral to the prosecuting attorney. Currently the Clallam County On-site Code caps inspection enforcement at \$300, and not to be issued more than once in a calendar year. Property owners have taken advantage of this, paying the fee rather than complying with inspection requirements. After Administrative penalties are assessed, EH will refer an enforcement case to the prosecuting attorney's office for civil action. Historically this has been reserved for septic failure cases as the PAO office has many obligations to other departments. Referring many SIC enforcement cases to the PAO a month is not feasible.

To combat these two issues EH is exploring raising the administrative penalty for inspection compliance from \$300 to \$1000. Second, the hearings examiner could be an option in lieu of the PAO, and/or us a collection agency for unpaid administrative penalties.



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 receive 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.

Staffing

The Onsite Septic permitting program consists of 2.3 EHS, 1 Administrative Specialist, and time from the Database Technician. Andy Gosnell and Janine Reed are the primary EHS in the permitting program. Andy Perham works part-time in the evenings. All three are certified On-site Wastewater Treatment Inspectors by Washington State Department of Licensing. Janine Reed has her registered environmental health specialist (REHS) certification from Washington State Board of Registered Sanitarians.

Consistent staffing was difficult to maintain in 2022 due to ongoing staff health issues. COVID and the flu hit our courthouse office in November and December which decimated the office staff down to only one person much of the time for over a 3 week period.

Karenann Mygind retired in June and left a customer service data entry inspection reminder postcard sized hole in the program. Hope Merideth was hired as a Customer Service Specialist in December and has been helping with administrative duties and helping at the counter with customer service as experience is accumulated.



Janine Reed



Andy Gosnell



Andy Perham



Hope Merideth



Nan Furford



Adar Feller

Routine Program Activities

Septic Permits/Site Surveys Received between January 1, 2022 and January 1, 2023

Printed: February 27, 2023

(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	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	5	2	1	0	1	12
	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	2.5
	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Expansion	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.5
	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.5
New	12	17	19	19	20	11	16	26	25	9	6	6	186
	77.4	47.9	24.7	18.4	38.8	34.5	26.6	37.0	48.4	39.0	22.6	32.5	37.3
	20.0	19.0	15.0	18.0	26.0	30.5	18.0	15.0	34.0	35.0	25.0	27.5	21.5
Repair Permit	4	6	11	9	12	13	7	6	10	8	4	2	92
	2.5	15.5	12.0	1.8	3.2	4.0	3.0	3.8	2.7	10.3	8.0	4.0	5.8
	2.5	6.0	6.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	4.0	6.5	4.0	3.0
Tank Placement	2	3	2	2	1	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	16
	13.0	2.3	47.0	11.5	24.0	33.0	0.0	13.0	32.0	6.0	0.0	1.0	18.2
	13.0	3.0	47.0	11.5	24.0	33.0	0.0	13.0	32.0	6.0	0.0	1.0	13.0
Total	19	26	32	30	35	26	24	38	39	19	10	10	308
	52.6	35.2	21.7	12.9	23.9	19.6	18.3	26.4	29.7	23.1	16.1	17.5	25.1
	13.0	13.0	15.0	13.5	14.0	21.0	12.0	12.0	28.0	12.0	18.0	10.5	14.0

Routine program activities include soils appointments with designers, permit review, and complaint response. Permitting slowed down in August due to interest rates rising and some building supply chain and rising costs of materials. On-site has been able to meet the 30 day requirement for permit issuance for the most part; the average number of days from receiving a permit to a decision is 25.1 days.

If designated 'critical areas' are found during preliminary septic permit review, the permit will be routed to DCD for critical area review prior to EH approval. Issues with extended time in DCD critical area review, or designer/applicants lack of action on requirements, are the main cause of permit issuance extending beyond 30 days.

The OSS program held a meeting in May with On-site Industry and staff to discuss program goals moving forward with 12 industry members (4 additional remotely) and 7 EH staff. Topics included the OSS Fee, changes for addition of Annual O&M Fee, removal of \$159 O&M contract review fee & \$46-56 inspection report for property transfer fee, upcoming database changes, current database challenges, rebate program ideas, inspection reminders and pumping recommendation revisions.

Throughout the year there were several procedure review meetings with installers to ensure compliance with codes, specifically reminders that all install jobs require notifications.

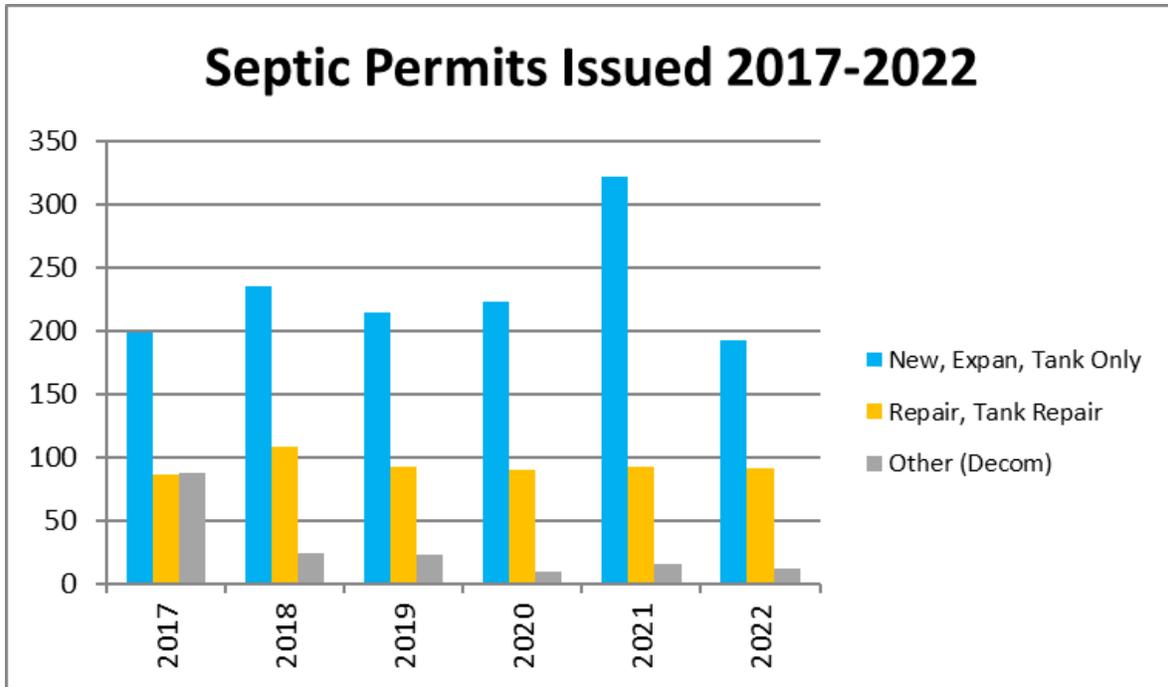
There were consultations on difficult designs and refining expectations for septic system design submittals with the professional septic designers. Reminders were sent out on the expectations of changes to designs must have approval from CCEH.

List of septic system permits installed in 2022 by month and system type below.

Septic Permits Installed between January 1, 2022 and January 1, 2023.

System Type \ month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Aerobic Treatment Unit	0	1	0	0	2	3	2	5	2	5	2	3	25
Biofilter	0	0	1	1	4	5	6	4	7	4	3	3	38
Conventional	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	7	3	2	3	0	21
Drip System	0	3	1	1	3	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	13
Mound	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	7
Pressure	4	3	2	3	4	6	4	3	4	0	3	1	37
Pressurized Deep Trench	0	3	2	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	13
Pump to Gravity	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
Sand Filter Pressure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Sand Line Pressure	5	2	5	1	1	5	3	4	1	3	0	6	36
Tank Only	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	9
Tank Repair	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	13
Total	13	15	15	12	17	22	19	30	23	19	13	19	217





2022 Program Highlights



On May 3rd, 2022, EH Onsite was notified of a particularly bad failure at Bayview Safeway. Onsite staff notified the Washington State Department of Health Larger Onsite (LOSS) program (who are the regulatory agency for LOSS in the State). LOSS staff notified the maintenance providers for the system who sent their staff to the site that same day. The failure was contained on Safeway property, so the general public was not exposed and the surfacing sewage was stopped that day and mitigated (pumped out and neutralized) within 3 days.

A long-time failure at a difficult site was also finally repaired and finalized in 2022. Failures resolved in 2022 totaled 109 (see OSS Failures Tracked and Repaired graph in O&M Program section).

Photo of septic tank being decommissioned on 8th St in Port Angeles for connection to city sewer after d-box failure from root intrusion caused backing-up and was within 200ft of sewer line. This was a difficult location due to the slope and required a pump and transport pipe to be installed.

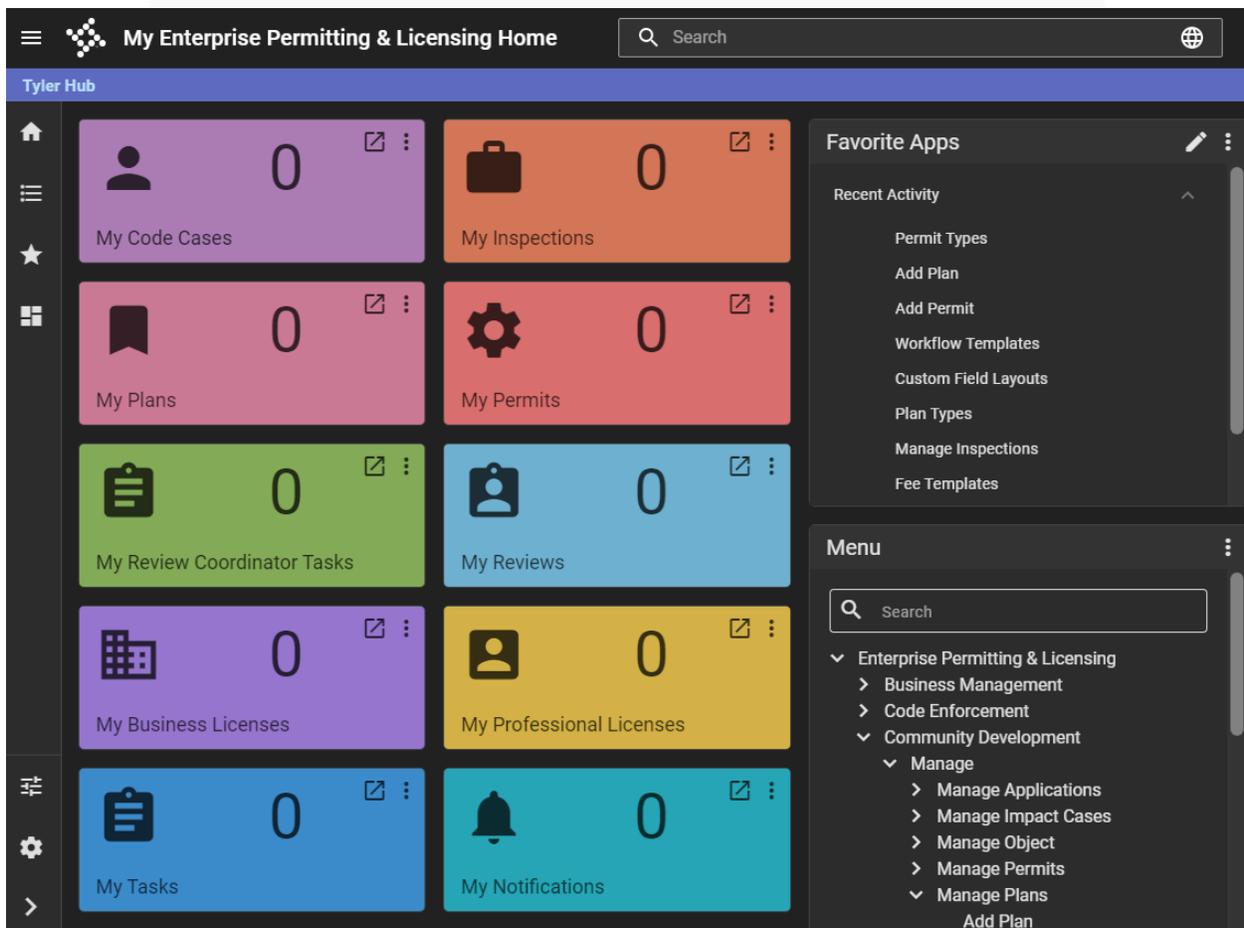
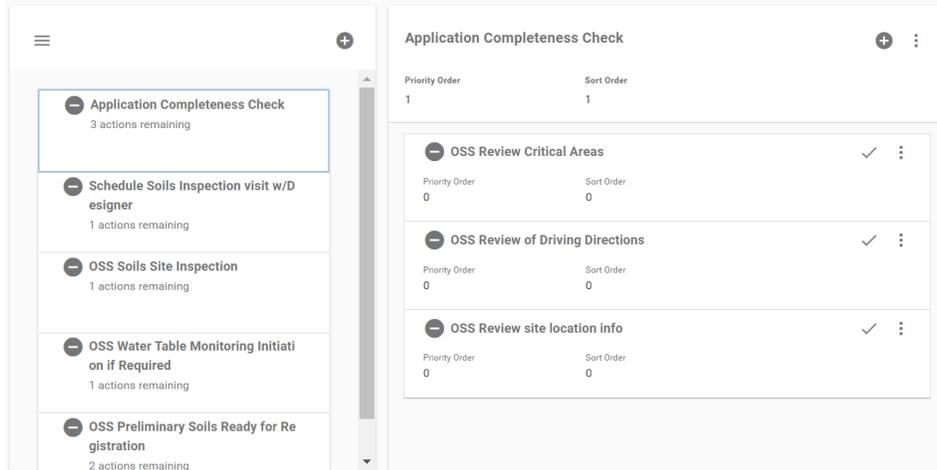
2022 Program Challenges

There are several ongoing complaints/failures that have not been resolved. These failures are not currently discharging sewage but do need to be repaired. On-site staff is pursuing enforcement using fines to encourage cooperation.

Having depth in staffing remains an issue with field work. For most of the year there has been one OSS staff available for field work. This is not a viable working condition for staff or the program because it puts the responsibility on one person to be available five days a week without consideration for their sick leave, vacation time, or other responsibilities.

Current permit tracking software is extremely outdated and becoming more problematic to manage while waiting for the replacement Tyler Enterprise Permits & Licensing (EPL) product to launch, experiencing failures in document attachments, current parcel info updates from the Assessor's records and current GIS connection. There is lack of staff availability to fast-track this major database replacement project; it is an exciting and long needed upgrade, but it required at least 10 hours of staff time per week that was unplanned. Database testing began in December, but many processes remain incomplete.





All on-site codes were reviewed and entered into a spreadsheet for the Code Enforcement section of this new database with short public friendly descriptions. All On-site workflows needed to be updated for a paperless routing system with electronic entry of soil site evaluations and installation inspections which included creating new inspection checklists for a program that previously did not use electronic inspection verification processes. See example of the new preliminary site registration workflow and inspection checklist with additional tables below:

CHECKLIST (5)

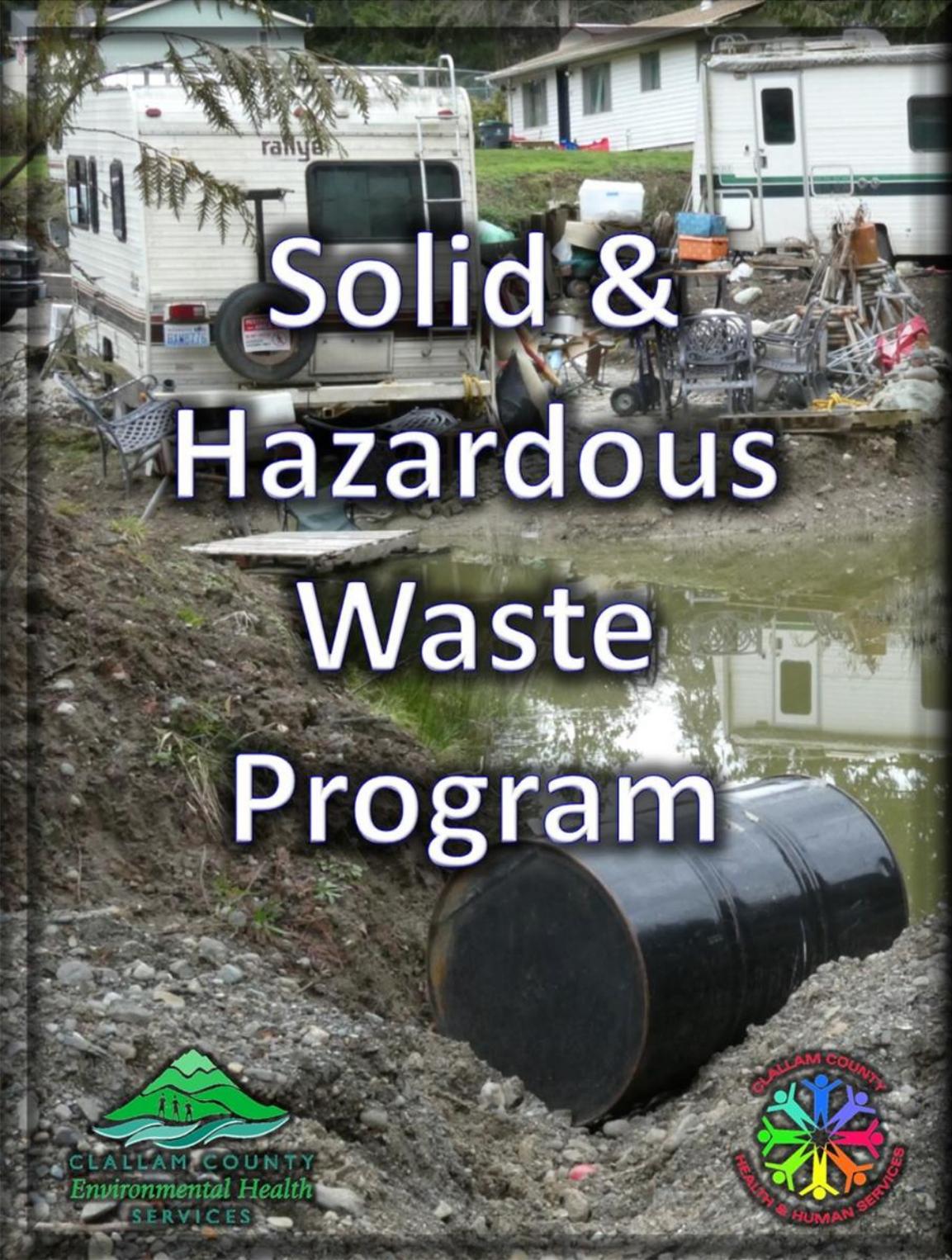


<input type="checkbox"/>	Order ↑	Name / Description	Comments	Pass	Fail	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Critical Areas Test pit locations meet Critic...		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Drinking water source setbacks Test pit locations meet setbac...		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Existing structures No impacts from existing stru...		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Fill No fill dirt or top soils dist...		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Previous OSS component No impacts from previous OSS c...		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Soils Analysis Details



Test Pit #	Soil Depth Range (in)	Mottling	Structure	Textural Qualifier	Texture	Comments
* 1	0-10	Very Faint (VF) ▾	Loose (L) ▾	Very Fine to Fine (L) ▾	Sandy Loam (L) ▾	dark brown
* 1	10-48	▾	Slightly Loose ... ▾	Coarse to Gravelly ... ▾	Sand (S) ▾	
* 1	48-74	▾	Slightly Loose ... ▾	Coarse (C) ▾	Sand (S) ▾	
* 6	0-10	Faint (F) ▾	▾	▾	Sandy Loam (L) ▾	
* 6	10-25	Distinct (D) ▾	Compact (C) ▾	▾	Sandy Loam (L) ▾	not suitable



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

Nan Furford 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

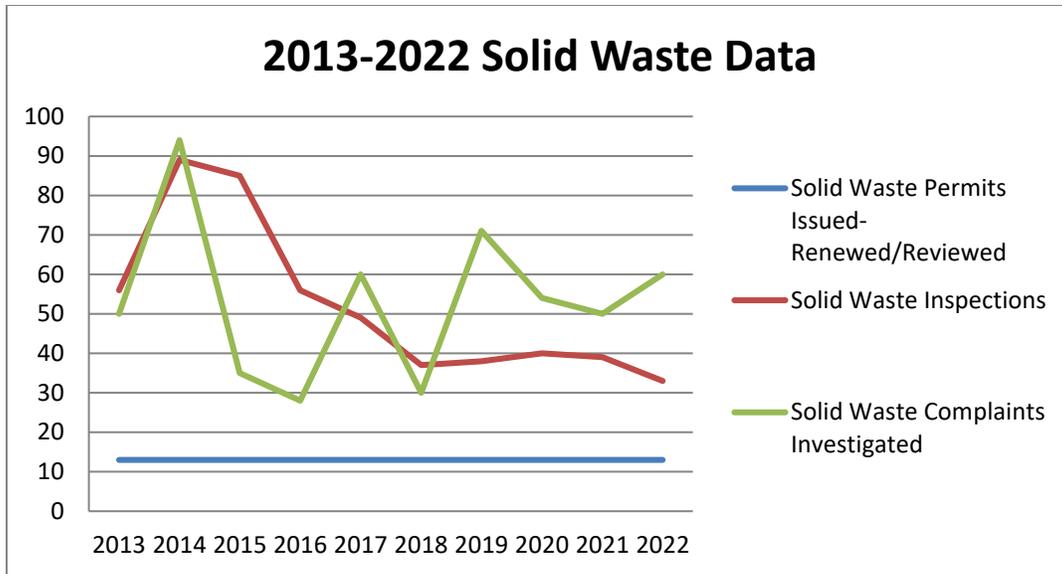


Nan Furford

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 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 and Forks, contributing to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and the development of the *Clallam County Solid Waste Management Plan*.

The table below shows the number of solid waste permits, inspections, and complaint cases investigated from 2013-2022. The graph on the next page shows the number of solid waste permits, inspections, and complaint cases investigated from 2013-2022.



2022 Program Highlights

Some of the highlights from 2022 includes: 11,117 people reached through social media outreach, 27 solid waste violation cases closed, 60 properties investigated for solid waste violations, 33 Facility Inspections, 13 Permit renewals or reviews, 1 Permit Modification Application Review, and 1 New Facility Permit Application Review. Additionally, 58 tons of used tires being stored at the Blue Mountain Transfer Station which were collected through code enforcement efforts were recycled and repurposed by the Department of Ecology.

The photo on the next page shows a successful property clean up at the site known as the former Humane Society building. EH worked with Code Enforcement for many years to work with the property owner to clean it up.



2022 Program Challenges

The biggest challenges of 2022 include the Old Humane Society Property followed through to a complete cleanup, and the City of Port Angeles transitioning from Owner to Operator for the Blue Mountain Transfer Station, Regional Transfer Station, Compost Facility, and Moderate Risk Waste Facility.

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

Katie Kowal is the Water Quality Program lead and responsible for completing all routine activities. She receives support from Eli Owens, Andrew Harris and Benjamin Majors with shellfish sampling and beach closure sign posting as part of the Biotoxin program. She also receives support from Adar Feller, who manages reporting for the OSS LMP IMP grant, provides data for metrics related to Clallam County's septic systems, and creates maps in support of specific water quality/septic related questions. The Water Quality Program also receives support from 4 volunteers who assist with shellfish sampling.



Katie Kowal



Andrew Harris



Eli Owens



Ben Majors

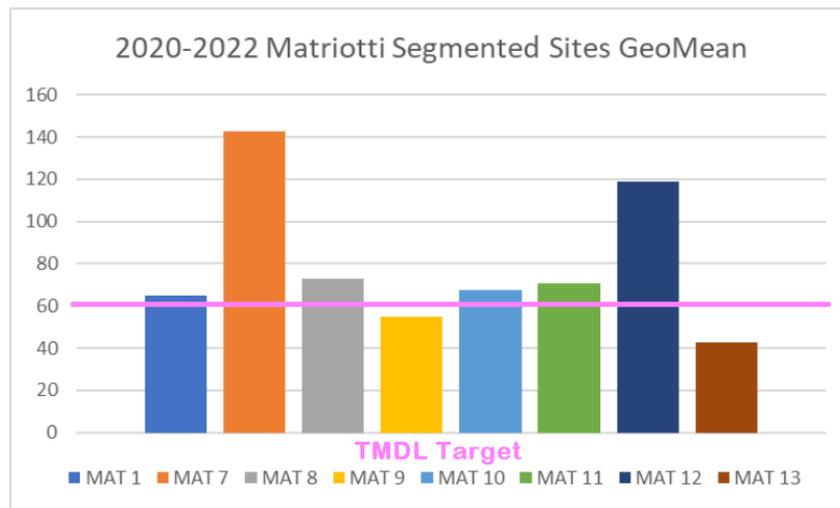


Adar Feller

Routine Program Activities

The Water Quality Program supports the DOH Biotoxin program, coordinating 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 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 Water Quality 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. The table below shows data from Matriotti Creek, one of the current PIC focus areas.



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

2022 Program Highlights

In 2022, the Water Quality (WQ) Program recruited a new volunteer to sample Freshwater Bay for biotoxins, which provided data for a site not monitored since the early 2000’s. This beach is frequented by locals for shellfish harvesting and has a history of high PSP levels.

The WQ Program also worked in partnership with the Clallam Conservation District to complete two OSS Cost-Share projects, replacing failing septic systems for two homeowners in need of financial support.

The WQ Program presented history of the program and current work to the Board of Health, as well as held an Open House outreach event for community members living within the Dungeness Watershed. The PIC program identified multiple hotspots along Matriotti and Bell Creek, identified one property for livestock referral to CCD, and several properties of concern due to out-of-date septic system inspections.

The WQ Program also provided support for the EH Department's participation in Septic Smart Week, including developing a survey to assess current septic owners' knowledge and inform future directions for septic education and outreach. The survey was distributed through Facebook and reached a total of 132 members of the public.

2022 Program Challenges

There were several hurdles jumped in 2022. The OSS Cost-Share program process required significant time and energy to establish over several months. Past procedures followed by two partners both required adjustments to be able to work together and took several iterations to reach an agreeable compromise. Additionally, due to staffing challenges during 2021, the first half of 2022 was largely spent developing current budgets and itemizing completed deliverables and developing plans for each grant to complete outstanding work within the remaining time and budget.



PIC Open House, November 2022

Environmental Health Administration Programs



Environmental Health Administration and Other Programs

The Environmental Health Administration Program oversees the Environmental Health staffing and program activities. The Environmental Health Director coordinates EH staff and programs. Other Environmental Health programs include emergency preparedness, foundational public health services (FPHS), and vector surveillance.

Staffing

The primary staff in the EH Administration Program is the Environmental Health Director, Jennifer Garcelon. In the EH budget, Jessica Pankey and Hope Merideth, Customer Service Specialist are funded in EH Administration, but Jessica is functionally in the Food Safety and Living Environment program and Hope works at the EH counter as part of the customer service team.

Hope Merideth was hired in November 2022. She replaced Karenann Mygind who retired in June 2022. She focuses on FPHS administrative activities primarily at the public interfacing front desk at the Courthouse.



Jennifer Garcelon



Jessica Pankey



Nan Furford

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, 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.

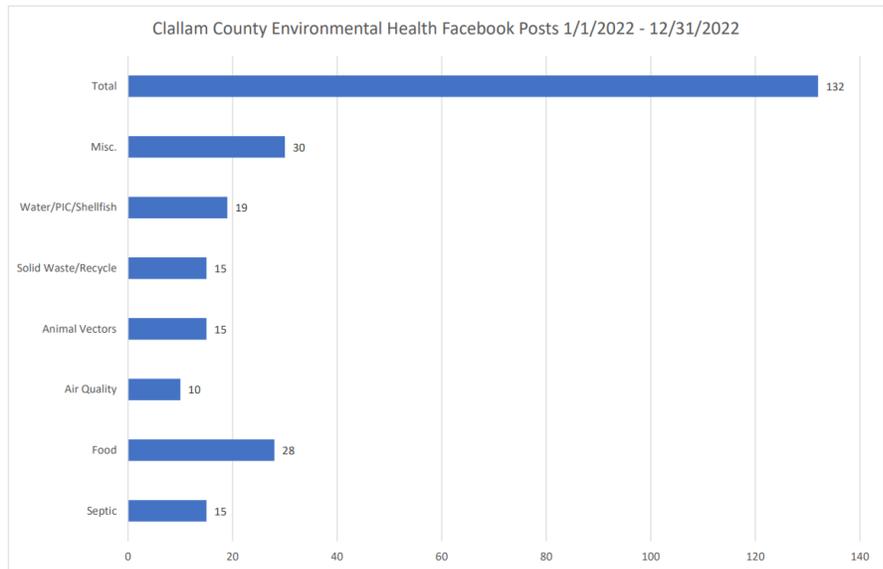
Other EH programs include FPHS planning, emergency preparedness, and vector surveillance. In emergency preparedness, staff works with Clallam County Department of Emergency Management on planning and response on disasters including windstorms, landslides, or power outages that affect drinking water, 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, EH collects mosquitos for West Nile Virus (WNV) surveillance. There are two collection sites that are collected weekly. The mosquitos are shipped to the PHL where they are speciated and tested for WNV.

Over the summer, there was a water line break at Bullman Beach, a Group A water system, in receivership. EH worked with Washington State Department of Health, County Emergency Management,

and Public Works on the drinking water response. The residents were without water for about a week until the break in the system was identified and repaired.

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 incoming president of the EHD. It is a three year term.

Environmental Health social media posts are approved by the EHD. Social media is becoming an important method to reach the public. In 2022, there were 132 EH posts. There were posts across programs. Some of the most popular posts included information on shellfish and biotoxin upgrades or downgrades, or weather updates from NOAA on heat, wildfire, cold. We found paying to boost the post was very effective to send messages.

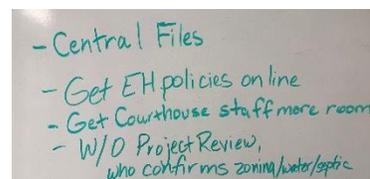


2022 Program Highlights

Program highlights in 2022 include the addition of the foundational public health services program funding, central files/archive project, and restarting public presentations again.

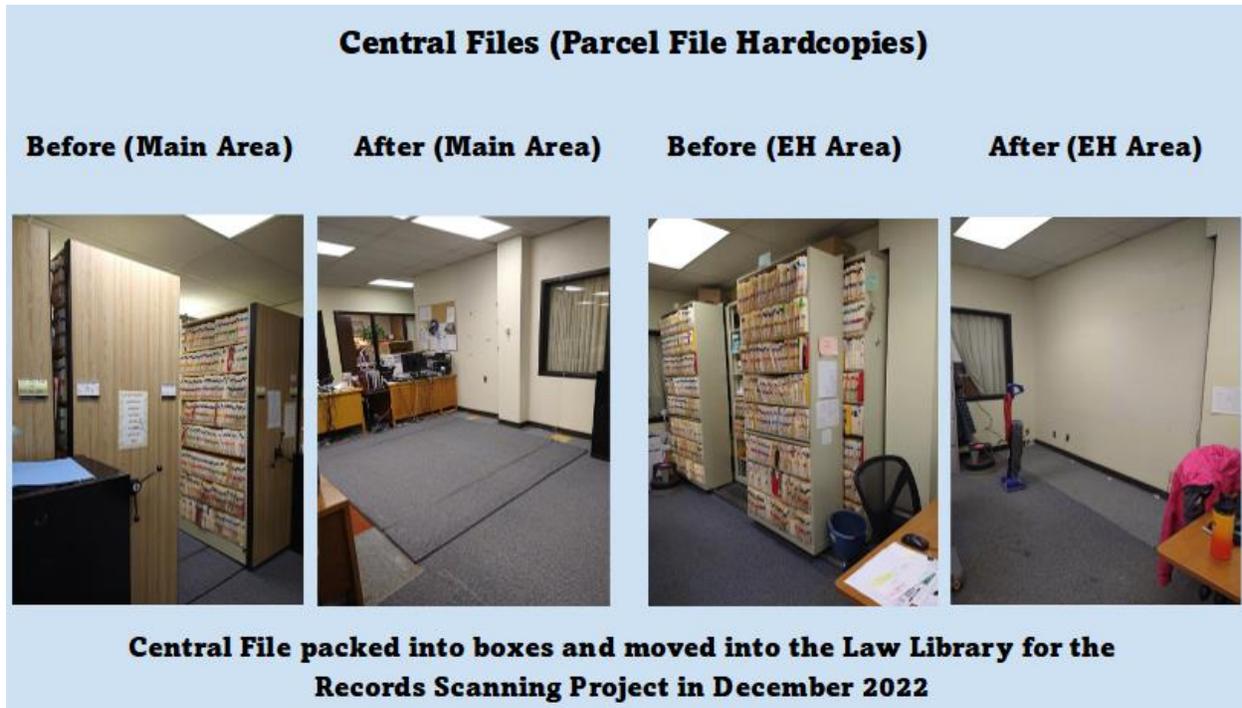
In 2019, the Washington State Legislature passed RCW 43.70.515 funding foundational public health services. In October 2021, local health jurisdictions were allocated their FPHS funds with funds specified for Environmental Public Health Services. Clallam County EH was allocated ~\$245,000 for the budget year for FPHS. EH is working on developing programs. General guidance for the first round of the funding is it can be used in the areas of food safety, onsite septic, and school safety in areas where fees cannot be used. The second round of funding in July offered additional program services in climate change and water system capacity.

The central files and archive project started in Fall 2022. 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, and using FPHS funds, the scanning project began. Paper records from central files



List from Jen's white board on long term EH goals.

are being scanned and stored for archival retention project. By the end of December all of 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.



Another 2022 highlight included doing public events and talking with the public. In Spring 2022, Jennifer Garcelon presented to both the Port Angeles Noon Rotary Club and the Sequim Rotary Club providing an overview of EH programs. In November, the water quality team hosted a PIC Open House. It was good to be back in the community talking about environmental health.

2022 Program Challenges

Staffing continues to be the biggest challenge throughout Environmental Health. Recruitment has been a huge challenge due to the changing job market and having the lowest pay scale in the region. There was one resignation in the EHS O&M Program and one retirement in 2022.

The O&M EHS position that was vacated in October 2021 was advertised about six times over the year. Interviews were held in December 2021, May 2022, Jul 2022, August 2022, and September 2022. Four conditional offers were extended and ultimately declined. A fifth offer was extended in September 2022, and the position was filled for six weeks, until the staff member accepted a position elsewhere.

The job market has changed drastically in the past four years. The candidate pool was low in each of the advertisements compared to pre-COVID times; typically there were at least ten qualified applicants, and recently, there are two to three qualified applicants per job opening.

Another program 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 permitting programs. In 2019, the food program entered into a contract with HealthSpace to go to a cloud based food program inspection database. Throughout 2022, the food team held weekly meetings with HealthSpace to transition to their cloud based system. The long term plan is for food program applications, permits, and inspections to all be electronically submitted and issued. Meanwhile, in 2022, Clallam County Information Technology worked with Tyler Energov/Enterprise as the database to replace 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. The theme for these database transitions have been “Everything, Everywhere, All at Once.”

COVID-19 continued to cause some wear on staff. In September 2021, the Public Health Order requiring vaccination verification created a tremendous amount of work for the Environmental Health team, particularly the customer service staff and the food safety program staff. The PHO was lifted in March 2022, but there were long lasting effects to everyone, including staff and regulated community. By the end of 2022, EH was getting back to routine activities.

Conclusion

In 2022, the Clallam County Environmental Health team balanced routine, mandated environmental health programs and emerged from COVID-19 response. They worked together as a team to get things done. 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 2022!