

# CARA Review Committee

## October 24, 2012 Meeting Summary

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### Meeting Attendees

Committee members that attended the meeting:

- Steve Davenport\*\*, Spokane County Building and Planning
  - Rick Eichstaedt, Center for Justice/Riverkeeper
  - Jim Harakas, GeoEngineers, Inc.
  - Kitty Klitzke, Futurewise
  - Richard Vandervert
  - Ned Wendle, Mead School District
  - Guy Gregory, Washington State Department of Ecology
  - Steven Holderby, Spokane Regional Health District
  - Eric Meyer\*\*, Spokane Regional Health District
- \*\* alternate committee member

County staff and consultants that attended the meeting:

- Bruce Rawls, Spokane County Utilities
- Rob Lindsay, Spokane County Utilities
- Mike Murray, HDR Engineering
- Michael Kasch, HDR Engineering
- Sarah Hubbard-Gray, Hubbard Gray Consulting
- Stan Miller, Inland Northwest Water Resources

Members of the public that attended the meeting:

- Larry Kunz

### Welcome and Introductions

Sarah Hubbard-Gray, the meeting facilitator, welcomed the committee members and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Bruce Rawls explained that the current CARA non-residential wastewater regulation includes simple language, but it has been complicated for the County to administer and difficult for developers to comply with. He provided background on the current CARA review considerations, including 1) historical implication challenges, 2) need to apply best available science, 3) new development considerations, such as the volume of wastewater discharge unknown or misrepresented, and 4) approved development considerations, such as the actual volume of wastewater discharge not what represented at time of approval.

Rob Lindsay explained that this CARA regulation review is limited to non-residential wastewater outside the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary. He provided an overview of the purpose of the current CARA review, which includes review of the current standard, conducting a scientific study, evaluating the need for revisions and developing recommendations for revisions if appropriate. Rob reviewed the opportunities for interested parties' engagement. Rob then explained the role of the CARA Review Committee and that their comments and perspectives will be shared with the County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Rob explained that the role of the Committee involves:

- Participation in four to five meetings at key points during review
- Sharing perspectives
- Providing feedback on technical aspects of CARA review
- Providing comments and suggestions relating to draft recommendations (if applicable)

Sarah Hubbard-Gray then asked the Committee for input on suggested meeting ground rules. All of the Committee members indicated that the ground rules seemed fine and no additional comments or suggestions were provided. The agreed upon ground rules include:

- Stay engaged
- Provide timely input and suggestions
- Consider different perspectives and experiences
- Listen and speak with respect
- Take a long-term view
- Be productive with our time
- Intervene to help the group
- Enjoy our time together

## **CARA Review – Process and Milestones, Current CARA Requirements, Study Area Characteristics**

Mike Murray reviewed the CARA Review objectives, which include 1) evaluating if the standard is effective, enforceable and equitable, 2) evaluating the need for revisions, and 3) making recommendations for standard revisions, if appropriate. He reviewed the approach, and provided background on the current CARA regulation and CARA susceptibility designations. Mike reviewed the process and tasks associated with the CARA review and the technical memos that will be developed to document the review.

Michael Kasch explained the study area, and provided a summary of the information in Tech Memo 1, which includes:

- Define non-residential uses
- Define non-residential sanitary wastewater characteristics
- Example septic tank effluent concentrations
- Define environmental/resource properties for area of study

Mike Murray explained that defining groundwater quality criteria and a loading analysis will be conducted next.

The Committee members asked a variety of questions that were discussed, including:

- Is the current 90 gallons per day per acre CARA requirement working? The team provided a variety of information about the characteristics of the SVRP Aquifer, Spokane County's current groundwater monitoring program, and that the County does not have specific monitoring data for non-residential areas outside the UGA. Mike Murray explained that a conceptual model will be developed and a mixing zone analysis will be conducted to evaluate if the current requirements are adequately protecting groundwater and surface water quality.
- Why develop a map of the current and possible future non-residential areas/uses outside the UGA? Mike Murray explained that it was intended to get a handle on the study area and the type of non-residential uses in the county.
- What data will be relied on for the study? Is wastewater from non-residential parcels outside the UGA being sampled and/or are property owners being interviewed about their wastewater discharge? Mike Murray explained that sampling is not being conducted, and that the study will rely on research and existing Spokane area data. Mike also explained that the evaluation will consider what loading will not impact groundwater and surface water quality, and then identify non-residential wastewater requirements that do not exceed the acceptable loading.
- Expertise available in the Spokane area to implement the requirements should be considered.
- Will a variety of pollutants be evaluated? Mike Murray explained that this will be covered in Tech Memo 2.
- How will surface water impacts be evaluated? Mike Murray explained that septic tank performance and breakthrough will be included in the evaluation, along with groundwater recharge to surface water.

## Review of CARA Survey Responses

Sarah Hubbard-Gray provided a summary of the September 2012 CARA Survey responses. The survey was sent to 137 individuals representing a wide variety of interests, and 39 individuals representing various affiliations completed the survey. The majority of the respondents were aware of the CARA requirements and understood the regulation very well or somewhat well. An overview of the responses to the questions was provided, along with the common comments and perspectives that were shared. It was explained that an overarching theme was that the CARA evaluation and requirements should be based on sound science and engineering studies. The complete documentation of the CARA Survey responses was provided as a handout.

## Issues and Concerns with CARA Requirements

Sarah Hubbard-Gray then facilitated a discussion with the Committee regarding issues and concerns with CARA requirements. The following input was provided.

Current CARA purpose and effectiveness considerations and questions:

- 1970 research was considered when the current CARA regulation was developed.
- In the past, Spokane Regional Health District sampled commercial wastewater from facilities that used critical materials. Minimal critical materials were found in the wastewater.
- It was explained how the high, moderate, and low aquifer susceptibility was determined.

CARA Review considerations:

- Advanced treatment on-site systems are available to landowners today that were not available when the CARA requirements were developed. .
- Different uses with different wastewater characteristics need to be considered.
- Different wastewater systems, different soils types, and other types of loading and cumulative impacts (e.g., stormwater runoff / infiltration) should be considered.
- May want to focus on areas with public water systems available, since this is where new development would be anticipated (e.g., Mead area with Whitworth Water District service).
- Challenge will be consideration of different geologic characteristics and geologic zoning needs.

Considerations related to CARA standards:

- Need to avoid contamination.
- The standard should be applicable or addresses both the SVRP and other aquifers in the county and outside the UGA. Different zones with different requirements may be appropriate.
- Who is administering and enforcing CARA requirement in the County? Is it in the correct department? Are there additional tools that are needed?
- Need to know if/when the requirements are not working. It needs to be clear who has authority and how to remediate. Enforcement is critical.

## Public Questions and Comments

Larry Kunz explained his concern about potential gas station contamination in the area of his private well. Bruce Rawls and Guy Gregory provided information, and Guy provided Mr. Kunz with contacts at the Department of Ecology to follow up with.

## Next Steps

It was requested that documents be posted to the CARA web page a few days before each CARA Review Committee meeting.

Sarah explained that comments on draft Tech Memo 1 are due by Friday November 2, 2012 and that the draft Tech Memo 2 will be available for review in early December 2012.

The next CARA Review Committee meeting was set for Wednesday December 12, 2012 from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.