

RCW 70A.125.010 Definitions. Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following definitions apply throughout this chapter:

(1) "Area-wide waivers" means a waiver granted by the department as a result of a geographically based testing program meeting required provisions of the federal safe drinking water act.

(2) "Department" means the department of health.

(3) "Federal safe drinking water act" means the federal safe drinking water act, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 300f et seq., as now in effect or hereafter amended.

(4) (a) "Group A public water system" means a public water system with 15 or more service connections, regardless of the number of people; or a system serving an average of 25 or more people per day for 60 or more days within a calendar year, regardless of the number of service connections; or a system serving 1,000 or more people for two or more consecutive days.

(b) A default number of people served per connection may not be used to calculate the average number of people served for purposes of (a) of this subsection, where such default number would cause a water system that would otherwise be classified as a group B water system to be classified as a group A water system.

(5) "Group B public water system" means a public water system that does not meet the definition of a group A public water system.

(6) "Local board of health" means the city, town, county, or district board of health.

(7) "Local health jurisdiction" means an entity created under chapter 70.05, 70.08, or 70.46 RCW, which provides public health services to persons within the area.

(8) "Local health officer" means the legally qualified physician who has been appointed as the health officer for the city, town, county, or district public health department.

(9) "Order" means a written direction to comply with a provision of the regulations adopted under RCW 43.20.050(2) (a) and (b) or 70A.120.050 or to take an action or a series of actions to comply with the regulations.

(10) "Person" includes, but is not limited to, natural persons, municipal corporations, governmental agencies, firms, companies, mutual or cooperative associations, institutions, and partnerships. It also means the authorized agents of any such entities.

(11) "Public health emergency" means a declaration by an authorized health official of a situation in which either illness, or exposure known to cause illness, is occurring or is imminent.

(12) "Public water system" means any system, excluding a system serving only one single-family residence and a system with four or fewer connections all of which serve residences on the same farm, providing water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, including any collection, treatment, storage, or distribution facilities under control of the purveyor and used primarily in connection with the system; and collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under control of the purveyor but primarily used in connection with the system, including:

(a) Any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the purveyor and used primarily in connection with such system; and

(b) Any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under control of the purveyor which are primarily used in connection with such system.

(13) "Purveyor" means any agency or subdivision of the state or any municipal corporation, firm, company, mutual or cooperative association, institution, partnership, or person or any other entity, that owns or operates a public water system. It also means the authorized agents of any such entities.

(14) "Regulations" means rules adopted to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(15) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department of health.

(16) "State board of health" is the board created by RCW 43.20.030. [2025 c 65 s 1; 2020 c 20 s 1353. Prior: 2009 c 495 s 3; 1999 c 118 s 2; 1994 c 252 s 2; 1991 c 304 s 2; 1991 c 3 s 370; 1989 c 422 s 2; 1986 c 271 s 2. Formerly RCW 70.119A.020.]

Effective date—2025 c 65: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 16, 2025]." [2025 c 65 s 3.]

Effective date—2009 c 495: See note following RCW 43.20.050.

Finding—Intent—1999 c 118: "The legislature finds and declares that the provision of safe and reliable water supplies is essential to public health and the continued economic vitality of the state of Washington. Maintaining the authority necessary to ensure safe and reliable water supplies requires that state laws conform with the provisions of the federal safe drinking water act. It is the intent of the legislature that the definition of public water system be amended to reflect recent amendments to the federal safe drinking water act." [1999 c 118 s 1.]

Finding—1994 c 252: "The legislature finds that:

(1) The federal safe drinking water act has imposed significant new costs on public water systems and that the state should seek maximum regulatory flexibility allowed under federal law;

(2) There is a need to comprehensively assess and characterize the groundwaters of the state to evaluate public health risks from organic and inorganic chemicals regulated under federal law;

(3) That federal law provides a mechanism to significantly reduce testing and monitoring costs to public water systems through the use of area-wide waivers.

The legislature therefore directs the department of health to conduct a voluntary program to selectively test the groundwaters of the state for organic and inorganic chemicals regulated under federal law for the purpose of granting area-wide waivers." [1994 c 252 s 1.]

Effective date—1994 c 252: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [April 1, 1994]." [1994 c 252 s 6.]

Requirements effective upon adoption of rules—1991 c 304: See note following RCW 70A.125.090.