

Chapter 246-293 WAC
WATER SYSTEM COORDINATION ACT

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WAC

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246-293-310 Severability. [Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-310, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-900, filed 6/28/78.] Repealed by WSR 97-20-101, filed 9/29/97, effective 10/30/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040.

246-293-440 Adjudicative proceeding. [Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-440, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 34.05 RCW, RCW 34.05.220 (1)(a) and 70.116.050. WSR 90-06-019 (Order 039), § 248-59-030, filed 2/28/90, effective 3/1/90. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.116.070 [70.116.070]. WSR 83-01-015 (Order 1919), § 248-59-030, filed 12/6/82.] Repealed by WSR 93-13-005 (Order 369), filed 6/3/93, effective 7/4/93. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040.

WAC 246-293-001 Purpose. This chapter is promulgated pursuant to the authority granted in the Public Water System Coordination Act of 1977, chapter 70A.100 RCW, for the purpose of implementing a program relating to public water system coordination within the state of Washington, for evaluation and determination of critical water supply service areas, and assistance for orderly and efficient public water system planning.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040 and 2020 c 20. WSR 22-07-025, § 246-293-001, filed 3/9/22, effective 4/9/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-001,

PART I. PROCEDURAL REGULATIONS

WAC 246-293-110 Definitions. (1) "Public water system" - Any system or water supply intended or used for human consumption or other domestic uses including, but not limited to, source, treatment, storage, transmission and distribution facilities where water is furnished to any community, number of individuals or is made available to the public for human consumption or domestic use. This definition shall exclude any water system serving one single family residence, water systems existing prior to September 21, 1977 which are owner operated and serve less than ten single family residences, and water systems serving no more than one industrial plant.

(2) "Purveyor" - Any agency or subdivision of the state or any municipality, firm, company, mutual or cooperative association, institution, partnership, person, or any other entity that owns or operates a public water system for wholesale or retail service (or their authorized agent).

(3) "Municipality" - Any county, city, town, or any other entity having its own incorporated government for local affairs including, but not limited to, metropolitan municipal corporation, public utility district, water district, irrigation district, sewer district, and/or port district.

(4) "Inadequate water quality" - An excess of maximum contaminant levels established by the state board of health (chapter 248-54 WAC).

(5) "Unreliable service" - Low pressure or quantity problems, and/or frequent service interruption inconsistent with state board of health requirements (chapter 248-54 WAC).

(6) "Lack of coordinated planning" - Failure to resolve existing or potential areawide problems related to:

(a) Insufficient control over development of new public water systems.

(b) Adjacent or nearby public water systems constructed according to incompatible design standards.

(c) No future service area agreements, or conflicts in existing or future service areas.

(d) Adjacent public water systems which could benefit from emergency interties or joint-use facilities.

(e) Water system plans which have not been updated in accordance with chapter 248-54 WAC.

(f) Inconsistencies between neighboring water system plans, or failure to consider adopted county or city land use plans or policies.

(7) "Critical water supply service area" - A geographical area designated by the department or county legislative authority characterized by public water system problems related to inadequate water quality, unreliable service, and/or lack of coordinated water system planning. It may be further characterized by a proliferation of small, inadequate public water systems, or by water supply problems which threaten the present or future water quality or reliability of service in such a manner that efficient and orderly development may best be achieved through coordinated planning by public water systems in the area.

(8) "County legislative authority" - The board of county commissioners or that body assigned such duties by a county charter as enacting ordinances, passing resolutions, and appropriating public funds for expenditure.

(9) "Local planning agency" - The division of city or county government responsible for land use planning functions.

(10) "Coordinated water system plan" - A plan for public water systems within a critical water supply service area which identifies the present and future water system concerns and sets forth a means for meeting those concerns in the most efficient manner possible.

(11) "Existing service area" - A specific area within which direct service or retail service connections to customers of a public water system are currently available.

(12) "Future service area" - A specific area for which water service is planned by a public water system, as determined by written agreement between purveyors provided for in WAC 248-56-730.

(13) "Department" - The Washington state department of social and health services.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-110, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-200, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-120 Preliminary assessment—Requirement. In areas where public water systems are suspected of having problems related to inadequate water quality, unreliable service, or lack of coordinated planning, a preliminary assessment shall be undertaken to determine if the geographical area should be designated a critical water supply service area. (See WAC 248-56-200 for definitions.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-120, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-300, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-130 Preliminary assessment—Procedures. (1) The preliminary assessment shall be conducted under the authority of the county legislative authority(ies) and the department with assistance from affected state and local agencies and water purveyors.

(2) Notice that a preliminary assessment is being undertaken shall be made to all affected parties, those who have demonstrated an interest, and the local news media.

(3) The preliminary assessment shall be presented in report form, as short and factual as possible, and shall consider at least the following topics as they relate to public water systems in the potential critical water supply service area:

(a) Existing water systems, including:

(i) History of water quality, reliability and service,

(ii) General firefighting capability of the utilities, and

(iii) Identification of major facilities which need to be expanded, altered, or replaced.

(b) Availability and adequacy of future water source(s).

(c) Service area boundaries, including a map of established boundaries and identification of systems without established boundaries.

(d) Present growth rate.

(e) Status of water system planning, land use planning, and coordination, including a list of land use plans and policies adopted by local general purpose governments.

(4) Upon completion, the preliminary assessment shall be submitted to the county legislative authority(ies) and the department for review. A copy shall also be transmitted to all potentially affected water purveyors and appropriate news media.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-130, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-310, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-140 Declaration of critical water supply service area. (1) Based upon review of the preliminary assessment, if findings indicate that a geographical area does have problems related to inadequate water quality, unreliable service, or lack of coordinated planning, the county legislative authority(ies) or the department shall declare that area a critical water supply service area.

(2) The declaration shall be in the format of a legislative enactment signed by the county legislative authority(ies), or administrative declaration signed by the secretary of the department or his designee.

(3) The declaring agency shall file its declaration with the other agency(ies) and notify in writing the appropriate local planning agencies, affected water purveyors, and the local news media within ten days.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-140, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-400, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-150 Water utility coordinating committee—Establishment. (1) Within thirty days following the declaration of a critical water supply service area, a water utility coordinating committee composed of not less than three voting members shall be appointed by the declaring authority.

(2) The water utility coordinating committee shall consist of one representative from each of the following:

(a) County legislative authority within the declared area;

(b) County planning agency having jurisdiction within the declared area;

(c) Health agency having jurisdiction within the declared area under chapters 70.08, 70.05, 43.20 RCW; and

(d) Water purveyor with over fifty services within the declared area.

(Other interested persons may be appointed as nonvoting members of the committee by the authority declaring the critical water supply service area if determined appropriate.)

(3) At the first meeting of the water utility coordinating committee, the following shall be determined:

- (a) Chairperson; and
- (b) Rules for conducting business, including voting procedure.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-150, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 89-16-065 (Order 2840), § 248-56-500, filed 7/31/89, effective 8/31/89; WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-500, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-160 Water utility coordinating committee—Purpose.

(1) The initial purpose of the water utility coordinating committee shall be to recommend external critical water supply service area boundaries to the county legislative authority(ies) within six months of appointment of the committee. (See WAC 248-56-600.)

(2) Following establishment of external critical water supply service area boundaries, the water utility coordinating committee shall be responsible for development of the coordinated water system plan. (See WAC 248-56-740.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-160, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-510, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-170 Establishment of external critical water supply service area boundaries—Procedures. (1) Proposed boundaries shall be documented by a written report which includes:

- (a) A map and narrative description of the recommended boundary.
- (b) A narrative statement outlining the reasons for the recommended boundary location, the criteria used and relative importance of each.

(2) Prior to submittal of recommended external boundaries to the county legislative authority(ies), the water utility coordinating committee shall conduct at least one informational meeting for the purpose of soliciting public input.

(3) The water utility coordinating committee shall make a formal report of its recommended external critical water supply service area boundaries to the county legislative authority(ies).

(4) The county legislative authority(ies) shall conduct at least two public hearings on the proposed boundaries within six months from the date the boundaries were submitted by the water utility coordinating committee, for the purpose of soliciting responses to the proposed boundaries.

(5) Within six months from the date proposed boundaries are submitted to the county legislative authority(ies), one of the following actions may be taken by the county legislative authority(ies):

- (a) Ratify the proposed boundaries based on findings at the public hearings, or
- (b) Modify the proposed boundaries in accordance with findings of the public hearings, and then ratify the revised boundaries.

If neither of the above actions are taken by the county legislative authority(ies) within six months, the boundaries as stated in the

proposal submitted by the water utility coordinating committee to said county legislative authority(ies) shall be automatically ratified.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-170, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-600, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-180 Establishment of external critical water supply service area boundaries—Criteria. (1) The water utility coordinating committee, in recommending, and county legislative authority(ies), in determining the location of external critical water supply service area boundaries shall consider factors including, but not limited to:

- (a) Existing land use,
- (b) Projected land use and permitted densities as documented in adopted county or city plans, ordinances and/or growth policies for at least ten years into the future,
- (c) Other planning activities or boundaries which may affect land use or water system planning,
- (d) Physical factors limiting provision of water service,
- (e) Existing political boundaries, including boundary agreements in effect and attitudes towards expanding those boundaries,
- (f) Future service areas of existing utilities,
- (g) Hydraulic factors, including potential pressure zones or elevations,
- (h) Economic ability of the public water systems to meet minimum service requirements.

(2) External critical water supply service area boundaries shall not divide any purveyor's existing, contiguous service area. Areas served by a wholesale purveyor may be divided into as many existing service areas as may be justified by geography, engineering or other factors discussed in the preliminary assessment.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-180, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-610, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-190 Establishment of critical water supply service area boundaries—Effect. (1) No new public water system shall be approved within a critical water supply service area subsequent to establishment of external boundaries unless specifically authorized by the department. Authorization shall be based upon compliance with the following:

(a) If unanticipated demand for water supply occurs within a purveyor's future service area, the following shall apply in the listed sequence:

(i) The existing purveyor shall provide service in a timely and reasonable manner consistent with state board of health regulations; or

(ii) A new public water system may be developed on a temporary basis. Before authorization, a legal agreement will be required which includes a schedule for the existing purveyor to assume management and/or connect the new public water system to the existing system; or

(iii) A new public water system may be developed. Before authorization, a revised service area agreement establishing the new purveyor's future service area will be required.

(b) If a demand for water supply occurs outside any purveyor's future service area, the following shall apply in the listed sequence:

(i) Those persons anticipating the need for water service shall contact existing nearby purveyors within the critical water supply service area to determine whether any will be interested in expanding their system to provide water service in a timely and reasonable manner consistent with state board of health regulations.

(ii) A new public water system may be developed on a temporary basis. Before authorization, a legal agreement will be required which includes a schedule for an existing system to assume management and/or connect the new public water system to an existing system; or

(iii) A new public water system may be developed.

Any of the options listed in subdivisions (b)(i), (b)(ii), or (b)(iii) will require establishment of new or revised service area agreements.

(2) If a new public water system is developed, it shall have an approved water system plan pursuant to WAC 248-54-580 and the provisions of this chapter. The plan shall include a section addressing the outcome of subsections (1)(a), or (1)(b) along with documented confirmation by the appropriate existing purveyors(s).

(3) Any proposed new public water system shall not be inconsistent with local adopted land use plans, shoreline management programs, and/or development policies as determined by the appropriate county or city legislative authority(ies).

(4) If a coordinated water system plan has been approved for the affected area, all proposed new public water systems shall be consistent with the provisions of that plan.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-190, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-620, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-200 Alteration of external critical water supply service area boundaries. (1) After establishment of external critical water supply service area boundaries, those boundaries may not be altered until the coordinated water system plan is completed.

(2) Alteration of external critical water supply service area boundaries may be initiated by the department or county legislative authority(ies) in accordance with the procedures and criteria identified in WAC 248-56-600 and 248-56-610. In addition:

(a) The department or county legislative authority(ies), whichever initiates alteration of external boundaries, shall prepare a brief report documenting the need for such alteration, and

(b) The department or county legislative authority(ies), whichever initiates preparation of the report, shall reconvene the water utility coordinating committee and present the report to the committee, together with instructions for committee action.

(3) The coordinated water system plan shall be revised as necessary, due to alteration of external critical water supply service area boundaries, within six months of the date of such action taken by the county legislative authority(ies), unless an extended schedule is approved by the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), re-
codified as § 246-293-200, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory
Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), §
248-56-630, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-210 Update of external critical water supply service area boundaries. External critical water supply service area bounda-
ries shall be reviewed by the water utility coordinating committee and
the county legislative authority(ies) at least once every five years,
as part of the update of the coordinated water system plan. (See WAC
248-56-760.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), re-
codified as § 246-293-210, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory
Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), §
248-56-640, filed 6/28/78.]

- WAC 246-293-220 Coordinated water system plan—Requirement.** (1)
A coordinated water system plan shall be required for the entire area
within the external critical water supply service area boundaries.
- (2) In critical water supply service areas where more than one
water system exists, a coordinated water system plan shall consist of
either:
- (a) A compilation of water system plans approved pursuant to WAC
248-54-580, together with supplementary provisions addressing water
purveyor concerns relating to the entire critical water supply service
area (fulfilling requirements of WAC 248-56-710 and 248-56-720 respec-
tively), or
- (b) A single plan covering all affected public water systems and
areawide concerns within the external critical water supply service
area boundaries (fulfilling requirements of both WAC 248-56-710 and
248-56-720).
- (3) The coordinated water system plan shall provide for maximum
integration and coordination of public water system facilities consis-
tent with the protection and enhancement of the public health and
well-being.
- (4) The coordinated water system plan shall not be inconsistent
with adopted county and city land use plans, ordinances, and/or growth
policies addressing development within the critical water supply serv-
ice area for at least five years beyond the date of establishment of
external boundaries.
- (5) If no land use plans, ordinances, or growth policies are in
effect for all or a portion of the area within the critical water sup-
ply service area at the time the coordinated water system plan is be-
ing prepared, the coordinated water system plan shall be based upon
the best planning data available from the appropriate local planning
agency(ies).
- (6) In critical water supply service areas where only one public
water system exists, the coordinated water system plan shall consist
of the water system plan for the water system. (See WAC 248-54-580 and
248-56-710.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), re-
codified as § 246-293-220, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory
Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), §
248-56-700, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-230 Coordinated water system plan—Water system plan. (1) Each purveyor within the external critical water supply service area boundaries shall be responsible for completion of a water system plan for the purveyor's future service area, including provisions of WAC 248-56-730, if such a plan has not already been approved, with the following exception:

(a) Nonmunicipally owned public water systems shall be exempt from the planning requirements (except for the establishment of service area boundaries pursuant to WAC 248-56-730) if they:

(i) Were in existence as of September 21, 1977; and

(ii) Have no plans for water service beyond their existing service area; and

(iii) Meet minimum state board of health requirements (chapter 248-54 WAC).

Note: If the county legislative authority permits a change in development that will increase the demand for water service of such a system beyond the existing system's ability to provide minimum water service, the purveyor shall develop a water system plan in accordance with this section.

(2) Each purveyors' water system plan shall be updated at the time the coordinated water system plan is prepared, which will eliminate the necessity of updating the water system plan prior to the mandatory five year update of the coordinated water system plan.

(3) The content of a water system plan shall be consistent with WAC 248-54-580 and shall comply with guidelines* which may be obtained from the department. These guidelines have been compiled to further assist in meeting the purpose of this chapter, and address three levels of planning requirements varying in detail, based upon the size of the public water system.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), re-
codified as § 246-293-230, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory
Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), §
248-56-710, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-240 Coordinated water system plan—Supplementary provisions. (1) All water purveyors within the external critical water supply service area boundaries (with the exception of the systems specifically exempted in WAC 248-56-710(1)) shall be notified and asked to participate in the development of the supplementary provisions.

(2) The supplementary provisions shall address areawide water system concerns relating to the entire critical water supply service area. The content of the supplementary provisions shall comply with guidelines* which may be obtained from the department.

The supplementary provisions shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Assessment of related, adopted plans,

(b) Identification of future service areas and service area agreements (WAC 248-56-730),

- (c) Minimum areawide water system design standards, including fireflow performance standards,
- (d) Procedures for authorizing new water systems in the critical water supply service area,
- (e) Assessment of potential joint-use or shared water system facilities and/or management programs.

* Copies of DSHS guidelines entitled, "Plan contents guidelines" may be obtained without charge from the Department of Social and Health Services, Water Supply and Waste Section, Mail Stop LD-11, Olympia, Washington 98504.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-240, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-720, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-250 Service area agreements—Requirement. (1) The service area boundaries of public water systems within the critical water supply service area shall be determined by written agreement among the respective existing purveyors and approved by the appropriate legislative authority(ies).

(2) Future service area agreements shall be incorporated into the coordinated water system plan as provided for in the guidelines identified in WAC 248-56-720.

(3) Future service area boundaries of public water systems shall be determined by existing purveyors. Criteria used in the establishment of future service areas should include, but not be limited to: Topography, readiness and ability to provide water, local franchise areas, legal water system boundaries, city limits, future population, land use projections, and sewer service areas.

(4) All future service areas shall not be inconsistent with adopted land use plans, ordinances, and growth policies of cities, towns, and counties, located within the future service area boundaries.

(5) Failure of the legislative authority(ies) to file with the department objections to service area agreements within 60 days of receipt of the agreement shall indicate automatic approval.

(6) If no service area boundary agreement has been established after a conscientious effort by the purveyors within one year of establishment of the external critical water supply service area boundaries, or if the legislative authority(ies) has filed with the department objections in writing, the department shall hold a public hearing.

(7) If a public hearing is required for the establishment of service areas the following procedures shall apply:

(a) The department shall provide notice of the hearing by certified mail to:

(i) Each purveyor providing service in the critical water supply service area,

(ii) Each county legislative authority having jurisdiction in the area, and

(iii) The public pursuant to chapter 65.16 RCW.

(b) The hearing may be continued from time to time.

(c) At the termination of the public hearing, the department may restrict the expansion of service of any purveyor within the external critical water supply service area boundaries if the department finds such restriction necessary to provide the greatest protection of the

public health and well-being. (Individual retail or direct service connections shall not be considered an expansion.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-250, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-730, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-260 Coordinated water system plan—Procedures (water utility coordinating committee). (1) Following establishment of external critical water supply service area boundaries, the water utility coordinating committee shall be responsible for the development of a coordinated water system plan.

(2) No later than two months after establishment of the external critical water supply service area boundary the water utility coordinating committee shall meet for the purpose of formulating arrangements for:

- (a) Preparation of the coordinated water system plan, and
- (b) Public involvement.

(3) The water utility coordinating committee shall meet as necessary in order to:

- (a) Collect and assemble water system plans,
- (b) Provide input and direction for the preparation of the supplementary provisions,
- (c) Serve as a forum for developing and/or negotiating future service area agreements (WAC 248-56-730),
- (d) Accomplish other related business as determined by the committee.

(4) Prior to submittal of the coordinated water system plan to the county legislative authority(ies) for review, the water utility coordinating committee shall:

- (a) Prepare written comments on the plan for the benefit of the reviewing authority(ies),
- (b) Conduct at least one public informational meeting for the purpose of soliciting public input,
- (c) Evaluate and respond to comments received at the hearing(s).

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-260, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-740, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-270 Coordinated water system plan—Effect. (1) All purveyors constructing or proposing to construct public water system facilities within the area covered by the coordinated water system plan shall comply with the plan.

(2) At any time after two years of establishment of the external critical water supply service area boundaries, the department may deny proposals to establish or to expand any public water system within a critical water supply service area for which there is not an approved coordinated water system plan. (Individual retail or direct service connections shall not be considered an expansion.) (See WAC 248-56-620 for provisions pertaining to new public water systems in the interim two years.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), redefined as § 246-293-270, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-750, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-280 Coordinated water system plan—Update. (1) The coordinated water system plan shall be reviewed and updated by the water utility coordinating committee at a minimum of every five years or sooner, if the water utility coordinating committee feels it is necessary, in accordance with both the provisions of WAC 248-54-580 and this section.

(2) Changes in the coordinated water system plan shall be accomplished in accordance with procedures for developing a coordinated water system plan (WAC 248-56-740). If no changes are necessary, the water utility coordinating committee shall submit to the department a statement verifying that the coordinated water system plan is still current.

(3) If the external critical water supply service area boundaries are altered by the county legislative authority(ies) pursuant to WAC 248-54-630, the coordinated water system plan shall be updated as provided for in WAC 248-56-630.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), redefined as § 246-293-280, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-760, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-290 Coordinated water system plan—Local review. (1) Prior to submission of a coordinated water system plan to the department for approval, the plan shall be reviewed by the county legislative authority(ies) in the county(ies) in which the critical water supply service area is located. County review of the coordinated water system plan shall include at least one public hearing.

(2) If no comments have been received from the county legislative authority(ies) within sixty days of receipt of the coordinated water system plan, the department may consider the plan for approval.

(3) If within sixty days of receipt of the coordinated water system plan, the county legislative authority(ies) find any segment of the plan to be inconsistent with adopted land use plans, shorelines master programs, the following shall occur:

(a) The county legislative authority(ies) shall submit written description of their determination and justification supporting their determination prior to the end of the sixty day period to the department and all affected parties.

(b) The county legislative authority(ies) shall make every effort to resolve any inconsistencies within sixty days of submittal of written justification.

(c) The department may approve those portions of the coordinated water system plan found not to be inconsistent with adopted plans and policies at any time after the initial determination by the county legislative authority(ies).

(d) If after the sixty day period established for resolution of inconsistencies an inconsistency still exists, the affected parties

shall each present their final recommended alternative solution to the department. The department shall then review all alternative solutions and discuss its recommendations with the county(ies) and the water utility coordinating committee. If after two years of the declaration of the critical water supply service area the inconsistencies persist, the department may deny proposals to establish or to expand any public water system facilities which affect that portion of the critical water supply service area being contested.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-290, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-800, filed 6/28/78.]

WAC 246-293-300 Coordinated water system plan—Department approval. (1) A coordinated water system plan shall be submitted to the department for design approval within two years of the establishment of external critical water supply service area boundaries.

(a) In its review of the coordinated water system plan, the department shall ensure that every topic in the guidelines identified in WAC 248-56-720 has been covered to the extent necessary based on the size and nature of the water system(s) and characteristics of the critical water supply service area.

(b) The department shall not approve those portions of a coordinated water system plan which fail to meet the requirements for future service area boundaries pursuant to WAC 248-56-730.

(2) The department shall either approve the coordinated water system plan, or respond within 60 days from the date the plan is received.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-300, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 78-07-048 (Order 1309), § 248-56-810, filed 6/28/78.]

PART II. RESOLUTION OF SERVICE AREA CONFLICTS

WAC 246-293-401 Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a process for resolving service area conflicts which arise from implementation of the Public Water System Coordination Act, chapter 70A.100 RCW, and its procedural regulations, chapter 248-56 WAC.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040 and 2020 c 20. WSR 22-07-025, § 246-293-401, filed 3/9/22, effective 4/9/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-401, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.116.070 [70.116.070]. WSR 83-01-015 (Order 1919), § 248-59-005, filed 12/6/82.]

WAC 246-293-420 Public hearing. (1) If no service area boundary agreement has been established after a conscientious effort by existing water purveyors within one year of establishment of external crit-

ical water supply service area boundaries, or if the legislative authority or authorities have filed written objections with the department, the water supply and waste section of the department of social and health services (DSHS) shall work with the affected parties in an informal manner in order to reach an agreement.

(2) If, in the judgment of the water supply and waste section of DSHS, informal negotiations with the affected parties fail to make progress toward reaching an agreement, the water supply and waste section of DSHS shall hold a public hearing to determine its course of action.

(3) The water supply and waste section of DSHS shall provide at least thirty days' notice of the public hearing; thus, giving the affected parties a final opportunity to agree upon service area boundaries prior to the public hearing.

(4) Notice of the public hearing shall be mailed by certified mail to:

(a) Each purveyor providing service in the area of conflict;

(b) Each legislative authority having jurisdiction in the area; and

(c) The public pursuant to chapter 65.16 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-420, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.116.070 [70.116.070]. WSR 83-01-015 (Order 1919), § 248-59-010, filed 12/6/82.]

WAC 246-293-430 Initial decision. (1) The public hearing may be continued from time to time if good cause can be shown for such a continuance.

(2) After conclusion of the hearing, the water supply and waste section of DSHS may decide to take no action or restrict any or all purveyors from carrying out improvements within the conflicting area. Affected parties shall be notified of the decision by certified mail. The decision shall be issued as a written report and include justification based upon:

(a) Compliance with DSHS regulations;

(b) A record of the hearing; and

(c) Criteria established in WAC 248-56-730.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-430, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.116.070 [70.116.070]. WSR 83-01-015 (Order 1919), § 248-59-020, filed 12/6/82.]

PART III. FIRE FLOW

WAC 246-293-601 Purpose. This chapter is promulgated pursuant to the authority granted in the Public Water System Coordination Act of 1977, chapter 70A.100 RCW, for the purpose of establishing minimum performance standards related to fire protection, including provisions for their application and enforcement, and incorporating them into the design and construction of new and expanding public water systems.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040 and 2020 c 20. WSR 22-07-025, § 246-293-601, filed 3/9/22, effective 4/9/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-601, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-010, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-602 Scope. These standards and regulations shall apply to the following new and expanding public water systems:

- (1) Those having more than 1,000 services. (See WAC 248-54-580.)
- (2) Those with less than 1,000 services located within the boundaries of a critical water supply service area and subject to the requirement for a coordinated water system plan. (See WAC 248-54-580 and 248-56-700.)

Note: Public water systems in existence prior to September 21, 1977, which are owner operated and serve less than ten single family residences; serving no more than one industrial plant; or are nonmunicipally owned with no plans for water service beyond their existing service area are exempt from the planning requirement.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-602, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-200, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-610 Definitions. (1) "Public water system" - Any system or water supply intended or used for human consumption or other domestic uses including, but not limited to, source, treatment, storage, transmission and distribution facilities where water is furnished to any community, number of individuals, or is made available to the public for human consumption or domestic use. This definition shall exclude any water system serving one single family residence, water systems existing prior to September 21, 1977, which are owner operated and serve less than ten single family residences, and water systems serving no more than one industrial plant.

(2) "Expanding public water systems" - Those public water systems installing additions, extensions, changes, or alterations to their existing source, transmission, storage, or distribution facilities which will enable the system to increase in size its existing service area. New individual retail or direct service connections onto an existing distribution system shall not be considered an expansion of the public water system.

(3) "Department" - The Washington state department of social and health services.

(4) "Critical water supply service area" - A geographical area designated by the department or county legislative authority characterized by public water system problems related to inadequate water quality, unreliable service, and/or lack of coordinated water system planning. It may be further characterized by a proliferation of small, inadequate water systems, or by water supply problems which threaten the present or future water quality or reliability of service in such a manner that efficient and orderly development may best be achieved through coordinated planning by public water systems in the area in accordance with chapter 248-56 WAC.

(5) "Fire flow" - The rate of water delivery needed for the purpose of fighting fires in addition to requirements for normal domestic

maximum instantaneous demand as referenced in guidelines published by the department entitled "Design standards for public water supplies."

(6) "Local fire protection authority" - The fire district, city, town, or county directly responsible for the fire protection within a specified geographical area.

(7) "Water system plan" - A document identifying present and future water system needs and establishing a program for meeting those needs in the most efficient manner possible, and consistent with other relevant plans and policies affecting the area in which the system is located. (See WAC 248-54-580, 248-56-710 and 248-56-720, and the plan content guidelines for a detailed description of water system plans.)

(8) "Existing service area" - A specific area within which direct service or retail service connections to customers of a public water system are currently available.

(9) "Future service area" - A specific area for which water service is planned by a public water system as determined by written agreement between purveyors. (See WAC 248-56-730.)

(10) "Planning jurisdiction" - The city, town, county or other entity acting as the responsible agency for preparation and adoption of land use plans, policies or standards affecting development.

(11) "Development classifications" - Specific geographical areas within the existing and future service area of a public water system, identified for the purpose of determining the appropriate level of fire protection.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-610, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-100, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-620 Administration. (1) The department shall administer these regulations through its ongoing review and approval of water system plans and engineering reports as provided for in WAC 248-54-580, 248-54-590, and 248-56-810.

(2) In the event that plans and specifications for water system improvements are submitted to the department for approval under WAC 248-54-600 and the design of the proposed improvements is inconsistent with development classifications identified in the water system plan, (see WAC 248-57-400) the department shall not approve the plans and specifications.

(3) Plans and specifications for water system improvements (see WAC 248-54-600) proposed within those cities, towns, or counties which operate under local fire flow standards shall include written confirmation that they meet the requirements of adopted local standards from the authority administering those standards. (See WAC 248-57-900.)

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-620, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-300, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-630 Application. (1) Water system plans prepared by those public water systems identified in WAC 248-57-200 shall include a section in their plans addressing fire flow, hydrant and system reliability standards in accordance with WAC 248-57-500, 248-57-600, and

248-57-700 respectively. The section shall include a map entitled development classifications consistent with the following:

(a) The map shall delineate the existing and future service area of the water system into the following categories:

(i) Rural - Lot sizes greater than one acre (including parks, open space, agricultural lands, etc.)

(ii) Residential - Lot sizes one acre or less, (including all single and multifamily structures less than 4000 square feet, and mobile home and recreational vehicle parks)

(iii) Commercial and multifamily residential structures with a floor area 4000 square feet or greater.

(iv) Industrial

(b) Assignment of the above categories shall be based upon:

(i) Existing development, and

(ii) Future development for a minimum of ten years as identified in proposed or adopted land use plans and policies applicable within the existing and future service area.

(c) The development classifications outlined in (a) above shall be determined by any method acceptable to the planning jurisdiction(s), provided that the criteria used is consistent within a given critical water supply service area.

(2) The water system plan shall identify and schedule improvements needed in order for the water system to be capable of supplying required fire flow for new and expanding public water systems consistent with these regulations.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-630, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-400, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-640 Minimum standards for fire flow. (1) City, town, or county legislative authority shall set minimum fire flows where local standards are adopted under WAC 248-57-900.

(2) Where local standards are not adopted under WAC 248-57-900, Table 1 shall identify minimum fire flows. Contact with the county and local fire protection authority shall be made before applying these standards in a water system plan or to design of individual development.

**TABLE 1
MINIMUM FIRE FLOWS***

Development Classification	Minimum Fire Flow Requirement
(as described under WAC 248-57-400)	
Rural	None
Residential	500 gallons per minute for 30 minutes
Commercial and multifamily structures greater than 4000 sq. ft.	750 gallons per minute for 60 minutes**
Industrial	1000 gallons per minute for 60 minutes**

* Minimum flows are in addition to requirements for normal domestic maximum use.

** Commercial and industrial buildings may be subject to higher flow requirements when evaluated on an individual basis by the local fire protection authority.

Note: Minimum standards in most cases require less flow than categories in the guidelines published by the Insurance Services Office (Municipal Survey Service, 160 Water Street, New York, New York 10038) and therefore may not result in lower insurance rates.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), reconfirmed as § 246-293-640, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.116 RCW. WSR 89-16-065 (Order 2840), § 248-57-500, filed 7/31/89, effective 8/31/89. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-500, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-650 Minimum standards for fire hydrants. (1) In those areas where minimum fire flow requirements must be met, fire hydrants shall be provided in accordance with WAC 248-57-600. If phased installation of water facilities are approved by the department, fire hydrants do not need to be installed until source, storage, and transmission capacity needed to meet the minimum flow requirements are operational: Provided, That in such instances a "T" shall be installed every 900 feet where fire hydrants will be located.

(2) Fire hydrants shall be located at roadway intersections whenever possible and the distance between them shall be no further than 900 feet.

(3) All fire hydrants shall conform to American Water Works Association specifications for dry barrel fire hydrants. Each hydrant shall have at least two hose connections of 2 1/2" diameter each and one pumper connection. All connections must have national standard threads or other connection devices consistent with local fire protection authority requirements.

(4) Fire hydrants shall be installed plumb and be set to the finished grade. The bottom of the lowest outlet of the hydrant shall be no less than eighteen inches above the grade. There shall be thirty-six inches of clear area about the hydrant for operation of a hydrant wrench on the outlets and on the control valve. The pumper port shall face the most likely route of approach of the fire truck as determined by the local fire protection authority.

(5) Fire hydrants shall be located so as to be accessible by fire engines and not be obstructed by any structure or vegetation or have the visibility impaired for a distance of fifty feet in the direction of vehicular approach to the hydrant. Fire hydrants subject to vehicle damage (e.g., such as those located in parking lots) shall be adequately protected.

(6) Provisions shall be made to drain fire hydrant barrels to below the depth of maximum frost penetration.

(7) Out of service fire hydrants shall be repaired as soon as possible.

(8) Public water systems are encouraged to enter into contracts with local fire protection authorities to insure proper maintenance of fire hydrants.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), reconfirmed as § 246-293-650, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-600, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-660 Minimum standards for system reliability. (1)

The public water system shall be capable of supplying minimum fire flows either by gravity, or under the following conditions where fire flows are supplied by pumping:

(a) The largest pump out of service at any pumping level,

(b) The highest capacity treatment unit out of service, while maintaining minimum acceptable standards of water quality.

(c) A power outage in effect, unless the appropriate power utility(ies) records indicate a low incidence of electrical outage, defined as follows:

(i) Outages shall average three or less per year based on data for the three previous years with no more than six outages in a single year. Power must be lost for a minimum of thirty minutes in order to qualify as an "outage."

(ii) Outage duration shall average less than four hours based on data for the three previous years. Not more than one outage during the three previous year period shall have exceeded eight hours.

(2) In assessing system reliability, the department shall also give consideration to potential reliability hazards such as reservoir repair or cleaning and/or lack of parallel water transmission lines.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-660, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-700, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-670 Alternate methods. Fire protection may be provided by means other than those discussed in these regulations, provided that such alternate methods are fully documented in the water system plan and approved by both the local fire protection authority and the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-670, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-800, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-680 Local standards. (1) Where standards in these regulations do not fully meet the fire protection needs of a city, town or county, the appropriate city, town or county legislative authority may promulgate fire flow and system reliability performance standards applicable within their respective jurisdiction. Such standards shall be fully documented and provide at least equal performance and protection as the minimum requirements contained in these regulations.

(2) Standards established by local jurisdictions shall be submitted to the department for review, and approval if they at least meet the minimum level of protection required by these regulations.

(3) The city, town, or county which adopts local fire flow or system reliability standards shall be responsible for administering those standards.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recodified as § 246-293-680, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory

Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-900, filed 3/12/79.]

WAC 246-293-690 Severability. If any provision of the chapter or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this chapter or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040. WSR 91-02-049 (Order 121), recondified as § 246-293-690, filed 12/27/90, effective 1/31/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 70.116.080. WSR 79-04-007 (Order 1378), § 248-57-990, filed 3/12/79.]