

RCW 64.44.020 Reporting—Warning—Notice—Duties of local health officer. Whenever a law enforcement agency becomes aware that property has been contaminated by hazardous chemicals, that agency shall report the contamination to the local health officer. The local health officer shall cause a posting of a written warning on the premises within one working day of notification of the contamination and shall inspect the property within fourteen days after receiving the notice of contamination. The warning posting for any property that includes a hotel or motel holding a current license under RCW 70.62.220, shall be limited to inside the room or on the door of the contaminated room and no written warning posting shall be posted in the lobby of the facility. The warning shall inform the potential occupants that hazardous chemicals may exist on, or have been removed from, the premises and that entry is unsafe. If a property owner believes that a tenant has contaminated property that was being leased or rented, and the property is vacated or abandoned, then the property owner shall contact the local health officer about the possible contamination. Local health officers or boards may charge property owners reasonable fees for inspections of suspected contaminated property requested by property owners.

A local health officer may enter, inspect, and survey at reasonable times any properties for which there are reasonable grounds to believe that the property has become contaminated. If the property is contaminated, the local health officer shall post a written notice declaring that the officer intends to issue an order prohibiting use of the property as long as the property is contaminated.

If access to the property is denied, a local health officer in consultation with law enforcement may seek a warrant for the purpose of conducting administrative inspections. A superior, district, or municipal court within the jurisdiction of the property may, based upon probable cause that the property is contaminated, issue warrants for the purpose of conducting administrative inspections.

Local health officers must report all cases of contaminated property to the state department of health. The department may make the list of contaminated properties available to health associations, landlord and realtor organizations, prosecutors, and other interested groups. The department shall promptly update the list of contaminated properties to remove those which have been decontaminated according to provisions of this chapter.

The local health officer may determine when the services of an authorized contractor are necessary. [2006 c 339 § 202; 1999 c 292 § 3; 1990 c 213 § 3.]

Intent—Part headings not law—2006 c 339: See notes following RCW 74.34.020.

Finding—Intent—1999 c 292: See note following RCW 64.44.010.