

WAC 173-539A-050 Water budget neutral projects. (1) Persons proposing a new use of groundwater shall apply to ecology for a permit to appropriate public groundwater or, if seeking to rely on the groundwater permit-exemption, shall submit to ecology a request for determination that the proposed permit-exempt use would be water budget neutral.

(2) As part of a permit application to appropriate public groundwater or a request for a determination of water budget neutrality, applicants or requestors shall include the following information:

(a) Identification of one or more water rights that would be placed into the trust water right program to offset the consumptive use (as calculated pursuant to subsection (3) of this section) associated with the proposed new use of groundwater;

(b) A site map;

(c) The area to be irrigated (in acres);

(d) A soil report, if proposed discharge is to a septic system and the applicant or requestor proposes to deviate from the values in subsection (3) of this section;

(e) A property covenant that prohibits trees or shrubs over the septic drain field; and

(f) A copy of the sewer utility agreement, if the proposed wastewater discharge is to a sanitary sewer system.

(3) Consumptive use will be calculated using the following assumptions: Thirty percent of domestic in-house use on a septic system is consumptively used; ninety percent of outdoor use is consumptively used; twenty percent of domestic in-house use treated through a wastewater treatment plant which discharges to surface water is consumptively used.

(4) Applications for public groundwater or requests for a determination of water budget neutrality will be processed concurrent with trust water right applications necessary to achieve water budget neutrality, unless:

(a) A suitable trust water right is already held by the state in the trust water right program; and

(b) The applicant or requestor has executed an agreement to designate a portion of the trust water right for mitigation of the applicant's proposed use.

(5) Applications to appropriate public groundwater or requests for determination of water budget neutrality that do not include the information listed in subsection (2) of this section will be rejected and returned to the applicant.

(6) To the extent that ecology determines that the mitigation offered would not reliably mitigate to be water budget neutral, ecology may deny the request or limit its approval to a lesser amount.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.54.050 and chapter 43.27A RCW. WSR 11-01-163 (Order 08-12), § 173-539A-050, filed 12/22/10, effective 1/22/11.]