

DATE: December 30, 2025

TO: Kathleen Buchli, Code Reviser

FROM: Tami Thompson, Regulatory Affairs
Manager

Tami M. Thompson

SUBJECT: Rescind Policy Statement | Sewage Disposal Guidelines for Vessels Filed
as WSR 99-07-119

This memo serves as notice that the Department of Health (department) is rescinding a policy statement titled “Sewage Disposal Guidelines for Vessels”, filed March 24, 1999, and published as WSR 99-07-119.

This policy statement specified procedures for sewage disposal that commercial shellfish operations must follow when operating a vessel in a shellfish harvesting area. The department is rescinding this policy because it is outdated and does not reflect current business practices.

Individuals requiring additional information on this should contact Todd Phillips, Director of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, at todd.phillips@doh.wa.gov.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

cc: Todd Phillips, Director, Office of Environmental Health and Safety

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: January 27, 2026

TIME: 3:08 PM

WSR 26-04-060



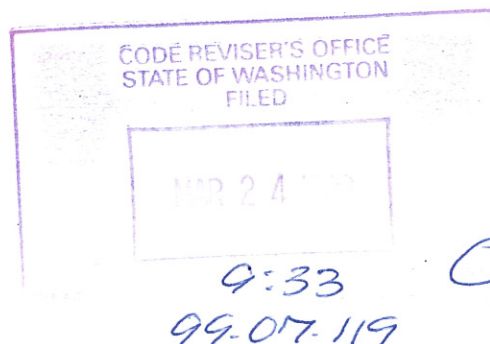
STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF SHELLFISH PROGRAMS

7171 Cleanwater Ln., Bldg. 4 • P.O. Box 47824 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7824
(360) 236-3330 • TDD Relay Services 1-800-833-6388

March 16, 1999

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF POLICY

Title of Policy	Sewage Disposal Guidelines for Vessels Policy and Procedure #018
Effective Date	New: March 16, 1999 Revision: NA
Issuing Agency/ Division	Department of Health (DOH) Environmental Health Programs Office of Shellfish Programs
Description	The policy specifies procedures for sewage disposal that commercial shellfish operations must follow when operating a vessel in a shellfish harvesting area. The policy is intended to clarify requirements of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Model Ordinance (VIII.02.C.) adopted by reference in WAC 246-282-005(1)(a). The policy specifies conditions when either a marine sanitation device, portable toilet, or other sewage receptacle must be carried on a vessel.
Contact	Judy Dowell, Commercial & Recreational Section Manager Office of Shellfish Programs P.O. Box 47824 Olympia, Washington 98504-7824
Telephone	(360) 236-3313
Internet	jad0303@doh.wa.gov





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March 16, 1999

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Jennifer Tebaldi,  Director
SUBJECT: Policy/Interpretive Statement Summary

The attached policy titled Sewage Disposal Guidelines for Vessels, Policy and Procedure #018, has been issued and signed into effect for the Office of Shellfish Programs. In accordance with RCW 34.05.230, I am filing this policy with the Code Reviser.



**Department of Health
Office of Shellfish Programs
Policy and Procedure**

Title:	Sewage Disposal Guidelines for Vessels Used by Commercial Shellfish Operations	Number: 018
References:	Model Ordinance, Chapter VIII.02.C.	
Contact:	Judy Dowell, Commercial & Recreational Section Manager	
Effective Date:	March 16, 1999	
Supersedes:	N/A	
Approved:	 Jennifer Tebaldi, Director, Office of Shellfish Programs	

Policy Statement

The National Shellfish Sanitation Program Model Ordinance, Chapter VIII.02.C., prohibits the discharge of human sewage overboard in shellfish growing areas from vessels used in the harvesting of shellstock or from vessels used to buy shellstock.

It requires vessels used in commercial shellfish operations to have either a marine sanitation device (MSD), or other receptacle for human sewage disposal approved by the authority, while in shellfish growing areas. To provide direction to harvesters and dealers about the type of container that is acceptable, the Office of Shellfish Programs adopts sewage disposal guidelines for vessels.

Procedure:

Commercial shellfish operations must have a receptacle for holding human sewage on-board any vessel used in a shellfish harvesting area, unless provided a written exemption by the Shellfish Program. The type of sewage receptacle that must be on the vessel is determined according to the following conditions:

Condition 1 - All vessels on the water less than 2 hours must have a container designated as a sewage receptacle (for emergency use only) approved by our office. It must be well marked for its intended use and have a tight fitting lid. A 5-gallon paint bucket is an example of such a receptacle.

Condition 2 - All vessels on the water more than 2 hours must have one of the following two approved sewage receptacle devices:

- 1) Type III MSD with a holding tank (any "Y" valve must be sealed in the closed position to prevent through-hull discharge); or
- 2) Self-contained commercially manufactured portable toilet unit.

The Shellfish Program may provide a written exemption from the sewage receptacle requirements under either of the above conditions if the vessel owner or operator documents that there is convenient access to another sewage disposal facility while the vessel is in shellfish growing areas. Geoduck and scallop boats are assumed to always meet **Condition 2** and will not be provided an exemption by the Director.

NO dumping of sewage overboard is allowed at any time.