

PERMITS FOR SHORT-TERM WATER USE

Resource Contact: Coordination and Hydrology Section

Effective Date: 09-10-92

Revised: New

Purpose: To provide guidance to Program personnel in the use of permits to authorize short-term water use.

Application: This procedure applies to all permits issued pursuant to chapters 90.03 and 90.44 RCW that authorize the short-term use of water.

1. Permits for short-term water use

Permits for short-term water use authorize water use in emergency situations or for short-term, nonrecurring projects of no more than four months duration. Regional section supervisors shall use their discretion in evaluating emergency situations. Examples of short-term water uses are hydrostatic testing of pipelines, water use associated with construction activities, and dust control.

Entities wishing to use water with no intent to appropriate the water on a long-term basis are issued this type of authorization.

2. Application process

A complete water right application form and examination fee is required.

Advertising the application for public notice is at the discretion of the regional section supervisor. Generally, advertising the application is advised.

Verbal requests and/or authorizations for permit for emergency use are permissible, but they must be followed up in writing. Only persons with signature authority to sign permits can give verbal authorizations.

The four tests for issuance of a permit (water availability, public interest, impairment of existing rights, and beneficial use of the water) must be considered prior to granting a permit.

Staff shall make a written recommendation to the regional section supervisor concerning all applications for permits for short-term water use. This recommendation is not necessarily a report of examination, but should justify why a permit should issue.

3. Format of a permit for short-term use

A permit for short-term water use may be issued in letter format, signed by the regional section supervisor. The letter shall state the specific conditions of the permit including:

- Applicants name, application number,
- The source, place of use, quantity of water, and time of use,
- An expiration date,
- A statement that if the applicant fails to comply with the terms of the permit, the application upon which it is based may be rejected and the permit revoked, and
- No long-term appropriation as contemplated by chapter 90.03 RCW is taking place.

No permit fee is required.

4. Time duration

The time duration for short-term permits will vary for each proposal; generally short-term is less than four months. The time duration for short-term may be modified based on the specific circumstances of a project.

All permits issued for short-term water use will contain an expiration date. Permits for short-term water use will be revoked for failure to comply with the terms of the permit.

5. Special considerations

No permits for short-term water use are to be issued when the source of water is closed.

No impairment of instream flows established by rule or administratively under RCW 75.20.050 are to be authorized.

For short-term use of ground water, the short-term permit should contain an admonishment pertaining to water use in excess of 5000 gallons per day after the expiration of the short-term permit.

6. Status of applications submitted for a short-term permit

During the active stage of permits for short-term water use, the application and permit should be filed by Section, Township, Range within each Water Resource Inventory Area for the source of water.

Applications for permits for short-term water use are rejected upon expiration of the short-term permit which issues. A permanent record (within WRATS) of permits for short-term water use is now developed; however, a record of the action may be maintained in regional office.

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Water Resources Program

Special Note: These policies and procedures are used to guide and ensure consistency among water resources program staff in the administration of laws and regulations. These policies and procedures are not formal administrative regulations that have been adopted through a rule-making process. In some cases, the policies may not reflect subsequent changes in statutory law or judicial findings, but they are indicative of the department's practices and interpretations of laws and regulations at the time they are adopted. If you have any questions regarding a policy or procedure, please contact the department.