

Courthouse Journal

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Washington State Association of Counties
Washington Association of County Officials

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Washington Counties Scholarships!

Five \$1,500 scholarships will be awarded to children of county employees!
Apply now!
Deadline is April 8, 2002. Call WACO or WSAC for information.

If It Weren't For Bad Luck They Wouldn't Have Any Luck At All

This week the tsunami of financial bad news finally washed up on the marble beaches of the capital. The news turned out to be even worse than expected. The additional projected revenue loss totaled \$247 million. The caseload increases unveiled on Thursday are expected to cost somewhere between \$140 and \$170 million. Pro-share, a multi-hundred million source of federal revenues budgeted by the Governor remained at the center of an increasingly acrimonious contest between the state and federal governments. This means the state must solve a \$1.6 to \$1.8 billion dollar problem against a State Fiscal Year 2003 budget base of \$11 billion. Over 44% of the budget is spent on basic education. Another 7% is spent on debt service. That means deep cuts to higher education, DSHS, and the rest of government.

For survivors of the Legislature's 81-83 budget struggles, it's enough to induce an episode of post-traumatic stress syndrome. During that terrible biennium, legislative budget writers struggled to find the mix of budget cuts and tax increases that would get a majority in each chamber. While the numbers from that biennium were more challenging, the political line up for this budget may be worse. Three years of power sharing in the House of Representatives and the recent struggles over transportation funding and collective bargaining have left a residue of bitterness. Local officials who have struggled through years of land use wars, budget cuts, and the odd pet licensing struggle will recognize the look of despair and frustration in the eyes of many legislators.

The constant efforts of local officials,

lobbyists, and WSAC and WACO staff to tell the county story, keep our issues on the minds of legislators. Our supporters are rural and urban, Democrat and Republican. Unfortunately, they are not yet a majority. Individual legislators have proposed a number of solutions; the proposals include sales tax, utility tax, motor vehicle excise tax, liquor tax, cash assistance, and various hybrids. WSAC and WACO appreciate this support. Key legislators continue to keep a "title only" funding bill alive in each house. (This is a bare-bones intent bill that can carry appropriations, new taxes, or both.)

One of the key obstacles to a dedicated revenue stream or local option taxes is that most of the potential new sources are already earmarked for one or more of the transportation packages. Now that legislators are searching for revenue for the state's general fund and local government, they are discovering that the transportation proposals depend on traditional funding sources for the general fund, local government, and transit.

Another disappointment for local government this week was the passage in one chamber or the other of a number of new mandates and tax exemptions. This is certainly an issue to discuss with your legislators. All of these bills have merit, but the timing is unfortunate.

The Senate had hoped to release a budget on February 25. The new numbers mean that the budget will probably take longer to build.

Please stay in touch with your legislators. If they are working to find a solution in this tough situation, give them encouragement and thanks. They need it. If they are "No" voters on solutions for county government, keep working on them. You need it.

State Board Of Tax Appeals Bill Passes House Floor

SHB 2486 passed the floor in the House of Representatives February 18. The bill originally amended the Administrative Procedures Act that describes procedures for all state agencies to follow as they carry out their duties, including procedures that apply when hearings are conducted before an agency issues a final order. After a public hearing held January 29, with testimony from Department of Revenue Interpretations & Appeals Division and Department of Labor & Industry Claims Division, the bill was narrowed to include only the State Board of Tax Appeals

(SBTA). The SBTA did not testify, but sent a letter to the bill's sponsor Representative Fred Jarrett. As a result of the public hearing, the bill was amended to include only the SBTA. If the SBTA does not issue an initial or final order within 90 days after the conclusion of the hearing, the result shall be judgment for the taxpayer. The bill further states that if the hearing officer allows submission of additional documents after the hearing, the order must be served within 90 days after the deadline for submission of these documents.

In addition, the bill allows property tax appeals to the SBTA to be filed within 90 days rather than the current 30 days. The bill also says the deadline may be waived or extended for good cause. The effective date of the bill would be 90 days after adjournment of session.

Hearings Of Interest To Assessors

House committee hearings: Finance, February 26 at 3:30 p.m., will hear **SSB 6582**; this is one of the Department of Revenue (DOR) clean-up bills. Natural Resources, February 26 at 10 a.m., will hear **SSB 6257**, establishing contract harvesting of timber on state trust lands. Also in Natural Resources on February 27 at 1:30 p.m. they will hear **2SSB 5104**. This bill proposes a change in the conservation futures levy from .0625 to .10 and allows funds to be used for maintenance as well as procurement. State Government, February 28 at 8:00 a.m., will hear public testimony on **ESB 5833** permitting legislative hearings on initiatives and referendums, **SB 6571** providing fiscal impact statements for ballot measures, and **SB 6637** requiring financial disclosure by ballot measure sponsors.

The Senate will hold public hearings in the following committees: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines, February 25 at 1:30 p.m., will hear **SHB 2765** concerning the timber and forest lands compensating tax. The bill allows 60 days to present a Timber Management Plan. Agriculture & International Trade on February 27 at 2:00 a.m. will consider **SHB 2758** establishing the agricultural conservation easements program. Economic Development & Telecommunications, February 26 at 3:30 p.m., will hear **SHB 2592** modifying community revitalization financing. This bill now states the fire districts must agree to participate in the community revitalization financing of the project for the project to proceed. State & Local Government on

February 25 at 1:30 p.m. will hear **HB 2496**, modifying fire protection district provisions and the Constitutional amendment **HJR4220**. These bills authorize fire districts excess levies for periods not exceeding four years. On February 27 at 1:30 p.m., State & Local Government will hear **EHB 2498**, establishing a pilot program authorizing designation of industrial land banks outside urban growth areas, and **HB 2649**, requiring county assessors to submit an annual property tax report to the DOR. This is a bill intended to identify banked capacity.

County Treasurers

SB 6466, the Treasurers' Association cleanup bill, was heard in the House Local Government and Housing Committee on Wednesday. Lewis County Treasurer Rose Bowman and Grays Harbor County Treasurer Ron Strabbing -- Treasurers' Association chair and co-chair, respectively -- testified in favor of the bill. Kim Carpenter, a real estate investor who buys properties at foreclosures or pays taxes on them for delinquent taxpayers, testified against the bill. He was particularly concerned about the sections of the bill clarifying who qualifies as an authorized agent in the payment of property tax before the day of a foreclosure sale. Carpenter claimed that the sections targeted him and others like him.

SHB 2169, authorizing a fire district with an annual operating budget of under five million dollars to issue its own warrants with permission of the county treasurer, was heard by the Senate State and Local Government Committee, Wednesday. Rose Bowman and Ron Strabbing expressed concerns about the bill and suggested technical changes. They were particularly uneasy about allowing all fire districts to issue their own warrants, since some are basically "mom and pop" operations. They were more comfortable with going to a \$1 million threshold. Representative Alexander, sponsor of the bill agreed with having the technical changes drafted and indicated that he would be comfortable with a one-half million-dollar threshold.

HB 2467, requiring the county treasurer to remit to a taxing district with its own treasurer that district's pro rata share of the previous month's taxes by the 10th of the next month, was heard by the Senate State and Local Government Committee Thursday afternoon. In addition to the positive testimony by the Ports' Association, Lewis County Treasurer Rose Bowman spoke in favor of the bill. The House Local Government and Housing Committee will hear the companion bill, **SB 6437**, Wednesday, February 27 at 8:00 a.m.

The Courthouse Journal

The Courthouse Journal is published weekly by the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) and the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC).

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. The weekly deadline is noon Thursday.

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House, Senate Pass E-911 Bills—But It's Still Too Soon to Celebrate

Just a few hours in advance of the February 19 deadline for legislation to be out of its house of origin, the state House of Representatives passed the E-911 wireless bill 86-11. The Senate unanimously passed its version of the legislation on February 18.

The House approved **HB 2595** without amendment. The Senate version, **2SSB 6034**, includes a floor amendment providing that any county imposing a moratorium on the siting of cell towers shall not receive wireless 911 tax revenue during the period of the moratorium.

Both bills now start the committee process again. **HB 2595** is referred to the Senate Ways and Means Committee; **2SSB 6034** is referred to the House Finance Committee. As of the deadline for this publication, neither bill had been scheduled for a hearing.

This legislation would increase the E-911 tax on cell phones to a total of 70 cents per month, equal to the existing E-911 tax on wireline phones. It is a WSAC legislative priority and is necessary to improve E-911 funding and service.

Local Government Organizations Present Terrorism Broadcast

On March 21, 2002, seven local-government organizations will present a satellite and Internet broadcast on combating bioterrorism. Among the presenters are the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials

(NACCHO).

The broadcast, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Eastern Time, will describe regional approaches to preventing and preparing for bioterrorism events and will discuss how counties, cities, states, and the federal government can coordinate their efforts to safeguard citizens. It will also feature a tabletop exercise designed around a potential cataclysmic bioterrorist situation.

To register for the broadcast or obtain more information, county officials may email NACo's Education Division at education@naco.org or call Phyllis Pines at 202-942-4299. WSAC staff will monitor the satellite broadcast.

WSAC also plans to expand on the broadcast program with a three-hour training event in June that will be tailored to local officials in Washington state. The training is being developed in cooperation with the WSAC Certified Public Official training program and the Washington state Division of Emergency Management. To offer observations on the satellite broadcast and/or suggestions for the WSAC training program, please contact WSAC staff Sophia Byrd (sbyrd@wacounties.org) or Dema Harris (dharris@wacounties.org).

SSB 6473 and SHB 2468

Bills **SSB 6473** and **SHB 2458**, Offender DNA Database, both moved out of their house of origin. The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is the prime mover of the bills, but they are also WACO priorities. It is expected that **SSB 6473** and **SHB 2468** will be amended to include language that will give law enforcement the responsibility for collecting oral swabs of DNA. **SSB**

6473 has been referred to the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee and will be heard at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 27. **SHB 2468** is in the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee.

Next Week In The Senate Judiciary Committee:

Monday, February 25 at 10:00 a.m.

ESHB 1663, authorizing an exceptional sentence when crime is motivated by hate
ESHB 2505, providing criminal penalties for training for civil disorders
HB 2407, regional jails (a WASPC bill and WACO Priority)
SHB 2754, modifying mandatory arbitration provisions

Tuesday, February 26 at 8:00 a.m.

SHB 2541, expanding authority for interlocal agreements for jail services
SHB 2381, addressing the trafficking of persons
EHB 2655, waiving filing fees and costs for certain protection orders

Thursday, February 28 at 10:00 a.m.

HB 1512, including computer images for definition of "visual or printed matter"
SHB 2477, removing DOC requirement to file satisfactions of judgment
SHB 2879, providing penalties and remedies for terrorism offenses
2SHB 2346, updating the uniform parentage act
SHB 2347, modifying the uniform interstate family support act

County Clerk Bills

HB 6401, county clerks' cleanup, is set for hearing for 1:30 p.m. today in the House Judiciary Committee.
SHB 6402, collection of inmate legal financial obligations, is being heard today, February 22, at 8:00 a.m. in the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee. Chelan County Clerk's Collections Officer Alice Hildum and Thurston County Clerk Betty Gould are scheduled to testify in support of **SHB 6402**. Please contact your committee member to encourage their support of **SHB 6402**.
HB 6458, jury fees, is being heard in the House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, February 26, at 1:30 p.m.
HB 6417, filing of wills, is being heard in

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Online Legislative Information

If you're interested in finding out what's going on in the legislature, the following online resources are available to track bills, research fiscal notes, and listen to hearings.

Legislative Information. To track legislation and review Washington laws, go to www.leg.wa.gov. The site also contains point-of-contact information for your representatives and senators.

Fiscal Notes. For published information on the fiscal impacts of a bill, check out the Office of Financial Management's Fiscal Notes site. You can access that site by going to www.ofm.wa.gov/fns/.

TVW. To listen to a public hearing, log onto www.tvw.org. TVW's site also offers live television broadcasts of some of the hearings.

Courts, Law and Justice

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the House Judiciary Committee on Thursday, February 28, at 8:00 a.m. County clerks are encouraged to contact the House Judiciary Chair, Representative Pat Lantz, and their representatives on the House Judiciary Committee and urge them to pass **HB 6401**, **HB 6417**, and **HB 6458** out of committee.

Remaining Juvenile Justice Bills

Among the remaining juvenile justice bills that we have interest in is **SB 6501**, regarding offender residences. The title is slightly misleading since the major impact of the bill is the required detention of a broad class of juvenile sex offenders prior to disposition. The reports from juvenile court administrators, in both large and

small counties, are that the mandatory detention requirement will have significant costs since it is not something routinely occurring now. They note these kinds of offenders typically take a lengthy period of time prior to disposition for evaluation. The bill is scheduled for hearing on Tuesday, February 26, at 10:00 in the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee.

Transportation and Public Works

The House Democrats released their statewide package on Thursday, February 21. The "Eight Cent" gas tax proposal raises \$5.5 billion dollars bonded over 10 years, with one penny directly evenly distributed between counties, cities, and the Transportation Improvement Board. This equates to \$111 million for each entity. In addition, the proposal includes \$214 million over 10 years for special needs transit, an 80% reduction from the previous biennium. Attached is a 10-year summary. The House Transportation Committee held a public hearing hours after the plan was released. Speaker Chopp indicated at the press conference that the committee will take executive action on Friday and floor action early next week.

A regional transportation proposal is still under negotiation between the House and the Senate.

Bills of note:

- **SB 6643**, the Local Transportation Funding Options bill, passed out of the Senate Transportation Committee last Tuesday by a 9-8 vote. Final passage of

this bill will be difficult. The Association of Washington Businesses (AWB) is working against the Street Utility Charge, and there are separate rumblings about enabling an increase in the motor vehicle license fee.

The following highlights **SSB 6643**:

- Correcting the Street Utility Charge. The State Supreme Court declared the legislatively authorized street utility charge invalid in 1995. We have redrafted the previous legislation into a new bill that corrects the original legislation and can be used to create a street utility that can monitor, regulate, and maintain public streets.
- Increasing the currently authorized \$15 Motor Vehicle License Fee to \$50. This is a Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Recommendation that had bipartisan and business support. If a county does not use the fee within two years, a city can impose the fee. A combined county and city fee cannot exceed 50 dollars. The city component is subject to voter approval.

Note: The local option gas tax provision,

of increasing the current rate from 10% to 20% and allowing cities to impose the tax, was struck from the bill.

- **SSB 6643** and **HB 2700**, the companion bill, are being held as necessary to implement the transportation budget.

The following bills that we support are still alive after the cutoff as of this printing:

- **HB 2527/SB 5873** adjusts day labor limits to account for inflation.
- **SSB 6350** allows counties to use the county road fund in order to participate in state projects.

Please contact WSAC staff member Jackie White for additional information.

Status Of Public Health Bills And Scheduled Hearings For Next Week

ESHB 2325—Food Donation. This bill was amended on the floor of the House. The adopted amendment removed the ratification language that would have required local boards of health to obtain ratification by cities and towns within their jurisdictions of any food regulation passed by the local board of health. This requirement was objectionable to counties and their local health officials. The amendment provides that local boards of health will provide prior written notification to cities, towns, and known charitable organizations if the local board of health will be considering a rule more stringent than the state board of health food rule. The amended bill addressed our concerns. The bill passed the House and was heard this week in the Senate Agriculture & International Trade Committee. Staff has been asked to attend a meeting with other stakeholders and Senator Swecker regarding possible further refinements to the bill.

ESHB 2323—Creating a Direct Retail Endorsement for Commercial Fishers. This bill would allow commercial fishers to obtain a direct retail sales endorsement from the Department of Fish and Wildlife after receiving a letter from the local health department in the county of residence certifying that the individual is in compliance with the health standards of that community, with standards developed by the state board of health, and that the individual is in possession of a valid food handlers card. The local health jurisdiction in this original county may charge a fee for any inspections. Once the retail endorsement is obtained, the commercial fisher may sell retail in any county in Washington. The amended bill requires the fisher to notify the local health department of any county in which he or she sells 48 hours prior to selling, and the local health jurisdiction may inspect the retail sales operation to ensure compliance with public health standards. However, that local health jurisdiction is prohibited from charging a fee for that work. The local health jurisdiction in the county in which the fish is sold is not required to inspect, so the language is permissive. The problem is a concern about the protection of the public's health after the fish has been transported to another county and set up to be sold. Without re-

sources, local health jurisdictions may not be able to inspect these facilities; however, without the inspection, the local health jurisdiction will not be able to ensure safe storage and handling. This bill is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines Committee on Wednesday, February 27, at 1:30 p.m. in Senate Hearing Room 2.

ESHB 2385—Emergency Management Council. With the heightened concern about bioterrorism and recognition of the key role public health plays in any bioterrorism response, this bill would add a local public health official to the State Emergency Management Council. This bill is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate State and Local Government Committee on Monday, February 25, at 1:30 p.m. in Senate Hearing Room 3.

ESHB 2518—Authorizing health districts to levy civil penalties. This bill would provide health districts with the same authority currently enjoyed by county health departments to levy civil fines for violations of environmental health statutes, rules, and regulations. The cap on the penalty is \$100 per day. Providing the authority to levy civil fines is a much less costly way to achieve compliance than having to file a formal lawsuit for failure to comply. This bill is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee on Monday, February 25, at 1:30 p.m. in Senate Hearing Room 4.

SB 6328—Temporary Harvest Labor Camps. This bill would allow for an extension beyond the current 21-day limit on temporary cherry harvest labor camps. It allows the camps to remain open to correspond with the harvest rather than an arbitrary time limit. From a public health perspective, this bill is good for both the growers and the workers. It is scheduled for a hearing in the House Commerce and Labor Committee on Wednesday, February 27, at 8:00 a.m. in House Hearing Room B.

ESSB 6588—Food Services Rules. This bill would preempt local government from ever adopting a food rule more stringent than the state food rule adopted by the state board of health. For example, if this bill were to go into effect, it would immediately nullify the work that has gone on in King County around the development of specialized food codes to respond to par-

ticular circumstances in King County. There are few local health jurisdictions that have adopted rules more stringent than the state board of health. Additionally, the state board of health is in the process of updating its very old food code. This bill is not needed, and unnecessarily restricts local government. This bill is scheduled for a hearing in the House Health Care Committee on Tuesday, February 26, at 1:30 p.m. in House Hearing Room C.

Public Health—Seattle & King County Have A New Board Of Health Chair

Metropolitan King County Councilmember Carolyn Edmonds will serve as the chair of the King County Board of Health for 2002. Edmonds was elected by a unanimous vote. Councilmember Edmonds stated that she is looking forward to guiding the Board through the creation of efforts and initiatives aimed at promoting the good health of King County's residents. The functions of the Board are to set county-wide public health policy, enact and enforce local public health regulations, and carry out other duties of local boards of health specified in state law. These duties include enforcing state public health statutes, preventing and controlling the spread of infectious disease, abating nuisances, and establishing fee schedules for licenses, permits, and other services.

Clark County Commissioners To Dissolve Southwest Washington Health District

The Clark County Board of Commissioners announced their intent to dissolve the Southwest Washington Health District and will begin immediately to plan for Clark County to provide services currently provided by the health district. The Southwest Washington Health District currently provides public health services to both Clark and Skamania counties. The Board of Health, which oversees the Health District, and the Board of Clark County Commissioners, agreed that strategic planning for the health district will focus on a more economical approach to service delivery in Clark County. The Board of County Commissioners expressed a need to explore options for the county to deliver health services with greater economy and efficiency. The Board of Health agreed to spend at

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least six months developing a transition plan to address the needs of Clark and Skamania counties.

"It is critical that we respond to budget tightening at both the state and local levels," said Mary Kufeldt-Antle, a Camas city councilmember who chairs the health board. "We are hopeful that a greater consolidation of services will result in greater efficiencies throughout the counties."

Under state law, counties are responsible for public health services, and those responsibilities may be handled by a health district, by a county department, or through contractual arrangements between counties. After the health district transitions to a Clark County department, it is not yet known how Skamania County will provide for public health services to its citizens.

Final Week For Human Services Bills That Don't Affect The Budget Is Here

The last week for bills to be heard in policy committees in the opposite house from the house of origin is here. Cut-off for the policy committees is Friday, March 1 and with the usual House Appropriations marathon on Saturday, April 2, the few surviving bills of interest in human services move to the floor for final passage. There are a few bills that have been held back as necessary to implement the budget, including the Senate's drug sentencing reform bill, **SB 6361**, and the Senate version of the affordable housing bill, **SB 5936**. The few other bills of interest have moved along in the process and having hearings in the opposite house. These include: the House version of the drug sentencing bill, **HB 2338**; **HB 2574**, the Clark County system of care pilot; **HB 2454**, developing a cost-benefit analysis of successful at-risk youth programs; **SB 6288**, the technical clean-up of last year's **SB 6151**, on siting sexually violent predator housing; **SB 6368**, creating a statewide drug formulary for Medicaid clients; **SB 6482**, eliminating the six-month limit on the ADATSA program; **SB 6594**, implementing the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Equitable Distribution of Community Residential Facilities for Sexually Violent Predators; **HB 2060**, the House version of the affordable housing bill; and **SB 5936**, San Juan County's housing bill.

Human Services Bills Scheduled For Hearing The Week Of February 25–March 1

The House Children and Family Services Committee will hear **SB 6482**, removing the time limits on alcohol/drug treatment, **ESSB 5416**, requiring identification of drug-affected babies, and **SSB 6536**, requiring DSHS to expand caseload capacity on Monday, February 25 at 1:30. **SB 6482** is scheduled for executive action on Thursday, February 28 at 1:30. The House Commerce and Labor Committee will hear **SB 6328**, extending the time frame for allowing tents to be used for cherry harvest workers to more fully match the length of the cherry harvest season, on Wednesday, February 27 at 8:00. The House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee will hear **SB 6594**, implementing the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Equitable Distribution, on Tuesday, February 26 at 10:00. The House Finance Committee will hear **2SSB 5965**, the Senate version of San Juan County's Real Estate Excise Tax bill on Tuesday, February 26 at 3:30. The House Health Care Committee will hear **SSB 6289**, specifying qualifications for adult family home providers and resident managers; **SB 6337**, prohibiting tobacco product sampling; and will possibly pass out **2ESSB 5522**, the mental health ombuds bill, on Monday, February 25 at 6:00 p.m. The Committee will hear **ESSB 6368**, creating the drug formulary, and **2ESSB 5291**, requiring certain immunizations of staff and residents of long-term care facilities on Tuesday, February 26, at 1:30. The House Judiciary Committee will hear the Senate version of the mental health advance directives bill, **ESSB 6589**, and two bills relating to methamphetamine precursor drugs on Tuesday, February 26 at 1:30. The House Juvenile Justice and Family Law Committee will hold a work session on the community networks on Thursday, February 28 at 10:00.

Over in the Senate, the Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee will meet on February 25 at 1:30, February 27 at 1:30, and February 28 at 3:30. They've just announced their agenda. It will include **ESHB 2707**, concerning long-term caregiver training on Monday, February 25 at 1:30, as well as **SHB 1759**, allowing for the sale of hypodermic syringes and needles to reduce the transmission of blood borne diseases such as HIV/AIDS some-

times transmitted by dirty needles shared by IV drug users. The Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee is scheduled for February 27, 28, and March 1, all at 8:00 a.m. The Committee has not announced their agenda. The Senate Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions Committee will hold a hearing on **SHB 2060**, the affordable housing bill, on Monday, February 25 at 10:00. Except for the Senate Ways and Means Committee hearings scheduled each day, that is all in the Senate for the week. The agenda in the Senate Ways and Means Committee is also not announced as yet.

Reminder: Co-Occurring Disorders Conference Coming April 4–5

The annual co-occurring disorders conference will be held April 4–5 at the Yakima Convention Center, 10 North 8th Street, Yakima. This year's title is "Expanding Our Reach...Creating Partnerships to Support Recovery." The conference is for chemical dependency professionals and mental health professionals working with individuals with co-occurring psychiatric and substance abuse disorders. Special guests include Craig Rennebohm; D. Min, Chaplain, Harborview Medical Center; Timothy Condon, Ph.D., Associate Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse; Patricia E. Deegan, Ph.D., co-founder, Center for the Study of Human Resilience, Boston University; David Mee Lee, MD, Assistant Clinical Professor, University of California at Davis; and Betty Blackmon, MSW, J.D., Parker, Blackmon and Associates. The conference will begin each day with plenary sessions featuring some of the special guests, then move into concurrent workshops. Topics such as the impact of Hepatitis C and AIDS, partnerships with police, working with the medical community, interventions for youth, engaging hard-to-reach individuals, working with inmate populations, and developing cultural competency, are included among the concurrent workshops. The conference is co-sponsored by the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA) and Mental Health Division and the Washington Institute for Mental Illness Research and Training. For additional information and to obtain registration materials, please contact the DASA Training Section at 877-301-4557 or 360-438-8200. The registration fee is \$85.00 if received before March 29, or \$100.00 after March 29.

Shorelines Takes Out GMA Timeline Bill In The House

Extending the deadlines for local growth management plans has been a high priority of both WSAC and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) for the last two sessions. The current statutes now require all GMA planning jurisdictions to review and update, if necessary, local GMA plans and development regulations by September 2002. A bill that was introduced last session, **SB 5841**, would establish new deadlines beginning in 2003 for critical area ordinances, and 2004 for comprehensive plans over a four-year period. The Senate passed **SB 5841** late last session, but the House did not take action. This session, the Senate placed the bill directly on the floor calendar with the intention of passing it quickly to the House without amendments. This week the Senate passed this bill without amendments, 33-13 votes, with three excused. Please note that this bill is only a vehicle at this point and will need to be amended in the House in order to achieve the goal of both WSAC and AWC. This bill was heard before the House Local Government and Housing Committee this week. The Realtors Association and the environmental groups are actively advocating for amendments to the bill that would impose more mandates on local governments.

WSAC and AWC's preferred bill, **HB 2676**, staggers the timeline for counties and their cities from 2004 thru 2007 and requires the plans to be updated every 10 years thereafter. The House Local Government and Housing Committee passed **HB 2676** with amendments that neither Association will support. The bill now has more sanctions if a jurisdiction is out of compliance with the law and includes additional "best available science language." Earlier this week, over 80 members presented an amendment to this bill that would have taken the bill back to its original form. A shorelines bill, **SHB 2304**, was hotly debated between members within the House Democratic Caucus. Unfortunately, this bill was tied to **HB 2676** and died on the floor.

HB 2846, a bill that removes the requirement to comply with the buildable lands provisions unless the State funds at least \$2.5 million, was also passed by the House Local Government and Housing Committee without amendments and now awaits action by the House Appropriations Committee. This bill is exempt from the

policy cut-off.

Please contact WSAC staff member Jackie White for questions or comments.

SHB 2308—Recycling And Waste Reduction

SHB 2308 is still moving. While it does not revolutionize recycling in Washington, it is another step towards improving recycling and waste reduction. This bill is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy and Water Committee on Friday, March 1 at 8:00 a.m. in Senate Hearing Room 1. The bill will also need to be passed out in Executive Session that day as well because March 1 is cutoff for the policy committees.

Instream Flow Setting Guide Out For Comment

The Department of Ecology is seeking advice and comment on a new guidance document designed to help watershed-planning groups make stream-flow recommendations so the creeks and rivers in their area always have enough water for fish. People have until March 29 to submit their remarks to Ecology.

In 2001, amendments to the watershed planning process under chapter 90.82 RCW encouraged local watershed planning groups to recommend stream flows for state creeks and rivers. Planners have the option of making recommendations for their local basins, using the guidance from Ecology, or turning the task over to the state agency. Any stream-flow recommendation, whether it comes from Ecology or from a local watershed-planning unit, ultimately must be set by Ecology through the state rule-making process.

Ecology currently is evaluating funding requests from 31 different planning units to help them make stream-flow recommendations for their watersheds. Under state law, Ecology may award up to \$100,000 to each planning unit, but the agency also is required to provide guidance on how to set stream-flow levels.

Entitled *A Guide to Instream Flow Setting in Washington State*, the draft document provides basic education on stream flows and descriptions of different approaches planning units might use to recommend flow thresholds. It also outlines potential environmental effects of each approach and discusses various flow assessment tools.

The guidance document will provide a framework for how flows might be set. According to Tom Fitzsimmons, Director of Ecology, "These will be guidelines, not mandates."

The department already has set regulatory stream flows in 18 of the state's 62 watershed basins. All but one were adopted before 1986.

Shorelines Bills Remain Alive

Legislation to clearly exempt on-going agricultural activities from shoreline management legislation is under consideration by the Legislature. **Engrossed Substitute HB 2305** passed the House after major debate and is now scheduled for hearing on Monday, February 25 at 1:30 p.m. in the Senate Natural Resources, Parks and Shorelines Committee. The same Committee has already heard **EHB 2623**, which would raise to \$5,000 the dollar threshold for what constitutes development requiring a "substantial development permit" and would require an adjustment to the threshold for inflation every five years. The current dollar amount is \$2,500.

Chances For Water Law Reform Dwindle

When Senator Tim Sheldon (D-Mason County) once again joined forces with Senate Republicans to temporarily yank the majority away from the Democrats on Tuesday, five Senate bills were pulled from committee to the floor. One was a water utility bill clarifying "place of use" of a water right. That action is getting blamed for triggering the breakdown of negotiations between the Joint Executive-Legislative group which has been struggling all session long to develop water law reform legislation.

It is rumored that the Senate action breached agreed-to rules of conduct for all four caucuses on the agreed water topics—including place of use—but many outside observers had already concluded the process was faltering. There may still be legislation introduced to attempt to salvage something from the hundreds of hours of work done since September. Committee staff remains engaged in work on the topic. Stay tuned.

Meanwhile, aside from stormwater bills (see separate story), the only water legislation alive is **SB 6737**. This measure, sponsored by Senator Karen Fraser (D-

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Thurston County), creates a state watershed coordinating council and authorizes administrative support grants for voluntary watershed organizations formed to implement adopted watershed plans. **SB 6737** is scheduled for hearing on February 28 at 8:00 a.m. in the House Agriculture and Ecology Committee.

Stormwater And HPA Bills Gaining Ground

Three bills addressing stormwater management and the administration of the Department of Fisheries' Hydraulic Projects Approval (HPA) program are scheduled for hearing in the Senate this week. **Engrossed Second Substitute HB 2847 (E2SHB 2847)**, by Rep. Mike Cooper (D-Snohomish County), would establish a stormwater advisory committee to work with the Department of Ecology on the implementation of Phase II stormwater planning, the use of the new stormwater manual, and the interaction between state and local stormwater management programs and other programs addressing water quality. **E2SHB 2847** is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Environment, Energy and Water Committee on Tuesday, February 26 at 3:30 p.m.

Engrossed Substitute HB 2866 (ESHB 2866) by Rep. Mark Doumit (D-Wahkiakum County), and **Substitute HB 2757** by Rep. Phil Rockefeller (D-Kitsap County), both address the HPA program. **ESHB 2866** is intended to clarify that the Department of Ecology or local governments—and not the Department of Fish and Wildlife—are the lead agency for stormwater permitting. **ESHB 2757** establishes an advisory committee to review the entire HPA program and recommend efficiencies and improvements. These two bills are scheduled for hearing on Wednesday, February 27 at 1:30 p.m., in the Senate Natural Resources, Parks and Shorelines Committee.

NMFS Will Consider Petitions To De-List Salmon And Steelhead Stocks

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will consider five petitions to remove federal protection from 14 stocks of West Coast salmon and steelhead. The petitions contend that the listings should be thrown out because in each case the fisher-

ies service improperly distinguished between hatchery and wild fish.

The filings follow a decision by U.S. District Judge Michael R. Hogan of Eugene, OR, who ruled that Oregon coastal coho should be removed from the endangered species list because the fisheries service protected only wild coho while ignoring abundant hatchery runs. Although Judge Hogan's decision was reversed when the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals agreed to consider an appeal of the ruling, it has had a significant impact. In November, the fisheries service cited the Hogan decision when it decided to review federal hatchery policy and determine what role hatcheries should play in the restoration of salmon populations.

The agency also said it would re-evaluate 23 salmon and steelhead listings on the West Coast to decide whether large numbers of hatchery fish make federal protection for only wild fish improper. The fisheries service has until October to propose removing federal protections for the 14 runs.

Notes From The Water Quality Financial Assistance Council (WQFAC) Meeting Minutes

The Water Quality Financial Assistance Council (WQFAC) advises the Department of Ecology on effective and efficient administration of state and federal grants and loans programs. The Council is to help ensure that the process of administering the grants and loans is transparent and supported by Ecology's clients and stakeholders with appropriate levels of technical assistance.

Draft Best Management Practices (BMP) definitions for water quality projects were discussed at the most recent WQFAC meeting. There are Facility and Activity BMPs; Grant Eligible BMPs and Loan Eligible BMPs; and Eligible Agricultural BMPs and Non-eligible Agricultural BMPs. Recommended changes will be evaluated and developed by the department for discussion and review at the next WQFAC meeting. These changes will be used for the FY2004 Centennial Clean Water Fund/Section 319/State Revolving Fund funding cycle.

The application deadline for the current FY2003 Centennial/Section 319/SRF Funding Cycle is March 6, 2002. The biggest change to the application is the addition of "outcome based results".

The WQFAC meets every two months. The next meeting is Tuesday, April 2, 2002 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Thanks to Donald Gatchalian, Yakima County Public Works, for the summary information. He can be reached at (509) 574-2300.

EFSEC Rule Process Moves Forward With Standards Meeting

The Energy Facility Standards group, convened by Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) Chair Jim Luce, met for a third time on January 30, 2002. The three items on the agenda for the meeting were discussions of standards for water, carbon dioxide emissions (and mitigation), and socio-economic impacts.

It was pointed out that the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC)-expedited permitting process already addresses socio-economic issues in the permit application. The major discussion was starting to focus on whether or not the application process was comprehensive enough, and were impacts on the community truly given a thorough consideration. The discussion of water standards was divided into issues surrounding water quality and water quantity.

Water quality ...

The question was raised as to whether there is a need for EFSEC to adopt standards on water quality. Water quality standards are already established by the federal government and the Department of Ecology (Ecology). Is there a need to "reinvent the wheel?" It was suggested that EFSEC adopt the existing standards by reference in the application process. Concerns were voiced about such a move becoming a "moving target" during energy facility construction. That is, if Ecology imposed more stringent requirements on water quality during construction, would the facility be bound by the newer standards, possibly requiring design and construction changes in mid project? Other concerns were raised as to EFSEC's authority to adopt standards by reference. Finally, the question was raised about local storm water regulations. If local regulations are more stringent than those of Ecology, which regulations apply? Can (or should) EFSEC and Ecology preempt local control?

Everyone agreed on the need for quality standards for the construction phase of

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Environment, Land Use and Resources

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an energy project, and for storm water runoff after. Since most new energy production facilities are designed for zero waste water discharge, very little time was spent on that discussion.

Water quantity ...

This discussion was less productive. Most of the discussion centered on Ecology and the time and requirements to secure water rights. Questions were raised about EFSEC's authority to preempt Ecology in issuing water rights. EFSEC staff pointed out that while EFSEC issues water use permits, it has no authority to issue a water right. Apprehension was expressed about EFSEC adopting a standard that would somehow give energy generation projects preferential treatment during the Ecology water right process.

A sub group was formed to bring suggestions back to the full body at the next meeting.

Carbon Dioxide ...

The third standard to be discussed was carbon dioxide (CO₂). Washington currently has no numeric standard for CO₂ emissions. Once again, everyone agreed on the need for a standard, but there was little consensus on what the standard should be. The generation industry is also interested in the costs of mitigation if future emission standards cannot be met.

Once again, industry questioned the authority of EFSEC to require mitigation or to set levels of emissions under the cur-

rent permitting process.

Counsel for industry and the state quickly got into discussions that were starting to focus on a pending power plant expansion application. The propriety of this was questioned due to possible litigation. As the debate started to cave in on itself, it was decided to table the discussion of CO₂ standards for the immediate future. Environmental representatives suggested getting together with industry in a series of side bar talks in the hope of bringing suggestions back to the full group at some future date.

Pipeline Rulemaking Proposed

The Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is proposing to define areas of high consequence where the potential consequences of a gas pipeline accident may be significant or may do considerable harm to people and their property. At this time, OPS is not proposing to consider any unusually sensitive environmental areas or commercially navigable waterways within the definition of HCA (unlike the recently issued hazardous liquid pipeline rule covering similar issues). This proposed rule is the first step in a two-step process to address integrity management programs for gas pipelines.

The current rulemaking is entitled, "Pipeline Safety: High Consequence Areas for Gas Transmission Pipelines",

Docket No. RSPA-00-7666; Notice 3. The Federal Register notice appeared on January 9, 2002.

OPS is requesting comments on the proposed definition of high-consequence areas (HCAs) on or before March 11, 2002. Comments may be sent by mail, fax, or submitted electronically through the federal docket management website.

For more information, contact Douglas Kilpatrick, PE, Pipeline Safety Director at the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, at (360) 664-1154 or dkilpatr@wutc.wa.gov

Ecology Offers Workshops On Stormwater Manual

Workshops on the new stormwater manual are being offered for state and local regulators and for developers and consulting engineers. The one-day workshops will run from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and include presentations on the manual contents and interactive examples and case studies using the manual.

The workshops are offered at the Shoreline Conference Center on March 5, at the Skagit PUD on March 6, at the WestCoast Silverdale Hotel on March 12, and at the Best Western Southcenter in Tukwila on March 13. For more information contact Donna Lynch at 360-407-7529 or dlyn461@ecy.wa.gov.

Elections, Recording and Licensing

Auditors: HB 2060 Adds A \$10 Surcharge To Recording Fees

HB 2060, which requires county auditors to charge a \$10 surcharge on recording fees of real property documents to fund low-income housing projects, is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions Committee on Monday, February 25 at 10:00 a.m. in the J.A. Cherberg Building, Senate Hearing Room 4. The bill would allow county auditors to retain up to five percent of collected funds for administration. Sixty percent of the remaining funds would be retained by the county and must be used by the county and its cities for low-income housing projects. The remaining 40% of the revenue would be deposited monthly with the State Treasurer in the Washington

Housing Trust Account. Companion bill **3SSB 5936** died in the Senate Ways & Means Committee.

HB 2453, Veterans Recording Exemption, is in the Senate State & Local Government Committee and is scheduled for a hearing on Monday, February 25 at 1:30 p.m. in the J.A. Cherberg Building, Senate Hearing Room 3. The hearing will be broadcast on TVW.

Auditors Priority Doesn't Make It Out Of Rules

WSACA legislative priority bill **HB 2556**, increasing recording fees, did not make it out of the House Rules Committee by the February 19 cut-off date.

Other Bills Of Interest To Auditors That Did Not Make The Cut-Off

SB 6494, the two-year vehicle-licensing bill, died in the Senate Rules Committee. **SSB 6814**, increasing Department of Licensing fees, died in the Senate Rules Committee.

SSB 6660 Exempts Law Enforcement Employee Records From Public Disclosure

This bill is intended to protect the personal information about law enforcement officers and their families. The way the bill is written, residential addresses, telephone numbers, property and tax records, con-

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Elections, Recording and Licensing

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tents of the public employment record, and financial information would be exempt from public inspection and copying. Auditors & Treasurers alike may have concerns with this bill. The bill is in House State Government Committee and is scheduled for hearing on Monday, February 25 at 6 p. m. in the John L. O'Brien Building, House Hearing Room D. For a copy of the bill visit the WACO website at www.wacounties.org and click on Bill Information.

Hearings Next Week

SB 6529, modifying the time period for holding elections to fill vacancies

(Auditors' Association recommendation); **SB 6321**, allowing candidates to file electronically; **SB 6323**, revising initiative filing fee procedures; **SB 6324**, directing a statewide voter registration data base; **SB 6325**, modifying the administration of elections, are being heard in the House State Government Committee on Monday, February 25 in the House State Government Committee.

Secretary of State companion bills to **SB 6324** and **SB 6325** noted above, **HB 2332** and **HB 2336** will be heard by the Senate State and Local Government Committee Monday, February 25 at 1:30 p.m.

Changing the Date of the Primary Elec-

tion: 2SHB 1230, changing the date of the primary to the second Tuesday in June and moving other election-related dates back to accommodate the primary date change, died with the cutoff February in the House Rules Committee.

Instant Runoff Voting: SHB 2698, the instant runoff voting (IRV) issue, died with the cutoff.

Fiscal Impact Statements for Voters: SB 6571, providing fiscal impact statements for ballot measures, and **SB 6637**, requiring financial disclosure by ballot measure.

General Government and Miscellaneous

HB 2297, a Clark County priority, would allow the county auditor and his or her deputy to perform clerical or ministerial duties for any other county officer and would allow other county officers or their deputy to perform duties for the office of county auditor. This bill was heard in the Senate State & Local Government Committee on Thursday, February 21. Companion bill **SB 6465** is scheduled for a hearing in the House Local Government & Housing Committee on Wednesday, February 27 at 8:00 a.m. in the John L. O'Brien Building, Hearing Room E.

Register Now For WSAC Spring District Meetings

Registrations were sent this week for the WSAC Spring District meetings. Be sure to register soon for a great hotel room and to take advantage of WSAC early registration rates.

Both meetings will begin with a wrap-up of the legislative activity (hopefully the Legislature will have adjourned) and with

a roundtable discussion of county budgets in the legislative aftermath.

The Western District meeting will be held at Rosario Resort in San Juan County on April 11 and 12 and will include a field trip to an affordable housing project on Orcas Island—one of our state's costliest addresses. The meeting will also include in-depth presentations on stormwater management developments, how counties protect riparian habitat, and recent salmon and watershed restoration activity.

The Eastern District meeting, to be held on April 25 and 26 at Sun Mountain Lodge in Okanogan County, will include an expert presentation on the Columbia River Watershed by Dr. Dan Ogden and a briefing on the removal of the Condit Dam in Klickitat County.

At the business meeting for each district, the membership will select a site for the 2002 fall meeting and the 2003 spring meeting. If your county is interested in hosting a district meeting, you will need to provide the following: a hotel with about

75 guest rooms, one meeting room large enough for 100 people, and one meeting room to hold 35 people. Please notify Kim Zydek, Association staff, for more information.

Death Investigations

SHB 2919, the bill to keep State Toxicology Laboratory reports confidential, has apparently missed the cutoff date and died in the House Rules Committee. **SSB 6745**, which would have placed a surcharge of death certificates to fund a web-based registration system, failed to leave the Senate Ways and Means Committee earlier in the week. Tuesday was the deadline for bills to leave their house of origination.

Calendar of Events

February 28

Urban County Caucus Meeting, 6:30 pm, Olympia

March 1

WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 1-5

NACo Legislative Conference, Washington Hilton & Towers Hotel, Washington, DC

March 14

WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee, (All Day Meeting), SeaTac

March 14

Urban County Caucus Meeting, 6:30 pm, Olympia

March 15

WSAC Board of Directors meeting, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 15

WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Washington Counties Building, Olympia

March 20-22

ACHS, Tacoma, Pierce County

March 21

Puget Sound Regional Council, General Assemble Meeting, 3:30 - 8:00 p.m., Bell Harbor International Conference Center, 2211 Alaskan Way, Seattle

March 21

WA Counties Risk Pool Meeting

April 4

Retro Pool Meeting, Best Inn/RV Park, Ellensburg

April 7-13

National County Government Week

April 11-12

WSAC Western District Meeting, Rosario Resort, San Juan County

April 23-26

Washington State Association of County Clerks' & Superior Court Administrators' Joint Conference, Ridpath Hotel, Spokane

April 25-26

WSAC Eastern District Meeting, Sun Mountain Lodge, Winthrop

April 24-26

Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' (WAPA) Annual Spring Training Program, Icicle Inn, Leavenworth

May 6-10

Washington State Association of County Auditors' Annual Conference, Red Lion, Port Angeles

May 22-24

WIR, Yellowstone County, Billings MT

May 15-17

ACHS, Spokane

May 20-23

Washington State Association of Sheriffs' & Police Chiefs' (WASPC) Spring Conference, WestCoast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee

June 10-14

International Association of Coroners' & Medical Examiners' Annual Conference, WestCoast Grand Hotel, Seattle

June 16-19

Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado

June 17

WSALPHO Meeting in conjunction with WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue

June 18

WCIF Board in conjunction with WSAC Summer Conference, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Bellevue

June 17-20

Washington State Association of County Assessors' Annual Conference, Rosario Resort, Orcas Island

June 18-21

WSAC Summer Convention, Bellevue Inn and Bellevue Hilton, Bellevue

June 18-21

Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Annual Conference, Yakima

June 19-21

Washington State Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' (WAPA) Summer Training Program, Campbell's Lodge, Chelan

June 22-26

National Sheriffs' Association Annual Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma

June 24-28

Washington State Association of County Clerks' Annual Conference, Best Western Suites, Walla Walla

June 24-28

Washington State Association of County Treasurers' Annual Conference, Lakeway Inn, Bellingham

July 12-16

NACo Annual Conference, New Orleans Parish, New Orleans, LA

July 17-19

ACHS, Clark County

August 22

WCIP Board/Rate Setting Session, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. SeaTac

September 12

WSALPHO Meeting, Spokane

September 18-20

ACHS, Leavenworth

September 19

WCIF/WCIP Boards/Insurance Advisory Committee (All Day Meeting), SeaTac

September 30 - October 4

WACO/WSAC Annual Conference, WestCoast Wenatchee Hotel, Wenatchee

November 14

WCIF Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – noon, Eastern Washington Location

November 18-21

Washington Association of Sheriffs' & Police Chiefs' (WASPC) Annual Fall Conference, Red Lion Hotel at the Quay, Vancouver

November 20-22

ACHS, Seattle

Employment Opportunities

ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR. Kitsap County Public Works - Road Division. \$64,105.60 - \$81,806.40/annually (2001 Salary Rate). Plans, organizes, and manages the activities of the Road Division of the Public Works Department including the administration and management of the functions of Engineering Services, Transportation/Traffic Operations/Maintenance, and Road Operations/Maintenance, to achieve goals within budgeted funds and available personnel. Oversees the development of divisional workloads and staff assignments, reviews progress and makes recommendations, directs changes in priorities and schedules as needed to assure work is performed in a timely and efficient manner according to appropriate guidelines, procedures, and legal regulations. Provides leadership and direction in the development of short and long-range plans, goals, and objectives for assigned operations. Makes recommendations regarding the development of capital improvement projects and priorities in annual and long-range capital improvement programs. Administers contracts associated with improvements to road and transportation facilities. Provides division and County representation on various committees and before special interest and community groups. May serve as the County Engineer. Bachelor's degree in civil engineering or closely related field, and five years of progressively responsible professional/administrative experience in planning, design, operation and construction of public works facilities, including two years of supervisory or management responsibilities; or any equivalent combination of experience and education which provides the applicant with the desired skills, knowledge and ability required to perform the work. Registration as a professional Civil Engineer in the State of Washington is desirable. (Required if designated as County Engineer). For additional information and application materials, please visit our website @ www.kitsapgov.com or contact the Kitsap County Personnel Department, (360) 337-7185, ext. 0. All application materials must be received by 4:30 pm on March 1, 2002.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PORT OF EDMONDS, WA.

The Port of Edmonds is accepting appli-

cations for the position of Executive Director. The Port of Edmonds is a municipal corporation with the Executive Director reporting to an elected board of five commissioners. The Port activities include a 1,200 slip marina and rental properties with gross operating revenues of approximately 4 million dollars and a staff of 24 employees. The Executive Director is responsible for all aspects of operations, budgeting, capital improvements including construction management, and maintenance. This position requires handling multiple priorities and dealing with multiple constituencies of the Port district. The Executive Director must have the ability to communicate effectively with several audiences, including elected officials and the public, and take the initiative in making decisions and assuming responsibility for recommendations and actions that will have long-range impacts on the finances and operations of the Port. Successful applicants will have significant experience in upper level management and will be able to demonstrate competency in the requirements listed above. Minimum requirements for the position require a college degree and five years of management experience. The candidate must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, demonstrated leadership abilities, and fiscal management capabilities including knowledge of public financing. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. The deadline for applications is March 15th 2002. Submit resume in confidence to: Port of Edmonds, C/O Traner Smith & Co., CPA's, 110 James St., Suite 106, Edmonds, WA 98020.

911 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, Spokane, WA. Plan, develop, organize and direct all aspects of the Spokane County 911/Crime Check Call Center: ensure compliance w/ applicable federal/state regulations; budget preparation and management; administer all staffing and personnel functions; provide information and reports to the E-911 Board, as well as to County, State and Federal agencies/officials; act as the liaison with all involved jurisdictions as well as the public. Requires a Bachelor's degree with major course work in criminal justice, business management, public administration, communications or

related AND five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in a senior management or administrative capacity, including experience with collective bargaining units; OR an equivalent combination of educ/exp. Law enforcement background with 911 Public Safety communications experience highly desirable. \$51,266- \$69,176 annually + exc benefit package; closes 03/08/02, 5:00pm For complete description and application materials, please contact Spokane County Human Resources at (509) 477-5750; www.spokanecounty.org; Equal Opportunity Employer.

MANAGEMENT, BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE. Executive Director at rural Community MH & CD Outpatient Center in northeast Washington State. Prefer Masters in social/behavioral sciences with 3 yrs. management experience or Bachelors in related field with 5 years experience in behavioral healthcare management. 2 offices, 57 staff, \$3.3 million annual budget; County pop. 40K; Salary \$52-\$58.6K DOE + benefits. Stevens County Counseling, Colville, WA, 1-866-708-4597 (WA. toll free) or (509) 684-4597, Fax (509) 684-5286, e-mail: ghankins@co.stevens.wa.us; area info. at www.colville.com or www.co.stevens.wa.us, deadline 3/31/02; position open 7/1/02

WHATCOM COUNTY FINANCE DEPARTMENT, in Bellingham, WA, is seeking a Budget Analyst or Sr. Budget Analyst, DOQ. This position assists in planning, issues instructions, and coordinates the preparation and compilation of the county budget and related material. Requires knowledge of Governmental accounting (including BARS), management theory, internal controls, administrative systems, qualitative and quantitative research and analysis, and fiscal management. **Senior Budget Analyst** level leads and balances team and individual responsibilities and functions more independently. Hiring range for the Budget Analyst is \$3,342-\$3,611/mo., DOQ, and for the Sr. Budget Analyst is \$3,635-\$3,928/mo., DOQ. This position requires a Bachelor's degree in public or business administration, accounting, finance or closely related field. In addition, the Budget Analyst requires four years of progressively responsible experience in

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Employment Opportunities

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accounting, including two years preparing detailed, organization-wide budgets, and a current CPA is preferred. The Sr. Budget Analyst requires six years of progressively responsible experience in accounting including three years preparing detailed, organization-wide budgets and must be a current CPA. Whatcom County offers excellent employer-paid medical, dental & vision benefits for employee and family, three weeks vacation, generous sick & holiday leave. WA State Retirement system. Optional deferred comp, Flex 125 plan, and long term disability available. Application period closes 3/4/02. For required application packet contact Whatcom County Human Resources, 311 Grand Ave., Suite 107, Bellingham, WA, or call (360) 676-6802. For detailed job announcement visit our website at www.co.whatcom.wa.us or call the jobline at (360) 738-4550. Equal Opportunity Employer.

COWLITZ COUNTY DIRECTOR OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, salary: \$6,056 including full benefits. This position directs and oversees the planning and administrative functions of the Health and Human Services departments pertaining to mental health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities programs, public health policy development, surveillance and compliance enforcement efforts. It supervises managers and other staff to carry the goals and objectives of each department and ensures the efficient administration of each department. It researches, develops and implements services and strategies to ensure compliance with laws, regulations and contractual obligations, and fosters constructive partnerships to

achieve effective planning and implementation of each department's goals, strategies and programs. Requirements: Bachelor's degree in Social Science, Public Health, Public Administration, or a related field; a master's degree is desired. 7 years of experience in human services and/or public health administration, which must include budget administration, developing and managing human services and/or public health services, public speaking, grant writing and administration, and full supervisory responsibilities. Or, a combination of education, experience, and skills that would ensure the successful performance of the duties of this position. Possess, develop and maintain a comprehensive knowledge of the laws, regulations and program trends pertaining to human services and public health. Possess and maintain a valid driver's license. Application Information: The application, job announcement and job description can be obtained by visiting Administrative Services at 207 Fourth Ave. North, Kelso, WA; by calling (360) 57-3065 or TDD (360) 577-3061; by faxing your request to (360) 423-9987; or by sending an email through the link in our website: www.co.cowlitz.wa.us. The application and job announcement can be downloaded from our website. Applications must be returned to Administrative Services by March 25, 2002. EOE

KITSAP COUNTY, BUDGET ANALYST II - Plans, organizes and coordinates budget development and financial management process. Requires a bachelors degree in business or public administration, accounting or closely related field, and four years of progressively responsible experience in government fi-

nancial administration and fiscal management with a background in grants and project administration; or any combination of experience and education which provides the applicant with the desired skills, knowledge and ability required to perform the work. Experience with governmental data processing systems required. MBA, MPA, or CPA is desirable. SALARY: \$41,308 - \$52,707. CLOSES: March 8, 2002. Please call (360)337-7185 for an application packet or download from our website at www.kitsapgov.com.

HUMAN RESOURCES PROGRAM COORDINATOR, YAKIMA COUNTY - Salary Range: \$36,404 - \$52,185 annually. Hiring Range: \$36,404 - \$37,530 DOQ. Requirements: Equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources, Business, Criminal Justice, Social Science or a related field and three years of human resource experience. Duties: Serves as a human resources generalist and coordinates personnel workflow between the Department of Corrections and the central Human Resources Office. Uses professional discretion in applying policies and procedures. Will be a key team member in staffing an expanded corrections program. Applications and Supplemental must be received by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, March 7, 2002. Apply to Yakima County Human Resources Department, 128 N. 2nd Street, Room 412, Yakima, WA 98901, telephone (509) 574-2220. Internet: www.co.yakima.wa.us, email: human.resources@co.yakima.wa.us.

Yearly reassessments called best policy in counties that have them

By Mark Belko, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Staff Writer, Sunday, February 17, 2002

In the land of Boeing, Bill Gates and Starbucks, people can count on four things -- death, taxes, rain and annual property reassessments.

Since 1996, King County, home to Seattle and Microsoft, has been reassessing nearly 600,000 properties, 490,000 of them residential, every year. Elected Assessor Scott Noble wouldn't have it any other way.

"We found, in general, and most experts opine, that an annual cycle is the most fair and equitable. You have certain segments of the market appreciating faster than others and in an annual cycle, those properties pay their fair share on a more timely basis," Noble said.

Allegheny County, by contrast, is about to end annual reassessments after two years of them, in part because of public backlash over double or triple-digit percentage increases in values. But assessors in counties that revalue annually say that elected officials here are just asking for trouble. Paul Welcome, chief appraiser in Johnson County, Kan., said Allegheny County's decision to switch to triennial reassessments -- the next revaluation won't be until 2006 -- will simply institutionalize one of the very things the county is trying to avoid: sticker shock. "You're just delaying it," he said. "You're going to have an outcry in three years."

Ben Gassaway, the elected assessor in Clark County, which is in the Portland, Oregon, metropolitan area, called it a bad idea. Gassaway, whose office revalues 150,000 properties each year, speaks from experience. Before 1989, Clark County reassessed every four years. Because of the lag and a booming real estate market, property values skyrocketed 200 to 300 percent with each reassessment. "Those big adjustments were what got the population in kind of an uproar," he said. Since going to an annual cycle, increases have averaged 7 percent to 10 percent a year. Gassaway said it took about six years of annual reassessments to bring everyone up to market levels. Over time, the yearly increases have leveled off. The average jump this year, for example, was 1.5 percent to 2 percent. "I think it's fairer for my people," he said.

In the past two years, the yearly cycle has achieved more backing in the industry as a whole. Yearly reassessments are done in 17 states, according to the International Association of Assessing Officers, the trade or-

ganization that sets standards for the industry. With the emergence of computer-assisted mass appraisal programs such as the one used by Allegheny County, the trend appears to be toward more of these annual revisions, not away from them. In 1990, for example, annual reassessments were done in about five states.

In switching from yearly reassessments to a three-year cycle, the county argued to Common Pleas Judge R. Stanton Wettick Jr. that the move would protect the integrity of the assessment system while minimizing the burdens imposed on the county and the taxpayers. But assessors in Washington and Kansas said lags between reassessments tended to give breaks to those in booming markets at the expense of those in stagnant or slightly increasing areas.

Before 1996, King County reassessed every two years. In a hot real estate market such as Seattle, that was one year too long. In 1990, King County property owners were hit with average increases of 60 percent. In 1992, they rose another 12 percent on average. "This produced an absolute avalanche of appeals. It took us years to wade through them," Noble said. To Noble, an avalanche was 20,000 appeals in 1990 and 20,000 in 1992, far from the 90,000 appeals generated during last year's reassessment in Allegheny County. Since switching to annual reassessments, the average increases in King County have fluctuated, dropping in recent years. They averaged 5.3 percent this year, 6.3 percent last year, 7.4 percent in 2000 and 11.6 percent in 1999. Over time, the number of appeals has dropped to about 3,000 to 3,500 a year.

Noble bases each year's assessment on two years' worth of sales and then computes what he calls a "rolling average" for each property. That calculation puts the property at 90 percent to 92 percent of full market value, on average. Noble said the rolling average helps make the assessment more palatable to property owners. "I think our citizens are confident that the value is fair, but they're probably cognizant that it probably is less than what they can sell the property for," he said. "We find that with the annual assessments, everyone has a bit more predictability. With the rolling average, there's a little more acceptability."

King County reassessments have not been devoid of controversy. In 1997, none other than Bill Gates -- yes, that Bill Gates -- objected to the \$53.3 million assessment on his mansion and five-acre estate. He and his wife, Melinda, eventually paid the \$600,000-

plus tax bill. Gates may now look back on that year with nostalgia. His 2000 assessment was \$109.5 million, translating into a \$1 million property tax bill.

Allegheny County Chief Executive Jim Roddey said he agreed to the triennial reassessments as part of negotiations with County Council over the 2002 values, which council Democrats wanted to throw out. He said council members were "adamant" in wanting a three-year cycle. "I think the feeling was that everyone was just bombarded two years in a row and they wanted to stop all of the objections and try to get the appeals down," he said. Councilman Wayne Fontana, chairman of the administrative services committee, said members thought the three-year cycle would be a way to "get some stability to the system as it exists right now." "The idea, obviously, was to give taxpayers the opportunity to straighten out the reassessment mess that has been generated by the Office of Property Assessment," he said. He and Roddey did not rule out the idea of returning to a yearly cycle at some point. Fontana said council might revisit that after the next reassessment in 2006. Although it has 50,000 more properties to assess, King County has one advantage over Allegheny County -- more employees. Noble heads a staff of 210, 85 of whom are appraisers. Allegheny County, by contrast, has 116 employees, 38 of them assessors.

Gassaway in Clark County supervises 65 to 70 employees to assess about a quarter of the properties Allegheny County values. Welcome has 100 workers, about two-thirds of them assessors, to assess 180,000 parcels. Roddey acknowledged that the county's staff was too thin. "I think we're going to need more assessors. But we're so constrained by the budget, I don't know how many we'll be able to afford. I don't think we need 200, but I think we probably need more than we have," he said.

King, Clark and Johnson counties allow property owners to appeal their assessments and argue for reductions before the official values kick in for tax purposes. Allegheny County plans to do the same thing before its next reassessment. Starting in 2005, property owners will receive a preliminary assessment for 2006 and will have the chance to appeal it and get a decision before the assessments are certified for tax purposes the next year. King, Clark and Johnson counties also send assessors to physically re-examine one-sixth of all properties each year, while a proposed Allegheny County resolution would require assessors to visit every property every time there is a reassessment.

10 Year Summary

\$ in Millions

Revenues	10 Year Revenues
8 Cent Increase in Motor Fuel Tax (4-4)	\$ 2,565.68
0.8% Sales tax on new and used vehicles	\$ 718.91
20% Gross weight fee	\$ 148.07
Bonds (7 cents, 25 yr, 5.5%)	\$ 3,500.00
Issuance costs	\$ (26.25)
Debt service	\$ (1,330.26)
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 5,576.15</u>

Expenditures	10 Year Expenditures
Highways	\$ 3,735.40
Park & Ride lots	\$ 46.00
Local freight mobility	\$ 148.07
Auto ferries and terminals	\$ 595.14
Passenger only ferries	\$ 98.20
Special needs transportation	\$ 214.30
Commute trip reduction, vanpools	\$ 128.80
Columbia river dredging	\$ 17.70
Passenger Rail	\$ 184.90
Freight Rail	\$ 75.00
Local Governments direct distribution	\$ 332.63
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 5,576.14</u>