

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN POLICY FORMATION

Intent and Benefit

These procedures have been specified in order to invite greater participation and facilitate the formulation of competent public policies that meet both the greater public concern as well as the need of individuals. Through this policy, which articulates stakeholder participation, public health and the environment will be protected and individual applicants will be served.

Background Information

In the rapidly changing field of onsite wastewater management and regulation, it is often necessary to develop new regulations or revise older regulations and guidelines in order to promote the public welfare. This is best accomplished through a cooperative effort amongst stakeholders. Historically, DEH has brought proposed policies to stakeholder meetings for review, comment and revision. The comment and revision process was repeated several times until consensus was reached. This policy is meant to memorialize and improve the current procedures for gathering input into policy formation at an early stage in the process.

Statement of Problem

In the past stakeholders may not have understood that anyone can propose a policy for consideration by the group and possible adoption by DEH. This policy specifically articulates that policies may be suggested by any stakeholder for consideration. The comment and revision cycle of a proposed policy had been unclear in the past, this policy memorializes the proposal, review discussion, comment period and revision cycle of stakeholder participation in policy formation.

Policy Implementation

Step 1. New or revised draft policies proposed by either DEH, or by a representative of either the consultant or construction industry shall be electronically distributed and posted to the DEH website then discussed and reviewed at a site evaluator's meeting. If the matter is a complex issue, it may be delegated to a subcommittee of stakeholders appointed by the Director.

Step 2. A revised draft shall be prepared by the subcommittee based on comments received.

Step 3. The revised draft shall be electronically distributed to stakeholders, posted to the DEH website and discussed again at the next site evaluator's meeting for consensus.

Step 4. Policy Adoption: The protocol for formalizing policies shall be as follows:

A. If the general consensus supports the draft, then its adoption shall be recommended to the DEH Director.

B. If there is a lack of agreement or consensus, the draft shall be returned to Step 2 for review and revision.

C. If there is an overriding public health or environmental health need, DEH may adopt a policy without general consensus.

Step 5. The adopted policies shall have an effective date 6 months later than the adopted date, unless there is general consensus or an overriding public health or environmental need, then DEH may in that case make an adopted policy effective in a shorter specified time frame.

Effective Date :
Revised Date:

9/15/05

Director's Initials:

JDR