

Lower Valley Groundwater Advisory Group

Reports on its Accomplishments

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Yakima – 19 months into a multi-year project to reduce nitrates in groundwater, the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Advisory Committee (GWAC) has released a report highlighting its progress to date.

The 22-member advisory board has been meeting monthly since June 2012 to tackle elevated nitrates in groundwater and drinking water in the Lower Yakima Valley. It is responsible for developing a Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) plan that will ultimately reduce nitrates in groundwater to meet state drinking water standards.

To work towards that goal, the committee has completed a variety of tasks that are summarized in a series of reports to the Department of Ecology. Highlights include:

Work Plan

- Creation of a two-year work plan, schedule and budget that establishes how the GWMA program will be developed.

Research and Data Collection

- Gathered information on data pertaining to federal, state and local agency regulatory requirements regarding nitrates in the GWMA
- Developed a Best Management Practices Scope of Work
- Developed a Draft Deep Soil Sampling Plan
- Identified Potential Groundwater Monitoring Stations

Education and Outreach

- Completed 136 door-to-door surveys in the GWMA aimed at gauging awareness of the nitrate issue and its potential health impacts
- Distributed nitrate-related health literature to over 200 healthcare providers
- Conducted presentations to healthcare providers, local community groups and on a statewide radio talk show to increase awareness about the GWMA
- Launched an in-depth well assessment survey that may include up to 350 homes in the target area
- Developed a community website that offers information about the committee, its meetings and information on nitrate-related topics

To view the GWAC's Progress Reports or to learn more about the GWAC, please visit:

<http://www.yakimacounty.us/gwma/>.

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