

Operator Certification Fees

Wastewater Discharge Permit Fee Task Force Meeting

April 21, 2016



Agenda

Purpose and Program Overview

Issues with Current Law

Request Legislation

Next Steps and Q&A



Purpose

Discuss options for
changing current law to
benefit the OpCert
Program and our
Operators



OpCert Program

Serves WWTP Operators across the state by...

- Ensuring operators meet education, experience, and professional growth requirements
- Reviewing applications for certification and renewal
- Evaluating and monitoring training opportunities
- Providing information about technical advancements and industry best practices



OpCert Program

- ❑ Averages just under 2,000 certifications per year since 2006
- ❑ Reviews and processes approximately 350 applications per year
- ❑ Reviews 150 professional growth packets per year
- ❑ Responds to an average of 500 calls or emails per month
- ❑ Attends Section and Advisory Meetings



Current Law



Chapter 70.95B RCW

In 1987, the Legislature amended Chapter 70.95B RCW, requiring Operators of Wastewater Treatment Plants be certified



RCW 70.95B.030

“...the individual on-site at a wastewater treatment plant who is designated by the owner as the operator in responsible charge of the operation and maintenance of the plant on a routine basis **shall be certified** at a level equal to or higher than the classification rating of the plant being operated.”



RCW 70.95B.095

“...the department shall establish rules for the collection of fees for the issuance and renewal of certificates as provided for in RCW 70.95B.090. Beginning January 1, 1992, these fees shall be sufficient to recover the costs of the certification program.”



RCW 70.95B.090

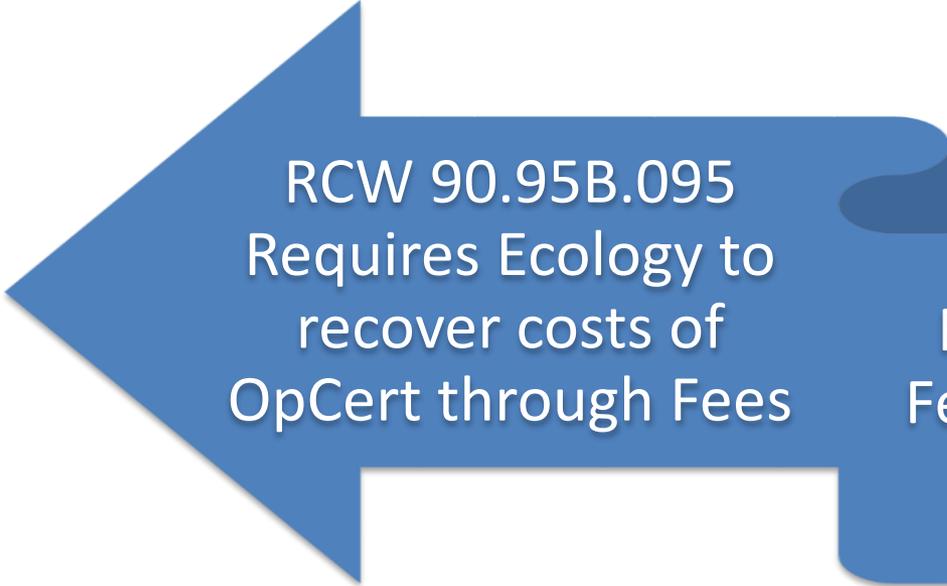
RCW 70.95B.090 capped
operator certification fees
at :

\$50 per application

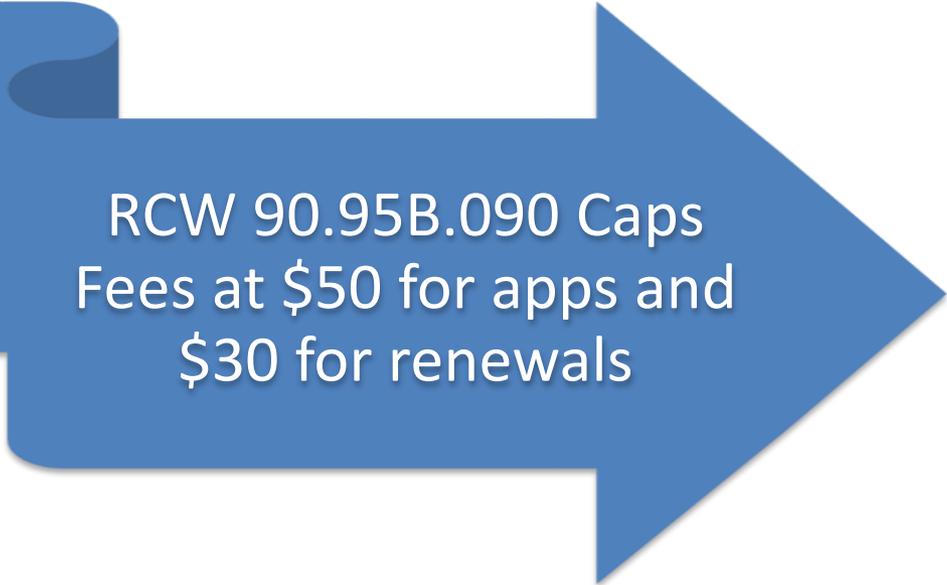
\$30 per renewal



Opposing Conditions



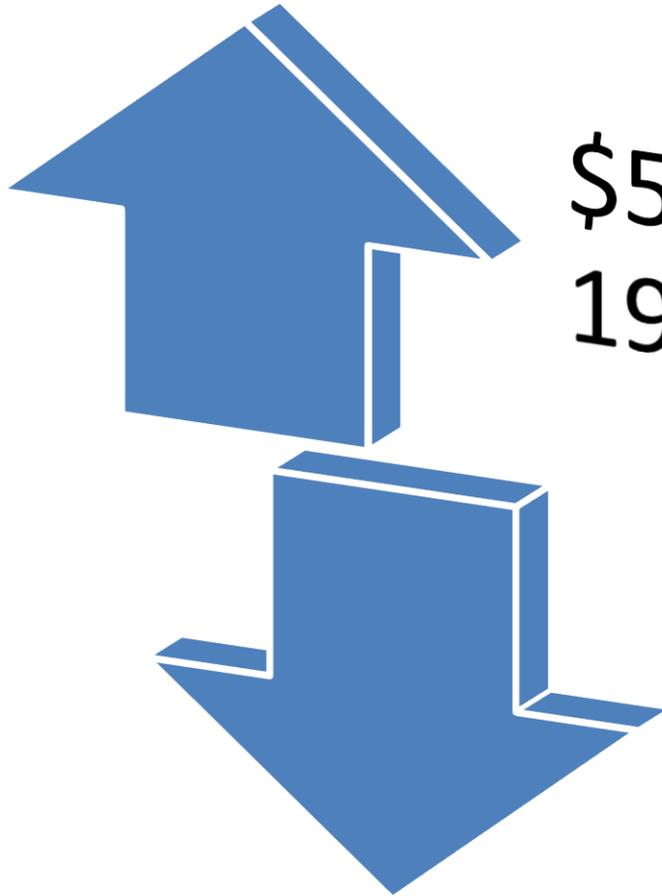
RCW 90.95B.095
Requires Ecology to
recover costs of
OpCert through Fees



RCW 90.95B.090 Caps
Fees at \$50 for apps and
\$30 for renewals



It's Not 1987 Anymore...

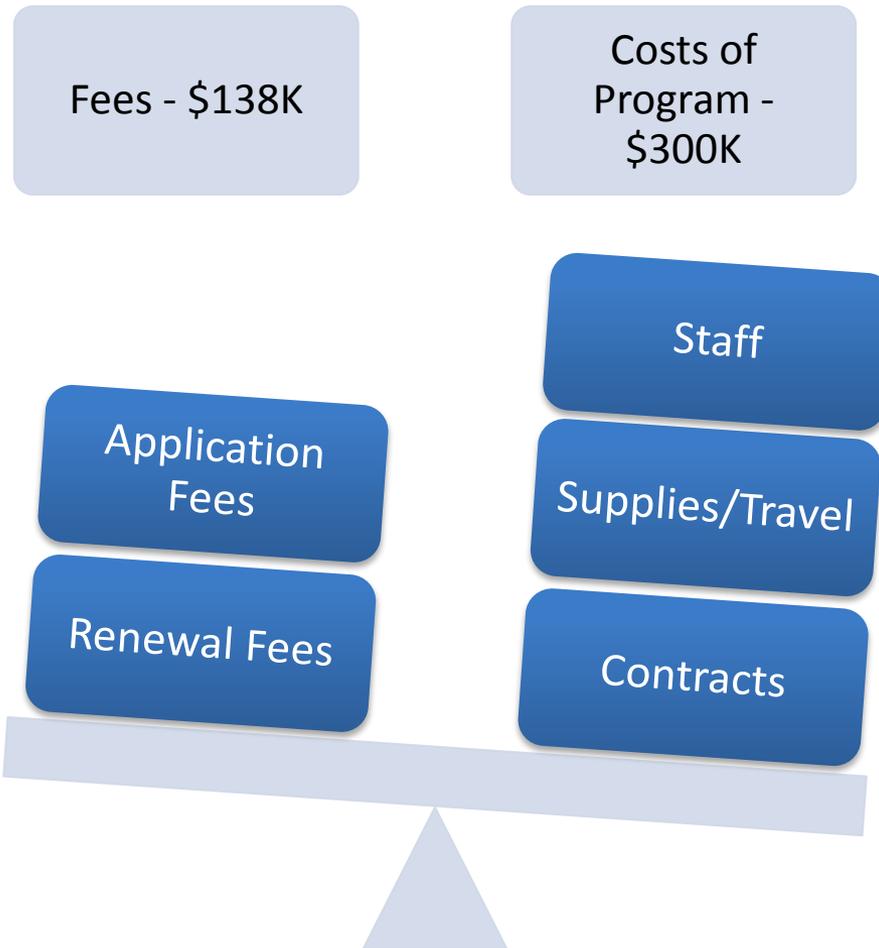


\$50 and \$30 in
1987 is worth...

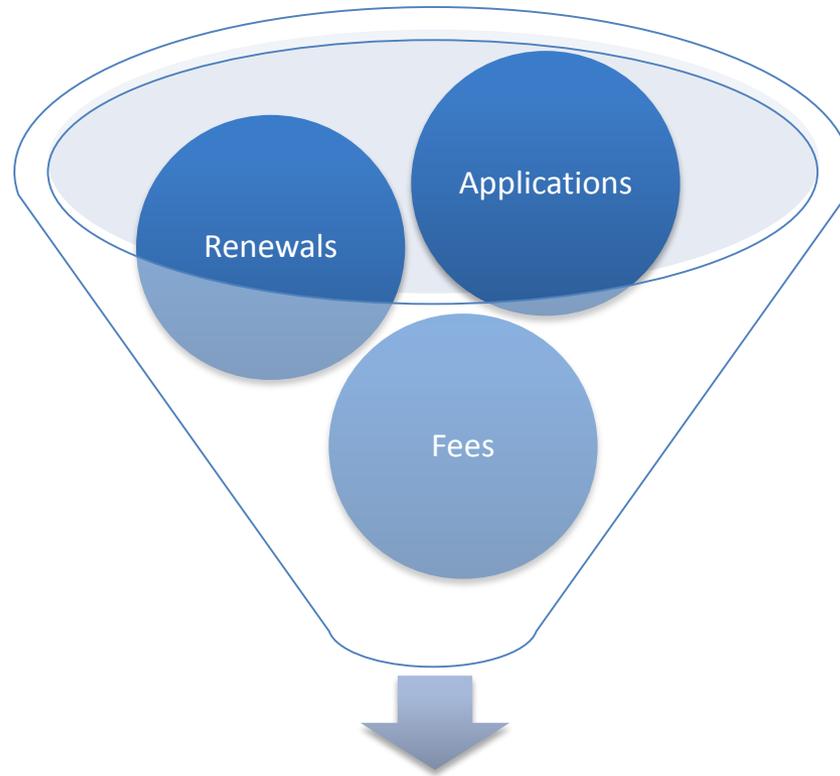
...\$23.35 and
\$14.01 in 2016



Fees Don't Cover Costs



Fees Don't Come to WQP



General Fund State



Ecology's Proposal

- Agency-Stakeholder Workgroup
- Request Legislation in 2017
- Amend Rules to Adjust Future Fees



Request Legislation in 2017

- Remove the current fee caps
- Redirect the fee revenue into a dedicated sub-account of GF-S
- Amend WAC 173-230 to allow for future fee adjustments



Timeline For Changes



Questions / Discussion



For More Information on this presentation or proposal, please contact:

- Don Seeberger, Deputy Program Manager, Water Quality Program – (360) 407-6489, don.Seeberger@ecy.wa.gov
- Garret Ward, Budget Manager, Water Quality Program – (360) 407-7544, garret.ward@ecy.wa.gov
- Poppy Carre, OpCert, Water Quality Program – (360) 407-6449, poppy.carre@ecy.wa.gov

