



# Rule Adoption Notice

## Walla Walla River Basin , Chapter 173-532 WAC

*Legislation passed in 2003 (ESSB 5766) requires Ecology to send out notification to businesses affected by rule adoptions. To comply with this law and to keep the regulated community better informed, you are receiving this notification of a rule adoption.*

### Requirements of the rule

This rule amends chapter 173-532 WAC, Water Resources Program for the Walla Walla River basin. The original rule, adopted in 1977, established seasonal closures on most surface waters during critical summer months; and protected surface water rights from new ground water permits by restricting drilling. In 1994, we determined that the gravel aquifers are connected to surface waters, and that continual use of those aquifers may impair existing surface water rights. Since 1996, no new surface or ground water rights have been issued.

In 2005, local agencies, Tribes, and the community in Walla Walla completed a watershed plan. The plan recommended instream flow levels, modification of the existing stream closures, and use of winter and spring high flows for water storage projects that improve stream flows for salmon production. This rule amendment was developed with continued participation from the watershed planning unit.

### Summary of the rule changes adopted on August 2, 2007

The key amendments include:

- Establishing instream flow water rights.
- Modifying seasonal surface waters closures.
- Closing the gravel aquifers, which are directly connected to surface waters.
- Limiting future withdrawals during high flow periods to projects resulting in net environmental benefits.
- Managing future permit-exempt groundwater withdrawals from the gravel aquifer, in “high density” areas by:
  - Limiting total water for one residence to 1,250 gallons and 5,000 gpd for multiple residences in one development.
  - Requiring water-for-water mitigation for outdoor watering, effective May 2008.
  - Metering permit-exempt uses.
- Limiting stock watering based on parcel sizes.
- Allowing permit exempt wells in accordance with RCW 90.44.050 outside of high density areas and in the basalt aquifer.

### Effective September 5, 2007

This amendment to Chapter 173-532 WAC becomes effective on Sept. 5, 2007.

### Appeal procedures

This adoption can be appealed under procedures described in the Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.330). For additional information about appealing this rule, please contact Jerry Thielen, Ecology’s Regulatory Affairs Manager at (360) 407-7551 or by email [jthi461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jthi461@ecy.wa.gov).

*If you require this publication in an alternative format, please contact the Water Resources Program at (360) 407-6600. Persons with a hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Services. Persons with a speech disability can call 800-833-6341.*

