

# Updating the State Environmental Policy Act

The 2012 Washington Legislature directed the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to make significant updates to existing State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) rules. The first round of rulemaking was completed on December 28, 2012.

Ecology is now working on the second round of rulemaking to be completed by December 31, 2013. The proposed changes include:

- Updating and reviewing the rule-based categorical exemptions and all other SEPA project actions.
- Integrating SEPA with provisions of the state Growth Management Act.
- Creating categorical exemptions for minor code amendments.
- Ensuring state agencies, tribal governments and other interested parties can receive timely notice about SEPA projects.
- Making other amendments to modernize SEPA rules.

## SEPA Rulemaking Advisory Committee

Ecology has created a special advisory committee to help the department craft the rule updates. Committee members represent a broad array of interests including agricultural, business, cultural resource and environmental organizations, state agencies, and city, county and tribal governments.

Advisory committee meetings are held monthly in Olympia through August 2013. All meetings are open to the public but space is limited. To help accommodate participation the meetings are also available through phone conference at 1-800-704-9804, participants pin 8386377#.

Advisory committee membership, meeting schedules, and up-to-date information about SEPA rulemaking is available at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sepa/e-review.html>

### WHY IT MATTERS

Many laws and procedures for environmental protection, land use planning and infrastructure provisions have been adopted since SEPA was passed in 1971.

Cities and counties are responsible for more than 75 percent of SEPA reviews. The proposed updates are intended to give local governments flexibility in using SEPA while maintaining environmental protections and timely notification of projects.

Stay informed about the SEPA rulemaking process. Join our SEPA listserv for regular rulemaking updates and information on how to participate:  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sepa/e-review.html>

### Contact information

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### Special accommodations

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