

PUGET SOUND

National Estuary Program

2017 Hammersley Inlet Emergency Closure



Shellfish Strategic Initiative Onsite Sewage Management Program

In early 2017 a norovirus illness associated with shellfish harvest occurred in Hammersley Inlet; threatening public health and temporarily shutting down commercial shellfishing. The purpose of this program is to protect public health by minimizing the impact of on-site septic systems on surface water and assure effective treatment and disposal of sewage on a long-term basis.

Protecting Water Quality and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The program will employ previously successful tools used by Mason County Public Health such as:

- Parcel evaluation
- Sampling fecal coliform and optical brighteners
- Dye studies
- Educating the public about water quality
- Policy and procedure evaluations



WHAT YOU CAN DO

People make the difference! Help protect water quality today. Onsite septic system owners should properly use and regularly maintain their systems. Shoreline residents can eliminate fertilizer use near water. All residents can plant more natural vegetative cover to increase buffers and decrease stormwater runoff.

ABOUT MASON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

The Mason County Water Quality Program monitors for and corrects sources of pollution to ensure the waters of Mason County meet state and federal criteria for public health by preventing pollutants from entering both ground and surface waters through conducting drainage investigations, data, analysis, emergency's/complaint response and education.

WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT?

Maintaining high water quality protects public health from water borne illnesses for all who live and recreate in the Puget Sound. Improving and protecting water quality preserves many of our natural resources like our salmon and shellfish which minimizes environmental degradation and helps preserve economic well-being.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.co.mason.wa.us/health

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