

Local Governments Determination On Permits

Roger Millar
Acting Secretary of Transportation

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Director, Environmental Services Office

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**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

RE: 2ESSB 5994, Section 2(2) – Report on local governments taking longer than 90 days to make a final determination on permits

The 2015 Legislature directed the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to track and report any permit application for a project, with an estimated cost of less than five hundred million dollars on a state highway, that took more than 90 days for local governments (cities, towns, code cities, and counties) to process following the submission of a complete application. The proviso states:

“The department must report annually to the governor and the transportation committees of the house of representatives and the senate in compliance with RCW 43.01.036 regarding any permit application that takes longer than the number of days identified in subsection (1) of this section to process.”

Implementation:

We did the following to implement the 90-day local government permit processing requirement:

- Coordinated with an Assistant Attorney General to define the legal requirements.
- Conducted outreach with all WSDOT environmental office managers and staff who develop permit application packages.
- Developed language for permit application cover letters to avoid surprising local jurisdictions with this new requirement.
- Developed a procedure and spreadsheet to track this information.

Proviso Response:

The timeframe for this report is limited to permit application packages submitted July 6, 2015 through October 2, 2015. The start date is when Governor Inslee signed the legislation and the end date is 90 days before the end of the year. We contacted our regional environmental offices and requested a list of local jurisdictions that were out of compliance with this new requirement. None of the local jurisdictions took more than 90 days to process our permit applications for highway projects within the reporting timeframe for 2015. We will continue to track any instance in the future and report this information annually.

Should you have any questions, or need further information, please contact Megan White, Environmental Services Office Director, at 360-705-7480, or WhiteM@wsdot.wa.gov.