



Campaign for Clean and Safe Drinking Water in Washington

Tell Ecology to Protect Our Drinking Water from Harmful Factory Farm Pollution

*** Public Comment Period Until August 17, 2016 ***

Factory Farms in Washington Create Tons of Untreated Waste . . .

Washington State's 200,000 adult dairy cows produce *over 20 million pounds of manure every day*. Unlike human waste, dairy waste is untreated, and significant amounts are stored in unlined manure lagoons that seep into groundwater. Groundwater is the drinking water supply for approximately 60 percent of Washingtonians. This untreated manure is also sometimes over-applied to farmland, contaminating soil, ground and surface waters.



Contaminating Drinking Water Supplies

State leaders are not doing enough to manage this pollution. More than 20 percent of wells used for drinking water in the Lower Yakima Valley exceed the EPA's maximum contaminant level for nitrates. 29% of sampled wells in the Sumas Blaine Aquifer, the drinking water source for up to 27,000 people in Whatcom County, exceed the maximum contaminant level for nitrates. Nitrates are toxins and may cause birth defects and other health consequences.

Big Ag Wants a Weak Approach to Managing this Pollution

Industrial agricultural interests want a weak approach to managing this pollution. So far, they've been effective at convincing the Department of Ecology (Ecology), the state agency charged with protecting Washington's ground and surface waters, to issue a new draft permit for industrial dairy farms that has no clear and enforceable limits on pollution, no requirements to use best management practices that stop pollution, and no ground and surface water testing.

We Can Protect Our Drinking Water from Industrial Dairy Pollution . . .



It's this simple: if the Dept of Ecology has a strong permit, **we can protect our waterways and drinking water from dairy pollution.** If Ecology sides with the polluters, our drinking water will continue to be contaminated. A strong permit would include these three key provisions:

- Clear and enforceable limits on pollution,
- Ground and surface water testing, and
- A requirement to use cost-effective technology, such as synthetically-lined manure lagoons, which could dramatically reduce pollution.

But, We Need Your Help!

1. Submit a public comment, urging Ecology to adopt a strong permit with the above three key provisions.
2. Attend one of the two public hearings hosted by Ecology: Bellingham on Tues, July 26, and Yakima on Thur, July 28.
3. Contact Payton at Environment Washington (psmith@environmentwashington.org) about ways to get involved.