

August 18, 2016

To: King County

Subject: On-site septic systems

I understand you are having a meeting to again discuss this subject. I have already spent significant time and effort to attend a public hearing and work through the last proposal. I would hope that your current discussions are not simply a process of wearing down voters resistance to more government regulations and controls.

Hopefully, you will first focus on the major challenges you have---such as eliminating raw sewerage discharge into Puget Sound from Seattle and Metro overflows, attention to already known circumstances where there is direct discharge into the Sound from point sources, and analysis of the situation in Victoria and Vancouver Island regarding their practices and what the impacts of their actions are. (They tell us that their major discharges are not a problem?)

As a homeowner in the rural area of King County, we maintain/check our systems on a regular basis. We do that for both good and necessary reasons. First, any failing system creates very negative circumstances regarding odors (if the failure is surface action). In that circumstance, any reasonable person takes quick action. We do not need a government regulation to figure out we need correction. Then, if failure into an aquifer occurs---we do have our well water tested regularly and would also be quick to action should such tests come in negative. Certainly, we want/expect to drink good clean water. But, overall---we do have our system pumped and inspected regularly and receive feed-back on any issues regarding the operation of our tank and drain field.

Our operation of well/septic system allows government to avoid major additional costs in construction/maintenance of more and larger public systems. But, we pay substantial already and am very concerned about the continuing movement to always add more regulations/costs onto the heads of homeowners. I keep trying to remember when the last time was that we saw a decline in duplicative regulations and costs.

You have much bigger fish to fry before taking on this topic. Show how you have solved the much bigger problems that hit us first---then, as you have proven success with already known issues---come back with a modest test to document the size and shape of this "problem" you want us to focus on.

I am reminded of a pollution challenge in Lacey in the eighties---a stream going to Puget Sound had "high levels of fecal coliform". Government felt that the farms between Lacey and the Sound were the major problem and went to them to discuss corrective actions. However, after a little more study---guess what? Turned out the major contributors were pets---cats and dogs from residential areas. After that finding---and lots of jokes about animal diapers---seems the whole issue just collapsed.

I am an advocate of clean air and water---however, I am also an advocate of realism. As I sit and look down on our pasture---I often see deer and coyote enjoying the scene. Wonder about their bodily discharges? Also, we are happy to have major populations of birds in our vicinity and---guess what? We are required to wash our vehicles regularly from all their droppings. Please---when you say there is a problem---be certain as to the nature of the problem.

Bill Lotto/ billlotto43@gmail.com