

June 3, 2015

The Honorable Curtis King
Senator 14th Legislative District
305 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40415
Olympia, WA 98504-0415

Re: Impacts of Coordinated Prevention Grant SW Enforcement Budget Cuts

Dear Senator King:

The Clark County Board of Health is writing to inform you of potential impacts of the proposed funding reductions to Coordinated Prevention Grants (CPG) through the Department of Ecology. The House and Senate capital budgets currently propose to cut CPG funding from \$29.6 million to \$15 million. This proposed reduction would have drastic impacts on Clark County Public Health's ability to comply with solid waste enforcement mandates established in regulation.

CPG funding allows for the implementation of RCW 70.95.160, which requires local health jurisdictions to enforce state solid waste laws. The state bears the responsibility to help pay for enforcement activities, which is fulfilled with CPG funding. Reductions in CPG would impact Clark County's ability to enforce state-imposed regulations, endangering public health and the health of the environment.

This money helps ensure illegally dumped solid and hazardous waste is remediated properly, solid waste handling facilities operate safely, and Clark County staff can address complaints about various urgent public health issues such as rodent infestations and special wastes such as bio-medical and animal wastes.

Solid waste enforcement is a significant issue in Clark County. Our Public Health department, using CPG funds, supports one full-time person to provide effective enforcement at regulated sites and timely response and remedies to public health complaints. The proposed 50 percent reduction in CPG awards will force Clark County to focus more on regulated sites, but less often. The overall impacts will be:

- Regulated facilities – Clark County performs approximately 42 inspections each year to collect data and monitor activities at seven (7) active solid waste facilities, three (3) post-closure landfills and 11 sites that handle wastes but are exempt from holding a solid waste permit. The CPG funding cut would force us to cut back to 22-25 inspections each year.
- Complaint response – Clark County responded to 171 Solid Waste complaints in 2014 and 34 complaints in the first quarter of 2015. The CPG funding cut would enable us to respond to only a few complaints each month.
- Customer and general public technical assistance actions – Clark County responds to approximately 1,100 technical assistance requests each year. The CPG funding cut would delay responses to assistance calls significantly.

We request the state fully fund the Department of Ecology's Coordinated Prevention Grant program at the current level of \$29.6 million.

If you have questions or comments, please feel free to contact the Clark County Board of Health at (360) 397-2232 or our Olympia representative, Mike Burgess, at (360) 223-3020.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Madore, Chair

Jeanne E. Stewart, Councilor

Tom Mielke, Councilor