

PRESS RELEASE

August 19, 2003

**MASON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
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(360) 427-9670 EXT. 263**

**TO: KMAS, KRXY, SHELTON-MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, THE OLYMPIAN,
SHELTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE, CITY OF SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL,
THE SUN, THE BELFAIR HERALD**

Re: Lower Hood Canal Operation and Maintenance Project begins

With the support of the Lower Hood Canal Watershed Implementation Committee, the Mason County Department of Health Services has received a grant from the Department of Ecology to monitor operation and maintenance of septic systems in the Lower Hood Canal Watershed. Proper operation, maintenance and monitoring of your septic system is somewhat like doing routine maintenance on your car. If everything is serviced and kept in working order, costly repairs and replacement can be avoided or delayed.

As part of the Mason County Department of Health Services' continuing effort to maintain and enhance the progress made in improving water quality in Lower Hood Canal, informational packets are being mailed out to all of the homeowners in the watershed. The packets include any septic system records that are on file for the property, a homeowner's manual for Operation and Maintenance for the specific type of septic system, a list of certified pumpers and operation & maintenance (O&M) specialists, and an onsite sewage and disposal system operation and maintenance report form.

The data system being used for this project allows the Department of Health Services to send reminder notices to homeowners when maintenance is due for their specific type of septic system. To make this project a success homeowners are asked to send in any additional septic and maintenance records they may have including septic pumper's reports. The information received as part of the project should help develop the picture of what is going on with the water quality in Hood Canal.

A special thank you goes to the citizens of the Lower Hood Canal Watershed for their cooperation and efforts in pollution identification and remediation in Hood Canal. The Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Project is another step toward maintaining and enhancing the waters of Hood Canal. The Health Department couldn't do its job without support and assistance from the community.

For information contact: Penny Orth, O&M Project Staff at 360-427-9670 Ext. 547 or from Belfair 360-275-4667 Ext. 547

Ron Henrickson, Mason County Administrator