



Frequently Asked Questions

Is the School Health and Safety (SH&S) program's review required for my project?

Yes. We are involved in the construction process for public, private, and parochial K-12 schools, including sites for homeschool enrichment programs. Our involvement is required by law (Washington State Board of Health Primary and Secondary School Regulations. Chapter 246-366 WAC) for projects defined as "new construction".

What construction projects are defined as "new construction" and require SH&S program approval?

"New construction" as defined in WAC 246-366 includes:

- New school buildings
- Schools established in all or part of any existing structures previously designed or utilized for other purposes
- Additions to existing schools
- Installation or alteration of any equipment or systems subject to these regulations.
- Renovation, other than minor repair, of existing schools
- Portable Classroom

Contact JCPH SH&S program at 360-385-9444 to see if approval is needed for your project or see page one of the flier for examples of projects requiring approval.

How is JCPH SH&S plan review different from a building department review?

Our review complements a building department review. We consider a school's proposed curriculum and determine appropriate health and safety requirements; the building department ensures the correct design and construction of those items. For example, school health and safety regulations require a fume hood for a science classroom conducting chemistry experiments. The building department will review the proposed hood to ensure the design and installation meet applicable building codes. We also review some items not requiring building department approval (e.g. playground equipment).

Does the building department forward plans to JCPH School Health and Safety?

No. It is the school's responsibility to submit plans and request inspections. The building department does not automatically forward plans or requests for pre-occupancy inspections.

At what point in the construction process in JCPH SH&S program approval required and what does it involve?

Our review is most beneficial when we are involved early in the process. This saves a school/district time and money by identifying design features to incorporate into the plans before they are finalized, sent out for bid or construction started. Our approval is required at three stages of the construction process:

- Site approval. The JCPH SH&S program reviews the proposed site to ensure it does not present any health problems. This step is required even for projects at existing schools. We research prior uses of the property and may require a site sound level survey and/or additional information. We may also schedule a meeting to discuss any concerns prior to issuing our written approval.
- Plan review. The JCPH SH&S program reviews project plans and specifications, coordinates with other Health Department programs (e.g. Food Safety program, Septic, Water Quality, etc.) and notifies the school of any requirements or recommendations. Plan review meetings are very beneficial at this stage. Once complete, we notify the building department we have no objections to the issuance of a building permit.
- Pre-occupancy inspection. JCPH SH&S program staff conduct a pre-occupancy inspection after construction is completed. The inspection ensures that construction conforms to the approved plans.

When our inspection is complete, we notify the building department that we have no objections to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

What can I do to ensure a quick review and inspection?

- Contact us early to get our comments incorporated in the project’s design phase (see chart page 1).
- Make sure we know your state funding match (D5 & D7) bid deadlines.
- Follow submittal instructions and provide a complete submittal. Respond promptly to plan review comments to receive final approval.
- Contact us at least one week before the tentative completion date to request a pre-occupancy inspection.

We are here to provide you with assistance and help your construction project go smoothly. For more information and submittal instructions please contact Jefferson County Public Health School Health & Safety program at 360-385-9444.