

May 227, 2015

To: Clark County Legislative Delegation:

Re: Impacts of Coordinated Prevention Grant SW Enforcement Budget Cuts

The Clark County Board of Health is writing this letter to inform you of the 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 as proposed in the Governor's budget to \$15 million. This proposed reduction will have drastic impacts on Clark County Public Health's ability to comply with the 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 the solid waste laws of the state. The state bears the responsibility to help fund enforcement activities, which is fulfilled with CPG funding. Reductions in CPG will impact Clark County's ability to enforce state imposed regulations, endangering the public health and the health of the environment.

These funds help ensure that illegally dumped solid and hazardous waste is remediated properly, ensure solid waste handling facilities operate safely, and allow Clark County staff to address complaints about a wide variety of urgent public health issues such as rodent infestations and other 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% reduction in the CPG will force Clark County to focus most of our time on the regulated sites, but at a lower frequency than normal. The overall impacts will be:

- Regulated facilities – Clark County performs approximately **42** inspections each year to collect data and monitor activities at 7 active solid waste facilities, 3 post-closure landfills, and 11 sites that handle wastes, but are exempt from holding a solid waste permit. The CPG funding cut will 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 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2015. The CPG funding cut will only enable us to respond to just 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 will delay responses to assistance calls significantly.

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