

K-12 School Construction Project Review

Spokane Regional Health District’s School Health & Safety program (SH&S) reviews public, private and parochial K-12 school construction projects to ensure the health and safety of students and other school occupants. *Our approval is required before building permits and/or certificates of occupancy are issued.*

Spokane Regional Health District’s SH&S program is involved in three stages of the school construction process:

- We **review proposed K-12 school sites** to ensure they do not present any health problems.
- We **review school construction plans** and specifications before construction.
- We **conduct pre-occupancy inspections** prior to use.

Example projects that require Health District approval:

- **Purchasing/leasing property**
- **New school** buildings
- School **remodels, additions, relocations**
- **Portable** classrooms
- **HVAC** or **lighting** upgrades
- **Shop, art, science equipment** changes
- **Playground** equipment
- **Food Service** (referred to our Food Safety program for review)

Not sure?

Call 324.1560, ext. 4 and ask!

Follow these guidelines to ensure a quick and complete review of your project:

Project Includes: <i>(More than one may apply)</i>	Contact SRHD’s School Health & Safety Program for:		
	Site Review	Plan Review	Pre-occupancy Inspection
Purchase or lease of property not previously used by <i>your school/district</i> for classroom instruction	Before purchasing property or leasing space	(Refer to specific project type)	(Refer to specific project type)
New school building, School remodel/addition , or School relocation In addition: Projects going through OSPI “D Process”	Before going out to bid. Submit plans when they are at 50% completion. Before completing D-5 submittal.	Before going out to bid. Submit plans when they are at 50% completion. Before completing D-7 submittal.	At least 1 week before proposed occupancy.
Portable/modular classrooms	Before purchasing portable.	Before purchasing portable. Submit plans when they are at 90-100% completion.	
HVAC, lighting and/or other system upgrades	n/a	Before purchasing new systems/equipment. Submit plans when they are at 90-100% completion.	At least 1 week before intended use of impacted rooms or equipment.
Shop, art, science room equipment and/or room changes	n/a	Before purchasing/relocating rooms and/or equipment. Contact SH&S program for requirements.	
Playground equipment (new or relocated)	Before purchasing playground equipment.	Before purchasing playground equipment.	At least 1 week before intended use.

Remember: 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.

To learn more and obtain complete submittal instructions, call 324.1560 ext. 4 or visit our web site at srhd.org/schoolinspection.

Frequently Asked Questions

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

Yes. Our involvement in the construction process 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
- Additions to existing schools
- Renovation, other than minor repair, of existing schools
- Portable classrooms
- Schools established in all or part of any existing structures previously designed or utilized for other purposes
- Installation or alteration of any equipment or systems subject to the regulations

Contact the SH&S program at 324-1560, ext. 4 to see if our approval is needed for your project or refer to page one for examples of projects that require our approval.

How is the SH&S 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 SRHD?

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 is 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 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 also may schedule a meeting to discuss any concerns prior to issuing our written approval.
- **Plan Review.** The SH&S program reviews project plans and specifications, coordinates with other Health District programs (e.g., Food Safety program, Liquid Waste program, 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 objection to the issuance of a building permit.
- **Pre-occupancy Inspection.** 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 we have no objection to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

What plans and specification books should I submit for plan review?

- For preliminary (50%) plan review submit **one set of paper drawings and specification books**.
- For final plan review (permit set) submit **one set of paper drawings along with complete electronic plans and specification books** for archival purposes (by e-mail or on thumb drive). The electronic and paper copies must include the same information; if there are differences they must be itemized. Note: If complete electronic copies are not submitted for archiving, the plan review fees will include charges (at our standard hourly rate) for the time required to do the scanning.

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 on page one).
- Make sure we know your state funding match (D5 and D7) and bid deadlines.
- Follow submittal instructions and provide a complete submittal (download at srhd.org/schoolinspection). 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 contact Spokane Regional Health District's School Health & Safety program at 324.1560, ext. 4 or visit our web site at srhd.org/schoolinspection.