

**Chapter 57.02 RCW  
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

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*Effect when city or town takes over portion of water system: RCW 57.08.035.*

**RCW 57.02.001    Reclassification of water and sewer districts—Previous actions valid.** Every sewer district and every water district previously created shall be reclassified and shall become a water-sewer district, and shall be known as the ". . . . Water-Sewer District," or "Water-Sewer District No. . . . ." or shall continue to be known as a "sewer district" or a "water district," with the existing name or number inserted, as appropriate. As used in this title, "district" means a water-sewer district, a sewer district, or a water district. All debts, contracts, and obligations previously made or incurred by or in favor of any water district or sewer district, and all bonds or other obligations issued or executed by those districts, and all assessments or levies, and all other things and proceedings done or taken by those districts or by their respective officers, are declared legal and valid and of full force and effect. [1996 c 230 § 101.]

**Part headings not law—1996 c 230:** "Part headings as used in this act do not constitute any part of the law." [1996 c 230 § 1700.]

**Effective date—1996 c 230:** "This act shall take effect July 1, 1997." [1996 c 230 § 1704.]

**RCW 57.02.010    Petition signatures of property owners—Rules governing.** Wherever in this title petitions are required to be signed by the owners of property, the following rules shall govern the sufficiency of the petitions:

(1) The signature of a record owner, as determined by the records of the county auditor of the county in which the real property is located, shall be sufficient without the signature of the owner's spouse.

(2) For mortgaged property, the signature of the mortgagor shall be sufficient.

(3) For property purchased on contract, the signature of the contract purchaser, as shown by the records of the county auditor of the county in which the real property is located, shall be sufficient.

(4) Any officer of a corporation owning land in the district duly authorized to execute deeds or encumbrances on behalf of the corporation may sign on behalf of that corporation, except that there shall be attached to the petition a certified excerpt from the bylaws showing such authority.

(5) If any property in the district stands in the name of a deceased person or any person for whom a guardian has been appointed, the signature of the personal representative, administrator, or guardian, as the case may be, shall be equivalent to the signature of the owner of the property. [1996 c 230 § 102; 1982 1st ex.s. c 17 § 8; 1953 c 251 § 24.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**RCW 57.02.015 Board of commissioners may notify property owners about petitions—Review of petitions—Information.** The board of commissioners of a district may notify the owner or reputed owner of any tract, parcel of land, or other property located within the area included in a petition being circulated for a local improvement district or utility local improvement district under chapter 57.16 RCW, an annexation under chapter 57.24 RCW, a consolidation under chapter 57.32 RCW, a merger under chapter 57.36 RCW, a withdrawal of territory under chapter 57.28 RCW, or a transfer of territory under RCW 57.32.160.

Upon the request of any person, the board of commissioners of a district may:

(1) Review a proposed petition for proper drafting; and

(2) Provide information regarding the effects of the adoption of any proposed petition. [1996 c 230 § 103; 1979 c 35 § 3. Formerly RCW 56.02.110.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**RCW 57.02.030 Title to be liberally construed.** The rule of strict construction shall not apply to this title, which shall be liberally construed to carry out its purposes and objects. [1996 c 230 § 104; 1959 c 108 § 19.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**RCW 57.02.040 Water-sewer district activities to be approved—  
Criteria for approval by county legislative authority. (1)**

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the following proposed actions shall be approved as provided for in RCW 57.02.045:

- (a) Formation or reorganization under chapter 57.04 RCW;
- (b) Annexation of territory under chapter 57.24 RCW;
- (c) Withdrawal of territory under chapter 57.28 RCW;
- (d) Transfer of territory under RCW 57.32.160;
- (e) Consolidation under chapter 57.32 RCW; and
- (f) Merger under chapter 57.36 RCW.

(2) At least one of the districts involved shall give notice of the proposed action to the county legislative authority, state department of ecology, and state department of health. The county legislative authority shall within thirty days of receiving notice of the proposed action approve the action or hold a hearing on the action.

(3) The county legislative authority shall decide within sixty days of a hearing whether to approve or not approve the proposed action. In approving or not approving the proposed action, the county legislative authority shall consider the following criteria:

(a) Whether the proposed action in the area under consideration is in compliance with the development program that is outlined in the county comprehensive plan, or city or town comprehensive plan where appropriate, and its supporting documents;

(b) Whether the proposed action in the area under consideration is in compliance with the basin-wide water and/or sewage plan as approved by the state department of ecology and the state department of social and health services; and

(c) Whether the proposed action is in compliance with the policies expressed in the county plan for water and/or sewage facilities.

(4) If the proposed action is inconsistent with subsection (3)(a), (b), or (c) of this section, the county legislative authority shall not approve it. If the proposed action is consistent with subsection (3)(a), (b), and (c) of this section, the county legislative authority shall approve it unless it finds that water or sewer service in the area under consideration will be most appropriately served by the county itself under the provisions of chapter 36.94 RCW, or by another district, city, town, or municipality. If there has not been adopted for the area under consideration a plan or program under subsection (3)(a), (b), or (c) of this section, the proposed action shall not be found inconsistent with such subsection.

(5) Where a district is proposed to be formed, and where no boundary review board is established in the county, the petition described in RCW 57.04.030 shall serve as the notice of proposed action under this section, and the hearing provided for in RCW 57.04.030 shall serve as the hearing provided for in this section and in RCW 57.02.045. [1996 c 230 § 105; 1988 c 162 § 7; 1971 ex.s. c 139 § 2.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

*1988 validation: RCW 57.06.180.*

**RCW 57.02.045 Approval by county legislative authority final, when—Boundary review board approval.** In any county where a boundary review board, as provided in chapter 36.93 RCW, is not established, the approval of the proposed action shall be by the county legislative authority pursuant to RCW 57.02.040 and shall be final, and the procedures required to adopt such proposed action shall be followed as provided by law.

In any county where a boundary review board, as provided in chapter 36.93 RCW, is established, a notice of intention of the proposed action shall be filed with the boundary review board as required by RCW 36.93.090 and with the county legislative authority. The county legislative authority shall transmit to the boundary review board a report of its approval or disapproval of the proposed action together with its findings and recommendations under RCW 57.02.040. Approval by the county legislative authority of the proposed action shall be final and the procedures required to adopt the proposal shall be followed as provided by law, unless the boundary review board reviews the action under RCW 36.93.100 through 36.93.180. If the county legislative authority does not approve the proposed action, the boundary review board shall review the action under RCW 36.93.150 through 36.93.180. The action of the boundary review board shall supersede approval or disapproval by the county legislative authority.

Where a district is proposed to be formed, and where no boundary review board is established in the county, the hearings provided for in RCW 57.04.030 shall serve as the hearing provided for in this section and in RCW 57.02.040. [1996 c 230 § 106; 1988 c 162 § 6; 1971 ex.s. c 139 § 3. Formerly RCW 56.02.070.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

*1988 validation: RCW 57.06.180.*

**RCW 57.02.050 Multicounty districts—Delegation of duties—Exceptions.** Whenever the boundaries or proposed boundaries of a district include or are proposed to include by means of formation, annexation, transfer, withdrawal, consolidation, or merger, territory in more than one county:

(1) All duties delegated by this title to officers of the county in which the district is located shall be delegated to the officers of the county in which the largest land area of the district is located, except that elections shall be conducted pursuant to general election law;

(2) Actions subject to review and approval under RCW 57.02.040 shall be reviewed and approved only by the officers or boundary review board in the county in which such actions are proposed to occur;

(3) Verification of voters' signatures shall be conducted by the county auditor of the county in which such signators reside; and

(4) Comprehensive plan review and approval or rejection by the respective county legislative authorities under RCW 57.16.010 shall be limited to that part of such plans within the respective counties. [1996 c 230 § 108; 1994 c 223 § 66; 1982 1st ex.s. c 17 § 5.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**RCW 57.02.070 Ratification of actions for the formation, annexation, consolidation, or merger of water districts prior to July 10, 1982.** All actions taken in regard to the formation, annexation, consolidation, or merger of water districts taken prior to July 10, 1982, but consistent with this title, as amended, are hereby approved and ratified and shall be legal for all purposes. [1982 1st ex.s. c 17 § 7.]

**RCW 57.02.080 Water-sewer districts desiring to merge into irrigation districts—Procedure.** The procedures and provisions of RCW 85.08.830 through 85.08.890, which are applicable to drainage improvement districts, joint drainage improvement districts, or consolidated drainage improvement districts that desire to merge into irrigation districts, shall also apply to districts organized, or reorganized, under this title that desire to merge into irrigation districts.

The authority granted by this section shall be cumulative and in addition to any other power or authority granted by law to any district. [1996 c 230 § 107; 1977 ex.s. c 208 § 3. Formerly RCW 56.02.100.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

*Merger of irrigation district with drainage, joint drainage, consolidated drainage improvement, or water-sewer district: RCW 87.03.720, 87.03.725.*

**RCW 57.02.090 Elections.** Elections in a district shall be conducted under general election laws. [1996 c 230 § 109.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**RCW 57.02.100 Single-family homes and townhouses—Multipurpose fire sprinkler systems.** (1) A water-sewer district may not prohibit the use of multipurpose fire sprinkler systems that are part of a structure's plumbing system for single-family homes and townhouses as defined by the state residential building code or require a separate water meter or backflow preventer for the multipurpose fire sprinkler system.

(2) For the purposes of this section, "multipurpose fire sprinkler system" means a fire sprinkler system that:

- (a) Is supplied only by the purveyor's water;
- (b) Does not have a fire department pumper connection;
- (c) Is constructed of approved potable water piping and materials to which sprinkler heads are attached; and
- (d) Terminates at a connection to a toilet or other plumbing fixture to prevent stagnant water. [2016 sp.s. c 14 § 1.]