

**Title 80 RCW  
PUBLIC UTILITIES**

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**Chapter 80.01 RCW**  
**UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

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**RCW 80.01.010 Commission created—Appointment of members—Terms—Vacancies—Removal—Salary.** There is hereby created and established a state commission to be known and designated as the Washington utilities and transportation commission, and in this chapter referred to as the commission.

The commission shall be composed of three members appointed by the governor, with the consent of the senate. Not more than two members of said commission shall belong to the same political party.

Each commissioner shall be appointed and hold office for the term of six years. The governor shall designate one of the commissioners to be chair of the commission during the term of the governor.

Each commissioner shall receive a salary as may be fixed by the governor in accordance with the provisions of RCW 43.03.040.

Any member of the commission may be removed for inefficiency, malfeasance or misfeasance in office, upon specific written charges filed by the governor, who shall transmit such written charges to the member accused and to the chief justice of the supreme court. The chief justice shall thereupon designate a special tribunal composed of three judges of the superior court to hear and adjudicate the charges. Such tribunal shall fix the time, place and procedure for the hearing,

and the hearing shall be public. The decision of such tribunal shall be final and not subject to review.

If the tribunal specified herein finds the charges of the governor to be true, the governor shall have the right to immediately remove the commissioner from office, to declare the position of the commissioner vacant, and appoint another commissioner to the position in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Any vacancy arising in the office of commissioner shall be filled by appointment by the governor, and, except for persons appointed as pro tempore commissioners, an appointee selected to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the balance of the full term for which his or her predecessor on the commission was appointed.

If a vacancy occurs while the senate is not in session, the governor shall make a temporary appointment until the next meeting of the senate, when he or she shall present to the senate his or her nomination or nominations for the office to be filled. [2006 c 346 s 1; 1961 c 307 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.010. Prior: 1955 c 340 s 7; 1951 c 260 s 1; 1949 c 117 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-1. Formerly RCW 43.53.010.]

**RCW 80.01.020 Commissioners—Oath, bond, and qualifications—Persons excluded from office and employment.** Each commissioner shall, before entering upon the duties of his or her office, take and subscribe the constitutional oath of office, and furnish bond to the state in the sum of twenty thousand dollars conditioned for the faithful discharge of the duties of his or her office and for the proper accounting for all funds that may come into his or her possession by virtue of his or her office. Each commissioner shall be a qualified elector of this state and no person in the employ of or holding any official relation to any corporation or person, which corporation or person is subject in whole or in part to regulation by the commission, and no person owning stocks or bonds of any such corporation or who is in any manner pecuniarily interested therein shall be appointed or hold the office of commissioner or be appointed or employed by the commission: PROVIDED, That if any such person shall become the owner of such stocks or bonds or become pecuniarily interested in such corporation otherwise than voluntarily, he or she shall within a reasonable time divest himself or herself of such ownership or interest, and failing to do so his or her office or employment shall become vacant. [2013 c 23 s 268; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.020. Prior: 1949 c 117 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-2. Formerly RCW 43.53.020 and 43.53.030.]

**RCW 80.01.030 Commission to employ secretary and other assistants—Secretary's duties—Deputies.** The commission shall appoint and employ a secretary and such accounting, engineering, expert and clerical assistants, and such other qualified assistants as may be necessary to carry on the administrative work of the commission.

The secretary shall be the custodian of the commission's official seal, and shall keep full and accurate minutes of all transactions, proceedings and determinations of the commission and perform such other duties as may be required by the commission.

The commission may deputize one or more of its assistants to perform, in the name of the commission, such duties of the commission

as it deems expedient. The commission may, by rule or order, delegate to designated assistants any of the powers and duties vested in or imposed upon the commission by law except matters governed by chapter 34.05 RCW; however, a matter may not be delegated to a person who has worked as an advocate on the same docket. Delegated powers and duties may be exercised in the name of the commission. The commission by rule shall implement a process by which notice shall be provided of matters designated for delegation. Any such matter shall be heard or reviewed by commissioners at the request of any commissioner or any affected person. [2006 c 346 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.030. Prior: 1949 c 117 s 4; 1934 c 267 ss 2, 3, 5 and 6; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-4 and Rem. Supp. 1945 ss 10459-2, 10459-3, 10459-5, 10459-6; prior: compare prior laws as follows: 1955 c 340 s 7; 1951 c 260 s 1; 1949 c 117 ss 1, 3, 8; 1945 c 267; 1935 c 8 s 1; 1921 c 7 ss 25, 26; 1911 c 117. Formerly RCW 43.53.040.]

**RCW 80.01.035 Appointment of commissioners pro tempore.** When a commissioner has heard all or a substantial part of an adjudicative proceeding and leaves office before entry of a final order in the proceeding, at the request of the remaining commissioners the commissioner leaving office may be appointed by the governor as commissioner pro tempore to complete the proceeding. A proceeding is completed when the commission enters a final order purporting to resolve all contested issues therein, from which no party seeks clarification or reconsideration, or upon entry of an order on clarification or reconsideration, even though the order is subject to a petition for judicial review. A commissioner pro tempore shall receive a reasonable compensation to be fixed by the remaining members of the commission. [2006 c 346 s 3.]

**RCW 80.01.040 General powers and duties of commission.** The utilities and transportation commission shall:

(1) Exercise all the powers and perform all the duties prescribed by this title and by Title 81 RCW, or by any other law.

(2) Regulate in the public interest, as provided by the public service laws, all persons engaging in the transportation of persons or property within this state for compensation.

(3) Regulate in the public interest, as provided by the public service laws, the rates, services, facilities, and practices of all persons engaging within this state in the business of supplying any utility service or commodity to the public for compensation.

(4) Make rules and regulations necessary to carry out its other powers and duties. [2007 c 234 s 1; 1985 c 450 s 10; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.040. Prior: (i) 1949 c 117 s 3; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-3. (ii) 1945 c 267 s 5; Rem. Supp. 1945 s 10459-5. (iii) 1945 c 267 s 6; Rem. Supp. 1945 s 10459-6. Formerly RCW 43.53.050.]

*Flaggers—Safety standards: RCW 49.17.350.*

**RCW 80.01.050 Quorum—Hearings—Actions deemed those of the commission.** A majority of the commissioners shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business, for the performance of any duty, or for the exercise of any power of the commission, and may hold

hearings at any time or place within or without the state. A quorum of commissioners need not affirm any matter delegated under RCW 80.01.030. Any investigation, inquiry, or hearing which the commission has power to undertake or to hold may be undertaken or held by or before any commissioner or any administrative law judge as provided in RCW 80.01.060. All investigations, inquiries, and hearings of the commission, and all findings, orders, or decisions, made by a commissioner or administrative law judge, when approved and confirmed by the commission or allowed to become final pursuant to RCW 80.01.060 and filed in its office, shall be the orders or decisions of the commission. [2006 c 346 s 4; 1995 c 331 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.050. Prior: 1949 c 117 s 6; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-6. Formerly RCW 43.53.060.]

**RCW 80.01.060 Administrative law judges—Powers.** (1) The commission may appoint administrative law judges when it deems such action necessary for its general administration. The administrative law judges may administer oaths, issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and the production of papers, waybills, books, accounts, documents, and testimony, examine witnesses, make findings of probable cause and issue complaints in the name of the commission, and receive testimony in any inquiry, investigation, hearing, or proceeding in any part of the state, under such rules as the commission may adopt. The administrative law judges appointed under this subsection are not subject to chapter 41.06 RCW; however, they are subject to discipline and termination, for cause, by the executive secretary of the commission. Upon written request of the person so disciplined or terminated, the executive secretary shall state the reasons for such action in writing. The person affected has a right of review by the superior court of Thurston county on petition for reinstatement or other remedy filed within thirty days of receipt of the written reasons.

(2) In general rate increase filings by a natural gas, electric, or telecommunications company, the administrative law judges may preside, but may not enter an initial order unless expressly agreed to in writing by the company making the filing. In all other cases, the administrative law judge may enter an initial order including findings of fact and conclusions of law in accordance with RCW 34.05.461(1)(a) and (c) and (3) through (9) or 34.05.485. RCW 34.05.461(1)(b) and (2) do not apply to entry of orders under this section.

(3) Administrative law judges may not enter final orders, except that the commission may designate persons by rule to preside and enter final orders in emergency adjudications under RCW 34.05.479. Initial orders of administrative law judges shall become final on the day following expiration of the time established by the commission for filing a petition for administrative review, unless, within that time, a party petitions for administrative review or the commission notifies parties that it will review the initial order on its own motion.

(4) If the administrative law judge does not enter an initial order as provided in subsection (2) of this section, then a majority of the members of the commission who are to enter the final order must hear or review substantially all of the record submitted by any party. [2006 c 346 s 5; 1995 c 331 s 3; 1991 c 48 s 1; 1981 c 67 s 35; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.060. Prior: 1925 ex.s. c 164 s 1; RRS s 10779-1. Formerly RCW 43.53.070.]

**Effective dates—Severability—1981 c 67:** See notes following RCW 34.12.010.

**RCW 80.01.070 Joint investigations, hearings, orders.** The commission shall have full power to make joint or concurrent investigations, hold joint or concurrent hearings, and issue joint or concurrent orders in conjunction or concurrence with any official, board, or commission of any state or of the United States, whether in the holding of such investigations or hearings or in the making of such orders the commission functions under agreements or compacts between states or under the concurrent power of states to regulate interstate commerce or as an agency of the federal government or otherwise. When necessary the commission may hold such joint hearing or investigation outside the state. [1961 c 14 s 80.01.070. Prior: 1949 c 117 s 7; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-7. Formerly RCW 43.53.080.]

**RCW 80.01.075 Authority to initiate, participate in federal administrative agency proceedings.** The commission shall have the authority as petitioner, intervenor or otherwise to initiate and/or participate in proceedings before federal administrative agencies in which there is at issue the authority, rates or practices for transportation or utility services affecting the interests of the state of Washington, its businesses and general public, and to do all things necessary in its opinion to present to such federal administrative agencies all facts bearing upon such issues, and to similarly initiate and/or participate in any judicial proceedings relating thereto. [1967 ex.s. c 49 s 1.]

**RCW 80.01.080 Public service revolving fund.** There is created in the state treasury a public service revolving fund. Regulatory fees payable by all types of public service companies shall be deposited to the credit of the public service revolving fund. Except for expenses payable out of the pipeline safety account, all expense of operation of the Washington utilities and transportation commission shall be payable out of the public service revolving fund. [2017 3rd sp.s. c 25 s 11; 2010 1st sp.s. c 37 s 950; 2006 c 3 s 2; 2003 1st sp.s. c 25 s 940; 2002 c 371 s 924; 2001 c 238 s 8; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.080. Prior: 1949 c 117 s 11; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-11. Formerly RCW 43.53.090.]

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 37:** See note following RCW 13.06.050.

**Effective date—2006 c 3:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [January 12, 2006]." [2006 c 3 s 3.]

**Severability—Effective date—2003 1st sp.s. c 25:** See notes following RCW 19.28.351.

**Severability—Effective date—2002 c 371:** See notes following RCW 9.46.100.

**Intent—Finding—Effective date—2001 c 238:** See notes following RCW 80.24.060.

**RCW 80.01.090 Proceedings public records—Seal.** All proceedings of the commission and all documents and records in its possession shall be public records, and it shall adopt and use an official seal. [1998 c 245 s 163; 1987 c 505 s 77; 1977 c 75 s 91; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.090. Prior: 1949 c 117 s 5; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 10964-115-5. Formerly RCW 43.53.100.]

**RCW 80.01.100 Duties of attorney general.** It shall be the duty of the attorney general to represent and appear for the people of the state of Washington and the commission in all actions and proceedings involving any question under this title or Title 81 RCW, or under or in reference to any act or order of the commission; and it shall be the duty of the attorney general generally to see that all laws affecting any of the persons or corporations herein enumerated are complied with, and that all laws, the enforcement of which devolves upon the commission, are enforced, and to that end he or she is authorized to institute, prosecute, and defend all necessary actions and proceedings. [2013 c 23 s 269; 1961 c 14 s 80.01.100. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 5; RRS s 10341.]

**RCW 80.01.110 Wholesale telecommunications services—Commission authorized to review rates, terms, conditions.** The commission is authorized to perform the duties required by RCW 53.08.380 and 54.16.340. [2000 c 81 s 10.]

**Findings—2000 c 81:** See note following RCW 53.08.005.

**RCW 80.01.300 Certain provisions not to detract from commission powers, duties, and functions.** Nothing contained in the provisions of RCW 36.58A.010 through 36.58A.040 and 70A.205.045 and this section shall detract from the powers, duties, and functions given to the utilities and transportation commission in chapter 81.77 RCW. [2021 c 65 s 92; 1971 ex.s. c 293 s 7.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.



**Chapter 80.04 RCW**  
**REGULATIONS—GENERAL**

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**RCW 80.04.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this title unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Automatic location identification" means a system by which information about a caller's location, including the seven-digit number or ten-digit number used to place a 911 call or a different seven-digit number or ten-digit number to which a return call can be made from the public switched network, is forwarded to a public safety answering point for display.

(2) "Automatic number identification" means a system that allows for the automatic display of the seven-digit or ten-digit number used to place a 911 call.

(3) "Battery charging facility" includes a "battery charging station" and a "rapid charging station" as defined in RCW 82.08.816.

(4) "Cogeneration facility" means any machinery, equipment, structure, process, or property, or any part thereof, installed or acquired for the primary purpose of the sequential generation of electrical or mechanical power and useful heat from the same primary energy source or fuel.

(5) "Commission" means the utilities and transportation commission.

(6) "Commissioner" means one of the members of such commission.

(7) "Competitive telecommunications company" means a telecommunications company which has been classified as such by the commission pursuant to RCW 80.36.320.

(8) "Competitive telecommunications service" means a service which has been classified as such by the commission pursuant to RCW 80.36.330.

(9) "Corporation" includes a corporation, company, association or joint stock association.

(10) "Department" means the department of health.

(11) "Electric plant" includes all real estate, fixtures and personal property operated, owned, used or to be used for or in connection with or to facilitate the generation, transmission, distribution, sale or furnishing of electricity for light, heat, or power for hire; and any conduits, ducts or other devices, materials, apparatus or property for containing, holding or carrying conductors used or to be used for the transmission of electricity for light, heat or power.

(12) (a) "Electrical company" includes any corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership and person, their lessees, trustees or receivers appointed by any court whatsoever (other than a railroad or street railroad company generating electricity solely for railroad or street railroad purposes or for the use of its tenants and not for sale to others), and every city or town owning, operating or managing any electric plant for hire within this state. An electrical company may own, operate, or manage any thermal energy network within this state.

(b) "Electrical company" does not include a company or person employing a cogeneration facility solely for the generation of electricity for its own use or the use of its tenants or for sale to an electrical company, state or local public agency, municipal corporation, or quasi municipal corporation engaged in the sale or distribution of electrical energy, but not for sale to others, unless such company or person is otherwise an electrical company.

(13) "Facilities" means lines, conduits, ducts, poles, wires, cables, cross-arms, receivers, transmitters, instruments, machines, appliances, instrumentalities and all devices, real estate, easements, apparatus, property and routes used, operated, owned or controlled by any telecommunications company to facilitate the provision of telecommunications service.

(14) "Gas company" includes every corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership and person, their lessees, trustees or receiver appointed by any court whatsoever, and every city or town, owning, controlling, operating or managing any gas plant within this state. A gas company may own, control, operate, or manage any thermal energy network within this state.

(15) "Gas plant" includes all real estate, fixtures and personal property, owned, leased, controlled, used or to be used for or in connection with the transmission, distribution, sale or furnishing of natural gas, or the manufacture, transmission, distribution, sale or furnishing of other type gas, for light, heat or power.

(16) "LATA" means a local access transport area as defined by the commission in conformance with applicable federal law.

(17) "Local exchange company" means a telecommunications company providing local exchange telecommunications service.

(18) "Noncompetitive telecommunications service" means any service which has not been classified as competitive by the commission.

(19) "Person" includes an individual, a firm or partnership.

(20) "Private shared telecommunications services" includes the provision of telecommunications and information management services

and equipment within a user group located in discrete private premises in building complexes, campuses, or high-rise buildings, by a commercial shared services provider or by a user association, through privately owned customer premises equipment and associated data processing and information management services and includes the provision of connections to the facilities of a local exchange and to interexchange telecommunications companies.

(21) "Private switch automatic location identification service" means a service that enables automatic location identification to be provided to a public safety answering point for 911 calls originating from station lines served by a private switch system.

(22)(a) "Private telecommunications system" means a telecommunications system controlled by a person or entity for the sole and exclusive use of such person, entity, or affiliate thereof, including the provision of private shared telecommunications services by such person or entity.

(b) "Private telecommunications system" does not include a system offered for hire, sale, or resale to the general public.

(23) "Public service company" includes every gas company, electrical company, telecommunications company, wastewater company, and water company. Ownership or operation of a cogeneration facility does not, by itself, make a company or person a public service company.

(24) "Radio communications service company" includes every corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership, and person, their lessees, trustees, or receivers appointed by any court, and every city or town making available facilities to provide radio communications service, radio paging, or cellular communications service for hire, sale, or resale.

(25) "Service" is used in this title in its broadest and most inclusive sense.

(26) "System of sewerage" means collection, treatment, and disposal facilities and services for sewerage, or storm or surface water runoff.

(27) "Telecommunications" is the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. As used in this definition, "information" means knowledge or intelligence represented by any form of writing, signs, signals, pictures, sounds, or any other symbols.

(28) "Telecommunications company" includes every corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership and person, their lessees, trustees or receivers appointed by any court whatsoever, and every city or town owning, operating or managing any facilities used to provide telecommunications for hire, sale, or resale to the general public within this state.

(29) "Thermal energy" means piped noncombustible fluids used for transferring heat into and out of buildings for the purpose of either: (a) Eliminating any resultant on-site greenhouse gas emissions of all types of heating and cooling processes including, but not limited to, comfort heating and cooling, domestic hot water, and refrigeration; (b) improving energy efficiency; or (c) both (a) and (b) of this subsection.

(30) "Thermal energy network" means all real estate, fixtures, and personal property operated, owned, used, or to be used for or in connection with or to facilitate a utility-scale distribution infrastructure project that supplies thermal energy. A thermal energy

network may not rely on combustion to create thermal energy, except for emergency backup purposes.

(31)(a) "Wastewater company" means a corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership and person, their lessees, trustees, or receivers that owns or proposes to develop and own a system of sewerage that is designed for a peak flow of 27,000 to 100,000 gallons per day if treatment is by a large on-site sewerage system, or to serve one hundred or more customers.

(b) For purposes of commission jurisdiction, wastewater company does not include: (i) Municipal, county, or other publicly owned systems of sewerage; or (ii) wastewater company service to customers outside of an urban growth area as defined in RCW 36.70A.030.

(32)(a) "Water company" includes every corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership and person, their lessees, trustees or receivers appointed by any court whatsoever, and every city or town owning, controlling, operating, or managing any water system for hire within this state.

(b) For purposes of commission jurisdiction, "water company" does not include any water system serving less than 100 customers where the average annual gross revenue per customer does not exceed \$300 per year, which revenue figure may be increased annually by the commission by rule adopted pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW to reflect the rate of inflation as determined by the implicit price deflator of the United States department of commerce. The measurement of customers or revenues must include all portions of water companies having common ownership or control, regardless of location or corporate designation.

(c) "Control" is defined by the commission by rule and does not include management by a satellite agency as defined in chapter 70A.100 RCW if the satellite agency is not an owner of the water company.

(d) "Water company" also includes, for auditing purposes only, nonmunicipal water systems which are referred to the commission pursuant to an administrative order from the department, or the city or county as provided in RCW 80.04.110.

(e) Water companies exempt from commission regulation are subject to the provisions of chapter 19.86 RCW. A water company cannot be removed from regulation except with the approval of the commission. Water companies subject to regulation may petition the commission for removal from regulation if the number of customers falls below 100 or the average annual revenue per customer falls below \$300. The commission is authorized to maintain continued regulation if it finds that the public interest so requires.

(33) "Water system" includes all real estate, easements, fixtures, personal property, dams, dikes, head gates, weirs, canals, reservoirs, flumes or other structures or appliances operated, owned, used or to be used for or in connection with or to facilitate the supply, storage, distribution, sale, furnishing, diversion, carriage, apportionment or measurement of water for power, irrigation, reclamation, manufacturing, municipal, domestic or other beneficial uses for hire. [2024 c 348 s 1; 2021 c 65 s 93. Prior: 2011 c 214 s 2; 2011 c 28 s 1; 1995 c 243 s 2; 1991 c 100 s 1; 1989 c 101 s 2; 1987 c 229 s 1; prior: 1985 c 450 s 2; 1985 c 167 s 1; 1985 c 161 s 1; 1979 ex.s. c 191 s 10; 1977 ex.s. c 47 s 1; 1963 c 59 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.010; prior: 1955 c 316 s 2; prior: 1929 c 223 s 1, part; 1923 c 116 s 1, part; 1911 c 117 s 8, part; RRS s 10344, part.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 214:** "The legislature recognizes the critical importance of infrastructure to the development of industrial, commercial, and residential properties and finds that infill development is often limited by the lack of infrastructure. The legislature further finds that in many areas, public funding to extend infrastructure is not available. It is the purpose of this act to allow private utilities to provide infrastructure needed for economic development in a manner that minimizes development sprawl." [2011 c 214 s 1.]

**Limitation of chapter—2011 c 214:** "Nothing in this act supersedes federal, state, or local government requirements to obtain a wastewater discharge permit or a large on-site sewerage system operating permit or other permits or licenses required by law in the state of Washington." [2011 c 214 s 30.]

**Effective date—2011 c 214:** "Except for section 29 of this act, this act takes effect July 1, 2012." [2011 c 214 s 32.]

**Findings—Severability—1995 c 243:** See notes following RCW 80.36.555.

**RCW 80.04.015 Conduct of business subject to regulation—Determination by commission.** Whether or not any person or corporation is conducting business subject to regulation under this title, or has performed or is performing any act requiring registration or approval of the commission without securing such registration or approval, shall be a question of fact to be determined by the commission. Whenever the commission believes that any person or corporation is engaged in any activity without first complying with the requirements of this title, it may institute a special proceeding requiring such person or corporation to appear before the commission at a location convenient for witnesses and the production of evidence and produce information, books, records, accounts, and other memoranda, and give testimony under oath as to the activities being conducted. The commission may consider any and all facts that may indicate the true nature and extent of the operations or acts and may subpoena such witnesses and documents as it deems necessary.

After investigation, the commission is authorized and directed to issue the necessary order or orders declaring the activities to be subject to, or not subject to, the provisions of this title. In the event the activities are found to be subject to the provisions of this title, the commission shall issue such orders as may be necessary to require all parties involved in the activities to comply with this title, and with respect to services found to be reasonably available from alternative sources, to issue orders to cease and desist from providing jurisdictional services pending full compliance.

In proceedings under this section, no person or corporation may be excused from testifying or from producing any information, book, document, paper, or account before the commission when ordered to do so, on the ground that the testimony or evidence, information, book, document, or account required may tend to incriminate him or her or

subject him or her to penalty or forfeiture specified in this title; but no person or corporation may be prosecuted, punished, or subjected to any penalty or forfeiture specified in this title for or on account of any account, transaction, matter, or thing concerning which he or she shall under oath have testified or produced documentary evidence in proceedings under this section: PROVIDED, That no person so testifying may be exempt from prosecution or punishment for any perjury committed by him or her in such testimony: PROVIDED FURTHER, That the exemption from prosecution in this section extends only to violations of this title.

Until July 1, 1994, in any proceeding instituted under this section to determine whether a person or corporation owning, controlling, operating, or managing a water system is subject to commission regulation, and where the person or corporation has failed or refused to provide sufficient information or documentation to enable the commission to make such a determination, the burden shall be on such person or corporation to prove that the person's or corporation's operations or acts are not subject to commission regulation. [1991 c 101 s 1; 1986 c 11 s 1.]

**RCW 80.04.020 Procedure before commission and courts.** Each commissioner shall have power to administer oaths, certify to all official acts, and to issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and the production of papers, books, accounts, documents, and testimony in any inquiry, investigation, hearing, or proceeding in any part of the state.

The superior court of the county in which any such inquiry, investigation, hearing, or proceeding may be had, shall have power to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of papers, books, accounts, documents, and testimony as required by such subpoena. The commission or the commissioner before which the testimony is to be given or produced, in case of the refusal of any witness to attend or testify or produce any papers required by the subpoena, shall report to the superior court in and for the county in which the proceeding is pending by petition, setting forth that due notice has been given of the time and place of attendance of said witnesses, or the production of said papers, and that the witness has been summoned in the manner prescribed in this chapter, and that the fees and mileage of the witness have been paid or tendered to the witness for his or her attendance and testimony, and that the witness has failed and refused to attend or produce the papers required by the subpoena, before the commission, in the cause or proceedings named in the notice and subpoena, or has refused to answer questions propounded to him or her in the course of such proceeding, and ask an order of said court, compelling the witness to attend and testify before the commission. The court, upon the petition of the commission, shall enter an order directing the witness to appear before said court at a time and place to be fixed by the court in such order, and then and there show cause why he or she has not responded to said subpoena. A copy of said order shall be served upon said witness. If it shall appear to the court that said subpoena was regularly issued by the commission, the court shall thereupon enter an order that said witness appear before the commission at said time and place as fixed in said order, and testify or produce the required papers, and upon failing to obey said order, said witness shall be dealt with as for contempt of

court. [2013 c 23 s 270; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.020. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 75, part; RRS s 10413, part.]

**RCW 80.04.030 Number of witnesses may be limited.** In all proceedings before the commission the commission shall have the right, in their discretion, to limit the number of witnesses testifying upon any subject or proceeding to be inquired of before the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.030. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 75, part; RRS s 10413, part.]

**RCW 80.04.040 Witness fees and mileage.** Each witness who shall appear under subpoena shall receive for his or her attendance four dollars per day and ten cents per mile traveled by the nearest practicable route in going to and returning from the place of hearing. No witness shall be entitled to fees or mileage from the state when summoned at the instance of the public service companies affected. [2013 c 23 s 271; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.040. Prior: 1955 c 79 s 1; 1911 c 117 s 76, part; RRS 10414, part.]

**RCW 80.04.050 Protection against self-incrimination.** The claim by any witness that any testimony sought to be elicited may tend to incriminate him or her shall not excuse such witness from testifying, but such evidence or testimony shall not be used against such person on the trial of any criminal proceeding, excepting in a prosecution for perjury. The commissioner shall have power to compel the attendance of witnesses at any place within the state. [2013 c 23 s 272; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.050. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 76, part; RRS 10414, part.]

*Powers of each commissioner to compel attendance of witnesses: RCW 80.04.020.*

**RCW 80.04.060 Depositions—Service of process.** The commission shall have the right to take the testimony of any witness by deposition, and for that purpose the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, documents, papers and accounts may be enforced in the same manner as in the case of hearings before the commission, or any member thereof. Process issued under the provisions of this chapter shall be served as in civil cases. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.060. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 76, part; RRS s 10414, part.]

**RCW 80.04.070 Inspection of books, papers, and documents.** The commission and each commissioner, or any person employed by the commission, shall have the right, at any and all times, to inspect the accounts, books, papers, and documents of any public service company, and the commission, or any commissioner, may examine under oath any officer, agent, or employee of such public service company in relation thereto, and with reference to the affairs of such company: PROVIDED, That any person other than a commissioner who shall make any such demand shall produce his or her authority from the commission to make



such inspection. [2013 c 23 s 273; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.070. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 77; RRS s 10415.]

**RCW 80.04.075 Manner of serving papers.** All notices, applications, complaints, findings of fact, opinions and orders required by this title to be served may be served by mail and service thereof shall be deemed complete when a true copy of such paper or document is deposited in the post office properly addressed and stamped. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.075. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 7; RRS s 10458-1. Formerly RCW 80.04.370.]

**RCW 80.04.080 Annual reports.** (1) Every public service company shall annually furnish to the commission a report in such form as the commission may require, and shall specifically answer all questions posed to it by the commission. The commission may prescribe a uniform system of accounts, and the manner in which such accounts shall be kept. Such detailed report shall contain all the required statistics for the period of twelve months ending on the last day of any particular month prescribed by the commission for any public service company. Such reports shall be made out under oath and filed with the commission at its office in Olympia on such date as the commission specifies by rule, unless additional time is granted by the commission.

(2) Any public service company that fails to file an annual report in the form and within the time required by the commission, including payment of any regulatory fee due, is subject to the following:

(a) Monetary penalties of:

(i) Two hundred fifty dollars for reports filed one to thirty days past the due date;

(ii) Five hundred dollars for reports filed thirty-one to sixty days past the due date;

(iii) One thousand dollars for reports filed sixty-one to ninety days past the due date; or

(b) Upon notice by the commission, cancellation or revocation of its operating authority and additional penalties pursuant to RCW 80.04.380 and 80.04.405.

(3) The commission may waive penalties when a public service company is able to sufficiently demonstrate that its failure to file an annual report in the form and within the time required was due to circumstances beyond its control. Requests for any such waiver must be received within fifteen days of the date a penalty is assessed.

(4) The commission shall have authority to require any public service company to file monthly reports of earnings and expenses, and to file periodical or special, or both periodical and special, reports concerning any matter about which the commission is authorized or required by this or any other law, to inquire into or keep itself informed about, or which it is required to enforce, such periodical or special reports to be under oath whenever the commission so requires. [2018 c 104 s 1; 1989 c 107 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.080. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 78, part; RRS s 10416, part.]

**RCW 80.04.090 Forms of records to be prescribed.** The commission may, in its discretion, prescribe the forms of any and all accounts,

records and memoranda to be kept by public service companies, including the accounts, records and memoranda of the movement of traffic, sales of its product, the receipts and expenditures of money. The commission shall at all times have access to all accounts, records and memoranda kept by public service companies, and may employ special agents or examiners, who shall have power to administer oaths and authority, under the order of the commission, to examine witnesses and to inspect and examine any and all accounts, records and memoranda kept by such companies. The commission may, in its discretion, prescribe the forms of any and all reports, accounts, records and memoranda to be furnished and kept by any public service company whose line or lines extend beyond the limits of this state, which are operated partly within and partly without the state, so that the same shall show any information required by the commission concerning the traffic movement, receipts and expenditures appertaining to those parts of the line within the state. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.090. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 78, part; RRS s 10416, part.]

**RCW 80.04.095 Protection of records containing commercial information.** Records, subject to chapter 42.56 RCW, filed with the commission or the attorney general from any person which contain valuable commercial information, including trade secrets or confidential marketing, cost, or financial information, or customer-specific usage and network configuration and design information, shall not be subject to inspection or copying under chapter 42.56 RCW: (1) Until notice to the person or persons directly affected has been given; and (2) if, within ten days of the notice, the person has obtained a superior court order protecting the records as confidential. The court shall determine that the records are confidential and not subject to inspection and copying if disclosure would result in private loss, including an unfair competitive disadvantage. When providing information to the commission or the attorney general, a person shall designate which records or portions of records contain valuable commercial information. Nothing in this section shall prevent the use of protective orders by the commission governing disclosure of proprietary or confidential information in contested proceedings. [2005 c 274 s 358; 1987 c 107 s 1.]

**RCW 80.04.100 Production of out-of-state books and records.** The commission may by order with or without hearing require the production within this state, at such time and place as it may designate, of any books, accounts, papers or records kept by any public service company in any office or place without this state, or at the option of the company verified copies thereof, so that an examination thereof may be made by the commission or under its direction. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.100. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 2; 1911 c 117 s 79; RRS s 10421.]

**RCW 80.04.110 Complaints—Hearings—Water systems not meeting board of health standards—Drinking water standards—Nonmunicipal water systems audits.** (1) (a) Complaint may be made by the commission of its own motion or by any person or corporation, chamber of commerce, board of trade, or any commercial, mercantile, agricultural or manufacturing society, or any body politic or municipal corporation, or by the

public counsel section of the office of the attorney general, or its successor, by petition or complaint in writing, setting forth any act or thing done or omitted to be done by any public service corporation in violation, or claimed to be in violation, of any provision of this title, Title 81 RCW, or of any order or rule of the commission.

(b) No complaint may be entertained by the commission except upon its own motion, as to the reasonableness of the schedule of the rates or charges of any gas company, electrical company, water company, wastewater company, or telecommunications company, unless the same be signed by the mayor, council or commission of the city or town in which the company complained of is engaged in business, or not less than twenty-five consumers or purchasers of such gas, electricity, water, wastewater company services, or telecommunications service, or at least twenty-five percent of the consumers or purchasers of the company's service.

(c) When two or more public service corporations, (meaning to exclude municipal and other public corporations) are engaged in competition in any locality or localities in the state, either may make complaint against the other or others that the rates, charges, rules, regulations or practices of such other or others with or in respect to which the complainant is in competition, are unreasonable, unremunerative, discriminatory, illegal, unfair or intending or tending to oppress the complainant, to stifle competition, or to create or encourage the creation of monopoly, and upon such complaint or upon complaint of the commission upon its own motion, the commission has power, after notice and hearing as in other cases, to, by its order, subject to appeal as in other cases, correct the abuse complained of by establishing such uniform rates, charges, rules, regulations or practices in lieu of those complained of, to be observed by all of such competing public service corporations in the locality or localities specified as is found reasonable, remunerative, nondiscriminatory, legal, and fair or tending to prevent oppression or monopoly or to encourage competition, and upon any such hearing it is proper for the commission to take into consideration the rates, charges, rules, regulations and practices of the public service corporation or corporations complained of in any other locality or localities in the state.

(2) All matters upon which complaint may be founded may be joined in one hearing, and no motion may be entertained against a complaint for misjoinder of complaints or grievances or misjoinder of parties; and in any review of the courts of orders of the commission the same rule shall apply and pertain with regard to the joinder of complaints and parties as herein provided. However, all grievances to be inquired into must be plainly set forth in the complaint. No complaint may be dismissed because of the absence of direct damage to the complainant.

(3) Upon the filing of a complaint, the commission shall cause a copy thereof to be served upon the person or corporation complained of, which must be accompanied by a notice fixing the time when and place where a hearing will be had upon such complaint. The time fixed for such hearing may not be less than ten days after the date of the service of such notice and complaint, excepting as herein provided. The commission shall enter its final order with respect to a complaint filed by any entity or person other than the commission within ten months from the date of filing of the complaint, unless the date is extended for cause. Rules of practice and procedure not otherwise provided for in this title may be prescribed by the commission. Such

rules may include the requirement that a complainant use informal processes before filing a formal complaint.

(4) (a) The commission may, as appropriate, audit a nonmunicipal water system upon receipt of an administrative order from the department, or the city or county in which the water system is located, finding that the water delivered by a system does not meet state board of health standards adopted under RCW 43.20.050(2) (a) or standards adopted under chapters 70A.100 and 70A.125 RCW, and the results of the audit must be provided to the requesting department, city, or county. However, the number of nonmunicipal water systems referred to the commission in any one calendar year shall not exceed twenty percent of the water companies subject to commission regulation as defined in RCW 80.04.010.

(b) Every nonmunicipal water system referred to the commission for audit under this section shall pay to the commission an audit fee in an amount, based on the system's twelve-month audited period, equal to the fee required to be paid by regulated companies under RCW 80.24.010.

(5) Any customer or purchaser of service from a water system or company that is subject to commission regulation may file a complaint with the commission if he or she has reason to believe that the water delivered by the system to the customer does not meet state drinking water standards under chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW. The commission shall investigate such a complaint, and shall request that the state department of health or local health department of the county in which the system is located test the water for compliance with state drinking water standards, and provide the results of such testing to the commission. The commission may decide not to investigate the complaint if it determines that the complaint has been filed in bad faith, or for the purpose of harassment of the water system or company, or for other reasons has no substantial merit. The water system or company shall bear the expense for the testing. After the commission has received the complaint from the customer and during the pendency of the commission investigation, the water system or company may not take any steps to terminate service to the customer or to collect any amounts alleged to be owed to the company by the customer. The commission may issue an order or take any other action to ensure that no such steps are taken by the system or company. The customer may, at the customer's option and expense, obtain a water quality test by a licensed or otherwise qualified water testing laboratory, of the water delivered to the customer by the water system or company, and provide the results of such a test to the commission. If the commission determines that the water does not meet state drinking water standards, it shall exercise its authority over the system or company as provided in this title, and may, where appropriate, order a refund to the customer on a pro rata basis for the substandard water delivered to the customer, and shall order reimbursement to the customer for the cost incurred by the customer, if any, in obtaining a water quality test. [2021 c 65 s 94; 2011 c 214 s 7; 1995 c 376 s 12. Prior: 1991 c 134 s 1; 1991 c 100 s 2; prior: 1989 c 207 s 2; 1989 c 101 s 17; 1985 c 450 s 11; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.110; prior: 1913 c 145 s 1; 1911 c 117 s 80; RRS s 10422.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Findings—1995 c 376:** See note following RCW 70A.100.060.

*Drinking water standards: Chapters 43.21A, 70A.125, and 80.28 RCW.*

**RCW 80.04.120 Hearing—Order—Record.** At the time fixed for the hearing mentioned in RCW 80.04.110, the complainant and the person or corporation complained of shall be entitled to be heard and introduce such evidence as he or she or it may desire. The commission shall issue process to enforce the attendance of all necessary witnesses. At the conclusion of such hearing, the commission shall make and render findings concerning the subject matter and facts inquired into and enter its order based thereon. A copy of such order, certified under the seal of the commission, shall be served upon the person or corporation complained of, or his or her or its attorney, which order shall, of its own force, take effect and become operative twenty days after the service thereof, except as otherwise provided. Where an order cannot, in the judgment of the commission, be complied with within twenty days, the commission may prescribe such additional time as in its judgment is reasonably necessary to comply with the order, and may, on application and for good cause shown, extend the time for compliance fixed in its order. A full and complete record of all proceedings had before the commission, or any member thereof, on any formal hearing had, and all testimony shall be taken down by a stenographer appointed by the commission, and the parties shall be entitled to be heard in person or by attorney. In case of an action to review any order of the commission, a transcript of such testimony, together with all exhibits introduced, and of the record and proceedings in the cause, shall constitute the record of the commission. [2013 c 23 s 274; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.120. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 81; RRS s 10423.]

**RCW 80.04.130 Suspension of tariff change—Mandatory measured telecommunications service—Washington telephone assistance program service—Effect of abandonment of electrical generation facility on which tax exemption for pollution control equipment is claimed—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, whenever any public service company shall file with the commission any schedule, classification, rule, or regulation, the effect of which is to change any rate, charge, rental, or toll theretofore charged, the commission shall have power, either upon its own motion or upon complaint, upon notice, to enter upon a hearing concerning such proposed change and the reasonableness and justness thereof. Pending such hearing and the decision thereon, the commission may suspend the operation of such rate, charge, rental, or toll for a period not exceeding ten months from the time the same would otherwise go into effect. After a full hearing, the commission may make such order in reference thereto as would be provided in a hearing initiated after the same had become effective.

(2) (a) The commission shall not suspend a tariff that makes a decrease in a rate, charge, rental, or toll filed by a telecommunications company pending investigation of the fairness,

justness, and reasonableness of the decrease when the filing does not contain any offsetting increase to another rate, charge, rental, or toll and the filing company agrees to not file for an increase to any rate, charge, rental, or toll to recover the revenue deficit that results from the decrease for a period of one year.

(i) The filing company shall file with any decrease sufficient information as the commission by rule may require to demonstrate the decreased rate, charge, rental, or toll is above the long run incremental cost of the service. A tariff decrease that results in a rate that is below long run incremental cost, or is contrary to commission rule or order, or the requirements of this chapter, shall be rejected for filing and returned to the company.

(ii) The commission may prescribe a different rate to be effective on the prospective date stated in its final order after its investigation, if it concludes based on the record that the originally filed and effective rate is unjust, unfair, or unreasonable.

(b) The commission shall not suspend a promotional tariff. For the purposes of this section, "promotional tariff" means a tariff that, for a period of up to ninety days, waives or reduces charges or conditions of service for existing or new subscribers for the purpose of retaining or increasing the number of customers who subscribe to or use a service.

(3) The commission may suspend the initial tariff filing of any water company removed from and later subject to commission jurisdiction because of the number of customers or the average annual gross revenue per customer provisions of RCW 80.04.010. The commission may allow temporary rates during the suspension period. These rates shall not exceed the rates charged when the company was last regulated. Upon a showing of good cause by the company, the commission may establish a different level of temporary rates.

(4) At any hearing involving any change in any schedule, classification, rule, or regulation the effect of which is to increase any rate, charge, rental, or toll theretofore charged, the burden of proof to show that such increase is just and reasonable shall be upon the public service company.

(5) The implementation of mandatory local measured telecommunications service is a major policy change in available telecommunications service. The commission shall not accept for filing a price list, nor shall it accept for filing or approve, prior to June 1, 2004, a tariff filed by a telecommunications company which imposes mandatory local measured service on any customer or class of customers, except that, upon finding that it is in the public interest, the commission may accept for filing a price list or it may accept for filing and approve a tariff that imposes mandatory measured service for a telecommunications company's extended area service or foreign exchange service. This subsection does not apply to land, air, or marine mobile service, or to pay telephone service, or to any service which has been traditionally offered on a measured service basis.

(6) The implementation of Washington telephone assistance program service is a major policy change in available telecommunications service. The implementation of Washington telephone assistance program service will aid in achieving the stated goal of universal telephone service.

(7) If a utility claims a sales or use tax exemption on the pollution control equipment for an electrical generation facility and abandons the generation facility before the pollution control

equipment is fully depreciated, any tariff filing for a rate increase to recover abandonment costs for the pollution control equipment shall be considered unjust and unreasonable for the purposes of this section.

(8) During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 401; 2003 c 189 s 1; 2001 c 267 s 1; 1998 c 110 s 1; 1997 c 368 s 14; 1993 c 311 s 1; 1992 c 68 s 1; 1990 c 170 s 1; 1989 c 101 s 13. Prior: 1987 c 333 s 1; 1987 c 229 s 2; prior: 1985 c 450 s 12; 1985 c 206 s 1; 1985 c 161 s 2; 1984 c 3 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.130; prior: 1941 c 162 s 1; 1937 c 169 s 2; 1933 c 165 s 3; 1915 c 133 s 1; 1911 c 117 s 82; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10424.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**Effective date—2001 c 267:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 11, 2001]." [2001 c 267 s 2.]

**Findings—Intent—Rules adoption—Severability—Effective date—1997 c 368:** See notes following RCW 82.08.810.

**Effective date—1993 c 311:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [May 12, 1993]." [1993 c 311 s 2.]

**Effective date—1987 c 333:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect June 1, 1987." [1987 c 333 s 2.]

**RCW 80.04.140 Order requiring joint action.** Whenever any order of the commission shall require joint action by two or more public service companies, such order shall specify that the same shall be made at their joint cost, and the companies affected shall have thirty days, or such further time, as the commission may prescribe, within which to agree upon the part or division of cost which each shall bear, and costs of operation and maintenance in the future, or the proportion of charges or revenue each shall receive from such joint service and the rules to govern future operations. If at the expiration of such time such companies shall fail to file with the commission a statement that an agreement has been made for the division or apportionment of such cost, the division of costs of operation and maintenance to be incurred in the future and the proportion of charges or revenue each shall receive from such joint service and the rules to govern future operations, the commission shall have authority, after further hearing, to enter a supplemental order fixing the proportion of such cost or expense to be borne by

each company, and the manner in which the same shall be paid and secured. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.140. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 83; RRS s 10425.]

**RCW 80.04.150 Remunerative rates cannot be changed without approval.** Whenever the commission shall find, after hearing had upon its own motion or upon complaint as herein provided, that any rate, toll, rental or charge which has been the subject of complaint and inquiry is sufficiently remunerative to the public service company affected thereby, it may order that such rate, toll, rental or charge shall not be changed, altered, abrogated or discontinued, nor shall there be any change in the classification which will change or alter such rate, toll, rental or charge without first obtaining the consent of the commission authorizing such change to be made. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.150. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 84; RRS s 10426.]

**RCW 80.04.160 Rules and regulations.** The commission is hereby authorized and empowered to adopt, promulgate and issue rules and regulations covering the transmission and delivery of messages and conversations, and the furnishing and supply of gas, electricity, wastewater company services, and water, and any and all services concerning the same, or connected therewith; and generally such rules as pertain to the comfort and convenience of the public concerning the subjects treated of in this title. Such rules and regulations must be promulgated and issued by the commission on its own motion, and must be served on the public service company affected thereby as other orders of the commission are served. Any public service company affected thereby, and deeming such rules and regulations, or any of them, improper, unjust, unreasonable, or contrary to law, may within twenty days from the date of service of such order upon it file objections thereto with the commission, specifying the particular grounds of such objections. The commission shall, upon receipt of such objections, fix a time and place for hearing the same, and after a full hearing may make such changes or modifications thereto, if any, as the evidence may justify. The commission has, and it is hereby given, power to adopt rules to govern its proceedings, and to regulate the mode and manner of all investigations and hearings. However, no person desiring to be present at such hearing may be denied permission. Actions may be instituted to review rules and regulations promulgated under this section as in the case of orders of the commission. [2011 c 214 s 8; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.160. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 85; RRS s 10427.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.04.170 Review of orders.** Any complainant or any public service company affected by any findings or order of the commission, and deeming such findings or order to be contrary to law, may, within thirty days after the service of the findings or order upon him or her or it, apply to the superior court of Thurston county for a writ of review, for the purpose of having the reasonableness and lawfulness of such findings or order inquired into and determined. Such writ shall



be made returnable not later than thirty days from and after the date of the issuance thereof, unless upon notice to all parties affected further time be allowed by the court, and shall direct the commission to certify its record in the case to the court. Such cause shall be heard by the court without the intervention of a jury on the evidence and exhibits introduced before the commission and certified to by it. Upon such hearing, the superior court shall enter judgment either affirming or setting aside or remanding for further action the findings or order of the commission under review. The reasonable cost of preparing the transcript of testimony taken before the commission shall be assessable as part of the statutory court costs, and the amount thereof, if collected by the commission, shall be deposited in the public service revolving fund. In case such findings or order be set aside, or reversed and remanded, the court shall make specific findings based upon evidence in the record indicating clearly all respects in which the commission's findings or order are erroneous. [2013 c 23 s 275; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.170. Prior: 1937 c 169 s 3; 1911 c 117 s 86; RRS s 10428.]

**RCW 80.04.180 Supersedeas—Water companies seeking supersedeas.**

(1) The pendency of any writ of review shall not of itself stay or suspend the operation of the order of the commission, but the superior court in its discretion may restrain or suspend, in whole or in part, the operation of the commission's order pending the final hearing and determination of the suit.

(2) No order so restraining or suspending an order of the commission relating to rates, charges, tolls or rentals, or rules or regulations, practices, classifications or contracts affecting the same, shall be made by the superior court otherwise than upon three days' notice and after hearing. If a supersedeas is granted the order granting the same shall contain a specific finding, based upon evidence submitted to the court making the order, and identified by reference thereto, that great or irreparable damage would otherwise result to the petitioner, and specifying the nature of the damage. A water company seeking a supersedeas must demonstrate to the court that it is in compliance with the state board of health standards adopted pursuant to RCW 43.20.050 and chapter 70A.100 RCW relating to the purity, volume, and pressure of water.

(3) In case the order of the commission under review is superseded by the court, it shall require a bond, with good and sufficient surety, conditioned that such company petitioning for such review shall answer for all damages caused by the delay in the enforcement of the order of the commission, and all compensation for whatever sums for transmission or service any person or corporation shall be compelled to pay pending the review proceedings in excess of the sum such person or corporations would have been compelled to pay if the order of the commission had not been suspended.

(4) The court may, in addition to or in lieu of the bond herein provided for, require such other or further security for the payment of such excess charges or damages as it may deem proper. [2021 c 65 s 95; 1989 c 207 s 3; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.180. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 6; prior: 1931 c 119 s 2; 1911 c 117 s 87; RRS s 10429.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**RCW 80.04.190 Appellate review.** The commission, any public service company or any complainant may, after the entry of judgment in the superior court in any action of review, seek appellate review as in other cases. [1988 c 202 s 60; 1971 ex.s. c 107 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.190. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 88; RRS s 10430.]

**Rules of court:** *Cf.* RAP 2.2.

**Severability—1988 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.24.050.

**RCW 80.04.200 Rehearing before commission.** Any public service company affected by any order of the commission, and deeming itself aggrieved, may, after the expiration of two years from the date of such order taking effect, petition the commission for a rehearing upon the matters involved in such order, setting forth in such petition the grounds and reasons for such rehearing, which grounds and reasons may comprise and consist of changed conditions since the issuance of such order, or by showing a result injuriously affecting the petitioner which was not considered or anticipated at the former hearing, or that the effect of such order has been such as was not contemplated by the commission or the petitioner, or for any good and sufficient cause which for any reason was not considered and determined in such former hearing. Upon the filing of such petition, such proceedings shall be had thereon as are provided for hearings upon complaint, and such orders may be reviewed as are other orders of the commission: PROVIDED, That no order superseding the order of the commission denying such rehearing shall be granted by the court pending the review. In case any order of the commission shall not be reviewed, but shall be complied with by the public service company, such petition for rehearing may be filed within six months from and after the date of the taking effect of such order, and the proceedings thereon shall be as in this section provided. The commission, may, in its discretion, permit the filing of a petition for rehearing at any time. No order of the commission upon a rehearing shall affect any right of action or penalty accruing under the original order unless so ordered by the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.200. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 89; RRS s 10431.]

**RCW 80.04.210 Commission may change orders.** The commission may at any time, upon notice to the public service company affected, and after opportunity to be heard as provided in the case of complaints rescind, alter or amend any order or rule made, issued or promulgated by it, and any order or rule rescinding, altering or amending any prior order or rule shall, when served upon the public service company affected, have the same effect as herein provided for original orders and rules. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.210. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 90; RRS s 10432.]

**RCW 80.04.220 Reparations.** When complaint has been made to the commission concerning the reasonableness of any rate, toll, rental or charge for any service performed by any public service company, and the same has been investigated by the commission, and the commission has determined that the public service company has charged an

excessive or exorbitant amount for such service, and the commission has determined that any party complainant is entitled to an award of damages, the commission shall order that the public service company pay to the complainant the excess amount found to have been charged, whether such excess amount was charged and collected before or after the filing of said complaint, with interest from the date of the collection of said excess amount. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.220. Prior: 1943 c 258 s 1; 1937 c 29 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1943 s 10433.]

**RCW 80.04.230 Overcharges—Refund.** When complaint has been made to the commission that any public service company has charged an amount for any service rendered in excess of the lawful rate in force at the time such charge was made, and the same has been investigated and the commission has determined that the overcharge allegation is true, the commission may order that the public service company pay to the complainant the amount of the overcharge so found, whether such overcharge was made before or after the filing of said complaint, with interest from the date of collection of such overcharge. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.230. Prior: 1937 c 29 s 2; RRS s 10433-1.]

**RCW 80.04.240 Action in court on reparations and overcharges.** If the public service company does not comply with the order of the commission for the payment of the overcharge within the time limited in such order, suit may be instituted in any superior court where service may be had upon the said company to recover the amount of the overcharge with interest. It shall be the duty of the commission to certify its record in the case, including all exhibits, to the court. Such record shall be filed with the clerk of said court within thirty days after such suit shall have been started and said suit shall be heard on the evidence and exhibits introduced before the commission and certified to by it. If the complainant shall prevail in such action, the superior court shall enter judgment for the amount of the overcharge with interest and shall allow complainant a reasonable attorney's fee, and the cost of preparing and certifying said record for the benefit of and to be paid to the commission by complainant, and deposited by the commission in the public service revolving fund, said sums to be fixed and collected as a part of the costs of the suit. If the order of the commission shall be found to be contrary to law or erroneous by reason of the rejection of testimony properly offered, the court shall remand the cause to the commission with instructions to receive the testimony so proffered and rejected and enter a new order based upon the evidence theretofore taken and such as it is directed to receive. The court may in its discretion remand any cause which is reversed by it to the commission for further action. Appeals to the supreme court shall lie as in other civil cases. All complaints concerning overcharges resulting from collecting unreasonable rates and charges or from collecting amounts in excess of lawful rates shall be filed with the commission within six months in cases involving the collection of unreasonable rates and two years in cases involving the collection of more than lawful rates from the time the cause of action accrues, and the suit to recover the overcharge shall be filed in the superior court within one year from the date of the order of the commission.

The procedure provided in this section is exclusive, and neither the supreme court nor any superior court shall have jurisdiction save in the manner hereinbefore provided. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.240. Prior: 1943 c 258 s 2; 1937 c 29 s 3; Rem. Supp. 1943 s 10433-2.]

**RCW 80.04.250 Valuation of public service property—Authority of commission.** (1) The provisions of this section are necessary to ensure that the commission has sufficient flexible authority to determine the value of utility property for rate making purposes and to implement the requirements and full intent of chapter 288, Laws of 2019.

(2) The commission has power upon complaint or upon its own motion to ascertain and determine the fair value for rate making purposes of the property of any public service company used and useful for service in this state by or during the rate effective period and shall exercise such power whenever it deems such valuation or determination necessary or proper under any of the provisions of this title. The valuation may include consideration of any property of the public service company acquired or constructed by or during the rate effective period, including the reasonable costs of construction work in progress, to the extent that the commission finds that such an inclusion is in the public interest and will yield fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient rates.

(3) The commission may provide changes to rates under this section for up to forty-eight months after the rate effective date using any standard, formula, method, or theory of valuation reasonably calculated to arrive at fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient rates. The commission must establish an appropriate process to identify, review, and approve public service company property that becomes used and useful for service in this state after the rate effective date.

(4) The commission has the power to make revaluations of the property of any public service company from time to time.

(5) The commission shall, before any hearing is had, notify the complainants and the public service company concerned of the time and place of such hearing by giving at least thirty days' written notice thereof, specifying that at the time and place designated a hearing will be held for the purpose of ascertaining the value of the company's property, used and useful as aforesaid, which notice must be sufficient to authorize the commission to inquire into and pass upon the matters designated in this section.

(6) Nothing in this section limits the commission's authority to consider and implement performance and incentive-based regulation, multiyear rate plans, and other flexible regulatory mechanisms. [2019 c 288 s 20; 2011 c 214 s 9; 1991 c 122 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.250. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 4; 1913 c 182 s 1; 1911 c 117 s 92; RRS s 10441.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 288:** See RCW 19.405.010 and 19.405.901.

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Findings—1991 c 122:** "The legislature finds that the state is facing an energy shortage as growth occurs and that inadequate supplies of energy will cause harmful impacts on the entire range of

state citizens. The legislature further finds that energy efficiency improvement is the single most effective near term measure to lessen the risk of energy shortage. In the area of electricity, the legislature additionally finds that the Northwest power planning council has made several recommendations, including an update of the commercial building energy code and granting flexible ratemaking alternatives for utility commissions to encourage prudent acquisition of new electric resources." [1991 c 122 s 1.]

**Severability—1991 c 122:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1991 c 122 s 4.]

**RCW 80.04.260 Summary proceedings.** Whenever the commission shall be of opinion that any public service company is failing or omitting, or about to fail or omit, to do anything required of it by law, or by order, direction or requirement of the commission, or is doing anything, or about to do anything, or permitting anything, or about to permit anything to be done contrary to or in violation of law or of any order, direction or requirement of the commission authorized by this title, it shall direct the attorney general to commence an action or proceeding in the superior court of the state of Washington for Thurston county, or in the superior court of any county in which such company may do business, in the name of the state of Washington on the relation of the commission, for the purpose of having such violations or threatened violations stopped and prevented, either by mandamus or injunction. The attorney general shall thereupon begin such action or proceeding by petition to such superior court, alleging the violation complained of, and praying for the appropriate relief by way of mandamus or injunction. It shall thereupon be the duty of the court to specify a time, not exceeding twenty days after the service of the copy of the petition, within which the public service company complained of must answer the petition. In case of default in answer or after answer, the court shall immediately inquire into the facts and circumstances in such manner as the court shall direct, without other or formal pleadings, and without respect to any technical requirement. Such persons or corporations as the court may deem necessary or proper to be joined as parties, in order to make its judgment, order or writ effective, may be joined as parties. The final judgment in any such action or proceeding shall either dismiss the action or proceeding or direct that the writ of mandamus or injunction, or both, issue as prayed for in the petition, or in such other modified form as the court may determine will afford appropriate relief. Appellate review of the final judgment may be sought in the same manner and with the same effect as review of judgments of the superior court in actions to review orders of the commission. All provisions of this chapter relating to the time of review, the manner of perfecting the same, the filing of briefs, hearings and supersedeas, shall apply to appeals to the supreme court or the court of appeals under the provisions of this section. [1988 c 202 s 61; 1971 c 81 s 140; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.260. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 93; RRS s 10442.]

**Severability—1988 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.24.050.

**RCW 80.04.270 Merchandise accounts to be kept separate.** Any public service company engaging in the sale of merchandise or appliances or equipment shall keep separate accounts, as prescribed by the commission, of its capital employed in such business and of its revenues therefrom and operating expenses thereof. The capital employed in such business shall not constitute a part of the fair value of said company's property for rate making purposes, nor shall the revenues from or operating expenses of such business constitute a part of the operating revenues and expenses of said company as a public service company. For purposes of this section, the providing of competitive telephone service, as defined in RCW 82.04.065, shall not constitute the sale of merchandise, appliances, or equipment, unless the commission determines that it would be in the public interest to hold otherwise. [1983 2nd ex.s. c 3 s 40; 1981 c 144 s 5; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.270. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 8; RRS s 10458-2.]

**Construction—Severability—Effective dates—1983 2nd ex.s. c 3:** See notes following RCW 82.04.255.

**Intent—Severability—Effective date—1981 c 144:** See notes following RCW 82.16.010.

**RCW 80.04.280 Purchase and sale of stock by employees.** No public service company shall permit any employee to sell, offer for sale, or solicit the purchase of any security of any other person or corporation during such hours as such employee is engaged to perform any duty of such public service company; nor shall any public service company by any means or device require any employee to purchase or contract to purchase any of its securities or those of any other person or corporation; nor shall any public service company require any employee to permit the deduction from his or her wages or salary of any sum as a payment or to be applied as a payment of any purchase or contract to purchase any security of such public service company or of any other person or corporation. [2013 c 23 s 276; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.280. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 9; RRS s 10458-3.]

**RCW 80.04.290 Sales of stock to employees and customers.** A corporate public service company, either heretofore or hereafter organized under the laws of this state, may sell to its employees and customers any increase of its capital stock, or part thereof, without first offering it to existing stockholders: PROVIDED, That such sale is approved by the holders of a majority of the capital stock, at a regular or special meeting held after notice given as to the time, place, and object thereof as provided by law and the bylaws of the company. Such sales shall be at prices and in amounts for each purchaser and upon terms and conditions as set forth in the resolution passed at the stockholders' meeting, or in a resolution passed at a subsequent meeting of the board of trustees if the resolution passed at the stockholders' meeting shall authorize the board to determine prices, amounts, terms, and conditions, except that in either event, a minimum price for the stock must be fixed in the resolution passed at the stockholders' meeting. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.290. Prior: 1955 c 79 s 2; 1923 c 110 s 1; RRS s 10344-1.]

**RCW 80.04.300 Budgets to be filed by companies—Supplementary budgets.** The commission may regulate, restrict, and control the budgets of expenditures of public service companies. Each company shall prepare a budget showing the amount of money which, in its judgment, will be needed during the ensuing year for maintenance, operation, and construction, classified by accounts as prescribed by the commission, and shall within ten days of the date it is approved by the company file it with the commission for its investigation and approval or rejection. When a budget has been filed the commission shall examine into and investigate it to determine whether the expenditures therein proposed are fair and reasonable and not contrary to public interest.

Adjustments or additions to budget expenditures may be made from time to time during the year by filing a supplementary budget with the commission for its investigation and approval or rejection. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.300. Prior: 1959 c 248 s 11; prior: 1933 c 165 s 10, part; RRS s 10458-4, part.]

**RCW 80.04.310 Commission's control over expenditures.** The commission may, both as to original and supplementary budgets, prior to the making or contracting for the expenditure of any item therein, and after notice to the company and a hearing thereon, reject any item of the budget. The commission may require any company to furnish further information, data, or detail as to any proposed item of expenditure.

Failure of the commission to object to any item of expenditure within ninety days of the filing of any original budget or within thirty days of the filing of any supplementary budget shall constitute authority to the company to proceed with the making of or contracting for such expenditure, but such authority may be terminated any time by objection made thereto by the commission prior to the making of or contracting for such expenditure.

Examination, investigation, and determination of the budget by the commission shall not bar or estop it from later determining whether any of the expenditures made thereunder are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the service, material, supplies, or equipment received. [1987 c 38 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.310. Prior: 1959 c 248 s 12; prior: 1933 c 165 s 10, part; RRS s 10458-4, part.]

**RCW 80.04.320 Budget rules.** The commission may prescribe the necessary rules to place RCW 80.04.300 through 80.04.330 in operation. It may, by rule, establish criteria to exempt companies in whole or in part from the operation thereof. The commission may upon request of any company withhold from publication during such time as the commission may deem advisable any portion of any original or supplementary budget relating to proposed capital expenditures. [1989 c 107 s 3; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.320. Prior: 1959 c 248 s 13; prior: 1933 c 165 s 10, part; RRS s 10458-4, part.]

**RCW 80.04.330 Effect of unauthorized expenditure—Emergencies.** Any public service company may make or contract for any rejected item of expenditure, but in such case the same shall not be allowed as an operating expense, or as to items of construction, as a part of the

fair value of the company's property used and useful in serving the public: PROVIDED, That such items of construction may at any time thereafter be so allowed in whole or in part upon proof that they are used and useful. Any company may upon the happening of any emergency caused by fire, flood, explosion, storm, earthquake, riot, or insurrection, or for the immediate preservation or restoration to condition of usefulness of any of its property, the usefulness of which has been destroyed by accident, make the necessary expenditure therefor free from the operation of RCW 80.04.300 through 80.04.330.

Any finding and order entered by the commission shall be in effect until vacated and set aside in proper proceedings for review thereof. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.330. Prior: 1959 c 248 s 14; prior: 1933 c 165 s 10, part; RRS s 10458-4, part.]

**RCW 80.04.350 Depreciation and retirement accounts.** The commission shall have power after hearing to require any or all public service companies to carry proper and adequate depreciation or retirement accounts in accordance with such rules, regulations and forms of accounts as the commission may prescribe. The commission may from time to time ascertain and by order fix the proper and adequate rates of depreciation or retirement of the several classes of property of each public service company. Each public service company shall conform its depreciation or retirement accounts to the rates so prescribed. In fixing the rate of the annual depreciation or retirement charge, the commission may consider the rate and amount theretofore charged by the company for depreciation or retirement.

The commission shall have and exercise like power and authority over all other reserve accounts of public service companies. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.350. Prior: 1937 c 169 s 4; 1933 c 165 s 13; RRS s 10458-7.]

**RCW 80.04.360 Earnings in excess of reasonable rate—**  
**Consideration in fixing rates.** If any public service company earns in the period of five consecutive years immediately preceding the commission order fixing rates for such company a net utility operating income in excess of a reasonable rate of return upon the fair value of its property used and useful in the public service, the commission shall take official notice of such fact and of whether any such excess earnings shall have been invested in such company's plant or otherwise used for purposes beneficial to the consumers of such company and may consider such facts in fixing rates for such company. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.360. Prior: 1959 c 285 s 2; 1933 c 165 s 14; RRS s 10458-8.]

**RCW 80.04.380 Penalties—Violations by public service companies.** Every public service company, and all officers, agents and employees of any public service company, shall obey, observe and comply with every order, rule, direction or requirement made by the commission under authority of this title, so long as the same shall be and remain in force. Any public service company which shall violate or fail to comply with any provision of this title, or which fails, omits or neglects to obey, observe or comply with any order, rule, or any direction, demand or requirement of the commission, shall be subject to a penalty of not to exceed the sum of one thousand dollars for each



and every offense. Every violation of any such order, direction or requirement of this title shall be a separate and distinct offense, and in case of a continuing violation every day's continuance thereof shall be and be deemed to be a separate and distinct offense. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.380. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 94; RRS s 10443. Formerly RCW 80.04.380, part. FORMER PART OF SECTION: 1911 c 117 s 96 now in RCW 80.04.387.]

**RCW 80.04.385 Penalties—Violations by officers, agents, and employees of public service companies.** Every officer, agent or employee of any public service company, who shall violate or fail to comply with, or who procures, aids or abets any violation by any public service company of any provision of this title, or who shall fail to obey, observe or comply with any order of the commission, or any provision of any order of the commission, or who procures, aids or abets any such public service company in its failure to obey, observe and comply with any such order or provision, shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.385. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 95; RRS s 10444. Formerly RCW 80.04.390, part.]

**RCW 80.04.387 Penalties—Violations by other corporations.** Every corporation, other than a public service company, which shall violate any provision of this title, or which shall fail to obey, observe or comply with any order of the commission under authority of this title, so long as the same shall be and remain in force, shall be subject to a penalty of not to exceed the sum of one thousand dollars for each and every offense. Every such violation shall be a separate and distinct offense, and the penalty shall be recovered in an action as provided in RCW 80.04.400. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.387. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 96; RRS s 10445. Formerly RCW 80.04.380, part.]

**RCW 80.04.390 Penalties—Violations by persons.** Every person who, either individually, or acting as an officer or agent of a corporation other than a public service company, shall violate any provision of this title, or fail to observe, obey or comply with any order made by the commission under this title, so long as the same shall be or remain in force, or who shall procure, aid or abet any such corporation in its violation of this title, or in its failure to obey, observe or comply with any such order, shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.390. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 97; RRS s 10446. FORMER PART OF SECTION: 1911 c 117 s 95 now in RCW 80.04.385.]

**RCW 80.04.400 Actions to recover penalties—Disposition of fines, penalties, and forfeitures.** Actions to recover penalties under this title shall be brought in the name of the state of Washington in the superior court of Thurston county, or in the superior court of any county in or through which such public service company may do business. In all such actions the procedure and rules of evidence shall be the same as in ordinary civil actions, except as otherwise herein provided. All fines and penalties recovered by the state under this title shall be paid into the treasury of the state and credited

to the state general fund or such other fund as provided by law: PROVIDED, That all fees, fines, forfeitures and penalties collected or assessed by a district court because of the violation of a state law shall be remitted as provided in chapter 3.62 RCW as now exists or is later amended. [1987 c 202 s 238; 1969 ex.s. c 199 s 35; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.400. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 98; RRS s 10447.]

**Intent—1987 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.04.190.

**RCW 80.04.405 Additional penalties—Violations by public service companies and officers, agents, and employees thereof.** In addition to all other penalties provided by law every public service company subject to the provisions of this title and every officer, agent or employee of any such public service company who violates or who procures, aids or abets in the violation of any provision of this title or any order, rule, regulation or decision of the commission shall incur a penalty of one hundred dollars for every such violation. Each and every such violation shall be a separate and distinct offense and in case of a continuing violation every day's continuance shall be and be deemed to be a separate and distinct violation. Every act of commission or omission which procures, aids or abets in the violation shall be considered a violation under the provisions of this section and subject to the penalty herein provided for.

The penalty herein provided for shall become due and payable when the person incurring the same receives a notice in writing from the commission describing such violation with reasonable particularity and advising such person that the penalty is due. The commission may, upon written application therefor, received within fifteen days, remit or mitigate any penalty provided for in this section or discontinue any prosecution to recover the same upon such terms as it in its discretion shall deem proper and shall have authority to ascertain the facts upon all such applications in such manner and under such regulations as it may deem proper. If the amount of such penalty is not paid to the commission within fifteen days after receipt of notice imposing the same or application for remission or mitigation has not been made within fifteen days after violator has received notice of the disposition of such application the attorney general shall bring an action in the name of the state of Washington in the superior court of Thurston county or of some other county in which such violator may do business, to recover such penalty. In all such actions the procedure and rules of evidence shall be the same as an ordinary civil action except as otherwise herein provided. All penalties recovered under this title shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the public service revolving fund. [1963 c 59 s 2.]

**RCW 80.04.410 Orders and rules conclusive.** In all actions between private parties and public service companies involving any rule or order of the commission, and in all actions for the recovery of penalties provided for in this title, or for the enforcement of the orders or rules issued and promulgated by the commission, the said orders and rules shall be conclusive unless set aside or annulled in a review as in this title provided. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.410. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 99; RRS s 10448.]

**RCW 80.04.420 Intervention by commission where order or rule is involved.** In all court actions involving any rule or order of the commission, where the commission has not been made a party, the commission shall be served with a copy of all pleadings, and shall be entitled to intervene. Where the fact that the action involves a rule or order of the commission does not appear until the time of trial, the court shall immediately direct the clerk to notify the commission of the pendency of such action, and shall permit the commission to intervene in such action.

The failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall render void and of no effect any judgment in such action, where the effect of such judgment is to modify or nullify any rule or order of the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.420. Prior: 1943 c 67 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1943 s 10448-1.]

**RCW 80.04.430 Findings of commission prima facie correct.** Whenever the commission has issued or promulgated any order or rule, in any writ of review brought by a public service company to determine the reasonableness of such order or rule, the findings of fact made by the commission shall be prima facie correct, and the burden shall be upon said public service company to establish the order or rule to be unreasonable or unlawful. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.430. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 100; RRS s 10449.]

**RCW 80.04.440 Companies liable for damages.** In case any public service company shall do, cause to be done or permit to be done any act, matter or thing prohibited, forbidden or declared to be unlawful, or shall omit to do any act, matter or thing required to be done, either by any law of this state, by this title or by any order or rule of the commission, such public service company shall be liable to the persons or corporations affected thereby for all loss, damage or injury caused thereby or resulting therefrom, and in case of recovery if the court shall find that such act or omission was wilful, it may, in its discretion, fix a reasonable counsel or attorney's fee, which shall be taxed and collected as part of the costs in the case. An action to recover for such loss, damage or injury may be brought in any court of competent jurisdiction by any person or corporation. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.440. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 102; RRS s 10451.]

**RCW 80.04.450 Certified copies of orders, rules, etc.— Evidentiary effect.** Upon application of any person the commission shall furnish certified copies of any classification, rate, rule, regulation or order established by such commission, and the printed copies published by authority of the commission, or any certified copy of any such classification, rate, rule, regulation or order, with seal affixed, shall be admissible in evidence in any action or proceeding, and shall be sufficient to establish the fact that the charge, rate, rule, order or classification therein contained is the official act of the commission. When copies of any classification, rate, rule, regulation or order not contained in the printed reports, or copies of papers, accounts or records of public service companies filed with the commission shall be demanded from the commission for proper use, the

commission shall charge a reasonable compensation therefor. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.450. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 103; RRS s 10452.]

**RCW 80.04.460 Investigation of accidents.** Every public service company shall give immediate notice to the commission of every accident resulting in death or injury to any person occurring in its plant or system, in such manner as the commission may prescribe. Such notice shall not be admitted as evidence or used for any purpose against the company giving it in any action for damages growing out of any matter mentioned in the notice.

The commission may investigate any accident resulting in death or injury to any person occurring in connection with the plant or system of any public service company. Notice of the investigation shall be given in all cases for a sufficient length of time to enable the company affected to participate in the hearing and may be given orally or in writing, in such manner as the commission may prescribe.

Such witnesses may be examined as the commission deems necessary and proper to thoroughly ascertain the cause of the accident and fix the responsibility therefor. The examination and investigation may be conducted by an inspector or deputy inspector, and he or she may administer oaths, issue subpoenas, and compel the attendance of witnesses, and when the examination is conducted by an inspector or deputy inspector, he or she shall make a full and complete report thereof to the commission. [2013 c 23 s 277; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.460. Prior: 1953 c 104 s 2; prior: 1911 c 117 s 63, part; RRS s 10399, part.]

**RCW 80.04.470 Commission to enforce public service laws—Employees as peace officers.** It shall be the duty of the commission to enforce the provisions of this title and all other acts of this state affecting public service companies, the enforcement of which is not specifically vested in some other officer or tribunal. Any employee of the commission may, without a warrant, arrest any person found violating in his or her presence any provision of this title, or any rule or regulation adopted by the commission: PROVIDED, That each such employee shall be first specifically designated in writing by the commission or a member thereof as having been found to be a fit and proper person to exercise such authority. Upon being so designated, such person shall be a peace officer and a police officer for the purposes herein mentioned. [2013 c 23 s 278; 1961 c 173 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.470. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 101; RRS s 10450.]

**RCW 80.04.480 Rights of action not released—Penalties cumulative.** This title shall not have the effect to release or waive any right of action by the state or any person for any right, penalty or forfeiture which may have arisen or may hereafter arise under any law of this state; and all penalties accruing under this title shall be cumulative of each other, and a suit for the recovery of one penalty shall not be a bar to the recovery of any other. [1961 c 14 s 80.04.480. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 104; RRS s 10453. Formerly RCW 80.04.480 and 80.04.490.]

**RCW 80.04.500 Application to municipal utilities.** Nothing in this title authorizes the commission to make or enforce any order affecting rates, tolls, rentals, contracts or charges or service rendered, or the adequacy or sufficiency of the facilities, equipment, instrumentalities or buildings, or the reasonableness of rules or regulations made, furnished, used, supplied or in force affecting any telecommunications line, gas plant, electrical plant, system of sewerage, or water system owned and operated by any city or town, or to make or enforce any order relating to the safety of any telecommunications line, electrical plant, system of sewerage, or water system owned and operated by any city or town, but all other provisions enumerated herein apply to public utilities owned by any city or town. [2011 c 214 s 10; 1985 c 450 s 13; 1969 ex.s. c 210 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.500. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 105; RRS s 10454.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.04.510 Duties of attorney general.** It shall be the duty of the attorney general to represent and appear for the people of the state of Washington and the commission in all actions and proceedings involving any question under this title, or under or in reference to any act or order of the commission; and it shall be the duty of the attorney general generally to see that all laws affecting any of the persons or corporations herein enumerated are complied with, and that all laws, the enforcement of which devolves upon the commission, are enforced, and to that end he or she is authorized to institute, prosecute, and defend all necessary actions and proceedings. [2013 c 23 s 279; 1961 c 14 s 80.04.510. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 5; RRS s 10341.]

**RCW 80.04.520 Approval of lease of utility facilities.** In addition to any other powers and duties under this chapter, the commission shall have the authority to authorize and approve the terms of any lease of utility facilities by a public service company, as lessee, if the public service company makes proper application to the commission certifying that such authorization or approval is necessary or appropriate to exempt any owner of the facilities from being a public utility company under the federal Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935. [1979 ex.s. c 125 s 1.]

**RCW 80.04.530 Local exchange company that serves less than two percent of state's access lines—Regulatory exemptions—Reporting requirements.** (1)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, the following do not apply to a local exchange company that serves less than two percent of the access lines in the state of Washington: RCW 80.04.080, 80.04.300 through 80.04.330, and, except for RCW 80.08.140, chapters 80.08, 80.12, and 80.16 RCW.

(b) Nothing in this subsection (1) shall affect the commission's authority over the rates, service, accounts, valuations, estimates, or determinations of costs, as well as the authority to determine whether any expenditure is fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the service, material, supplies, or equipment received.

(c) For purposes of this subsection, the number of access lines served by a local exchange company includes the number of access lines served in this state by any affiliate of that local exchange company.

(2) Any local exchange company for which an exemption is provided under this section shall not be required to file reports or data with the commission, except each such company shall file with the commission an annual report that consists of its annual balance sheet and results of operations, both presented on a Washington state jurisdictional basis. This requirement may be satisfied by the filing of information or reports and underlying studies filed with exchange carrier entities or regulatory agencies if the jurisdictionally separated results of operations for Washington state can be obtained from the information or reports. This subsection shall not be applied to exempt a local exchange company from an obligation to respond to data requests in an adjudicative proceeding in which it is a party.

(3) The commission may, in response to customer complaints or on its own motion and after notice and hearing, establish additional reporting requirements for a specific local exchange company. [1995 c 110 s 1.]

**RCW 80.04.550 Thermal energy—Restrictions on authority of commission.**

(1) It is the intent of the legislature to exempt from commission regulation thermal energy services provided by thermal energy companies and combined heat and power facilities that are not otherwise regulated under this title. Nothing in this section shall prevent the commission from issuing or enforcing any order affecting combined heat and power facilities owned or operated by an electrical company that are subsidized by a regulated service.

(2) Nothing in this title shall authorize the commission to make or enforce any order affecting rates, tolls, rentals, contracts or charges for service rendered, or the adequacy or sufficiency of the facilities, equipment, instrumentalities, or buildings, or the reasonableness of rules or regulations made, furnished, used, supplied, or in force affecting any thermal energy system owned and operated by any thermal energy company or by a combined heat and power facility engaged in thermal energy services.

(3) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Thermal energy company" means any private person, company, association, partnership, joint venture, or corporation engaged in or proposing to engage in developing, producing, transmitting, distributing, delivering, furnishing, or selling to or for the public thermal energy services for any beneficial use other than electricity generation;

(b) "Thermal energy system" means any system that provides thermal energy for space heating, space cooling, or process uses from a central plant or combined heat and power facility, and that distributes the thermal energy to two or more buildings through a network of pipes;

(c) "Thermal energy" means heat or cold in the form of steam, heated or chilled water, or any other heated or chilled fluid or gaseous medium; and

(d) "Thermal energy services" means the provision of thermal energy from a thermal energy system and includes such ancillary services as energy audits, metering, billing, maintenance, and repairs related to thermal energy. [2015 3rd sp.s. c 19 s 12; 1996 c 33 s 2.]

**Finding—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 19:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Findings—1996 c 33:** "(1) The legislature finds:

(a) The Washington utilities and transportation commission has the authority to regulate district heating suppliers on the basis of financial solvency, system design integrity, and reasonableness of contract rates and rate formulas under \*chapter 80.62 RCW;

(b) Consumers have competitive alternatives to thermal energy companies for space heating and cooling and ancillary services;

(c) Consumers have recourse against thermal energy companies for unfair business practices under the consumer protection act; and

(d) Technology and marketing opportunities have advanced since the enactment of \*chapter 80.62 RCW to make the provision of cooling services, as well as heating services, an economical option for consumers.

(2) The legislature declares that the public health, safety, and welfare does not require the regulation of thermal energy companies by the Washington utilities and transportation commission." [1996 c 33 s 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Chapter 80.62 RCW was repealed by 1996 c 33 s 3.

**RCW 80.04.560 Finding.** The legislature finds that an electrical company's acquisition of coal transition power helps to achieve the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals by effecting an orderly transition to cleaner fuels and supports the state's public policy. [2011 c 180 s 303.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.04.570 Power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power. (Expires December 31, 2025.)** (1) On the petition of an electrical company, the commission shall approve or disapprove a power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power, as defined in RCW 80.80.010, and the recovery of related acquisition costs. No agreement for an electrical company's acquisition of coal transition power takes effect until it is approved by the commission.

(2) Any power purchase agreement for the acquisition of coal transition power pursuant to this section must provide for modification of the power purchase agreement to the satisfaction of the parties thereto in the event that a new or revised emission or performance standard or other new or revised operational or financial requirement or limitation directly or indirectly addressing greenhouse gas emissions is imposed by state or federal law, rules, or regulatory requirements. Such a modification to a power purchase agreement agreed to by the parties must be reviewed and considered for approval by the commission, considering the circumstances existing at the time of such a review, under procedures and standards set forth in this section. In the event the parties cannot agree to modification of the power purchase agreement, either party to the agreement has the right to terminate the agreement if it is adversely affected by this new standard, requirement, or limitation.

(3) When a petition is filed, the commission shall provide notice to the public and potentially affected parties and set the petition

for hearing as an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW. Any party may request that the commission expedite the hearing of that petition. The hearing of such a petition is not considered a general rate case. The electrical company must file supporting testimony and exhibits together with the power purchase agreement for coal transition power. Information provided by the facility owner to the purchasing electrical company for evaluating the costs and benefits associated with acquisition of coal transition power must be made available to other parties to the petition under a protective order entered by the commission. An administrative law judge of the commission may enter an initial order including findings of fact and conclusions of law, as provided in RCW 80.01.060(3). The commission shall issue a final order that approves or disapproves the power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power within one hundred eighty days after an electrical company files the petition.

(4) The commission must approve a power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power pursuant to this section only if the commission determines that, considering the circumstances existing at the time of such a review: The terms of such an agreement provide adequate protection to ratepayers and the electrical company during the term of such an agreement or in the event of early termination; the resource is needed by the electrical company to serve its ratepayers and the resource meets the need in a cost-effective manner as determined under the lowest reasonable cost resource standards under chapter 19.280 RCW, including the cost of the power purchase agreement plus the equity component as determined in this section. As part of these determinations, the commission shall consider, among other factors, the long-term economic risks and benefits to the electrical company and its ratepayers of such a long-term purchase.

(5) If the commission has not issued a final order within one hundred eighty days from the date the petition is filed, or if the commission disapproves the petition, the power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power is null and void. In the event the commission approves the agreement upon conditions other than those set forth in the petition, the electrical company has the right to reject the agreement.

(6) (a) Upon commission approval of an electrical company's power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power in accordance with this section, the electrical company is allowed to earn the equity component of its authorized rate of return in the same manner as if it had purchased or built an equivalent plant and to recover the cost of the coal transition power under the power purchase agreement. Any power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power that earns a return on equity may not be included in an imputed debt calculation for setting customer rates.

(b) For purposes of determining the equity value, the cost of an equivalent plant is the least cost purchased or self-built electric generation plant with equivalent capacity. In determining the least cost plant, the commission may rely on the electrical company's most recent filed integrated resource plan. The cost of an equivalent plant, in dollars per kilowatt, must be determined in the original process of commission approval for each power purchase agreement for coal transition power.

(c) The equivalent plant cost determined in the approval process must be amortized over the life of the power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power to determine the recovery of the equity value.



(d) The recovery of the equity component must be determined and approved in the review process set forth in this section. The approved equity value must be in addition to the approved cost of the power purchase agreement.

(7) Authorizing recovery of costs under a power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power does not prohibit the commission from authorizing recovery of an electrical company's acquisition of capacity resources for the purpose of integrating intermittent power or following load.

(8) Neither chapter 180, Laws of 2011 nor the commission's approval of a power purchase agreement for acquisition of coal transition power that includes the ability to earn the equity component of an electrical company's authorized rate of return establishes any precedent for an electrical company to receive an equity return on any other power purchase agreement or other power contract.

(9) For purposes of this section, "power purchase agreement" means a long-term financial commitment as defined in \*RCW 80.80.010(15) (b).

(10) This section expires December 31, 2025. [2011 c 180 s 304.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 80.80.010 was alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2) (k), changing subsection (15) to subsection (16).

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.04.580 Regulatory fee on wastewater companies regulated by the commission—Rule-making authority.** (1) Every wastewater company subject to regulation by the commission must, on or before the date specified by the commission for filing annual reports under RCW 80.04.080, pay to the commission a regulatory fee.

(2) The commission must assess such regulatory fees in amounts sufficient for the commission to recover the commission's actual and reasonable costs of supervising and regulating wastewater companies.

(3) Any payment of a fee assessed under this section made after the due date must include a late fee of two percent of the amount due.

(4) Delinquent fees accrue interest at the rate of one percent per month.

(5) The provisions of RCW 80.24.030, 80.24.040, and 80.24.050 apply to regulatory fees for wastewater companies.

(6) The commission is authorized and empowered to adopt and issue rules and regulations to implement this section, including establishing the methodologies and procedures for developing, assessing, and collecting fees under this section. [2012 c 111 s 1; 2011 c 214 s 4.]

**Effective date—2012 c 111:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2012." [2012 c 111 s 2.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Chapter 80.08 RCW  
SECURITIES**

**Sections**

- 80.08.010 Definition.
- 80.08.020 Control vested in state.
- 80.08.030 Authority to issue.
- 80.08.040 Prior to issuance—Filing required—Contents—Request for order establishing compliance.
- 80.08.043 Issuance of notes—Compliance with RCW 80.08.040—Exceptions.
- 80.08.047 Commission may exempt certain issuances—Order or rule—Public interest.
- 80.08.080 Capitalization of franchises or merger contracts prohibited.
- 80.08.090 Accounting for disposition of proceeds.
- 80.08.100 Issuance made contrary to this chapter—Penalties.
- 80.08.110 Penalty against companies.
- 80.08.120 Penalty against individuals.
- 80.08.130 Assumption of obligation or liability—Compliance with filing requirements.
- 80.08.140 State not obligated.
- 80.08.150 Authority of commission—Not affected by requirements of this chapter.
- 80.08.160 Small local exchange company—Chapter does not apply.

**RCW 80.08.010 Definition.** The term "public service company", as used in this chapter, shall mean every company now or hereafter engaged in business in this state as a public utility and subject to regulation as to rates and service by the utilities and transportation commission under the provisions of this title. [1961 c 14 s 80.08.010. Prior: 1959 c 248 s 2; 1953 c 95 s 4; 1933 c 151 s 1, part; RRS s 10439-1, part.]

**RCW 80.08.020 Control vested in state.** The power of public service companies to issue stocks and stock certificates or other evidence of interest or ownership, and bonds, notes and other evidences of indebtedness and to create liens on their property situated within this state is a special privilege, the right of supervision, regulation, restriction, and control of which is and shall continue to be vested in the state, and such power shall be exercised as provided by law and under such rules and regulations as the commission may prescribe. [1961 c 14 s 80.08.020. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 2; RRS s 10439-2.]

**RCW 80.08.030 Authority to issue.** A public service company may issue stock and stock certificates or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bonds, notes or other evidence of indebtedness payable on demand or at periods of more than twelve months after the date thereof, for the following purposes only: The acquisition of property, or the construction, completion, extension, or improvement of its facilities, or the improvement or maintenance of its service, or the

issuance of stock dividends, or the discharge or refunding of its obligations, or the reimbursement of moneys actually expended from income or from any other moneys in the treasury of the company not secured by or obtained from the issue of stock or stock certificates or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bonds, notes or other evidence of indebtedness of the company for any of the aforesaid purposes except maintenance of service, in cases where the applicant keeps its accounts and vouchers for such expenditures in such manner as to enable the commission to ascertain the amount of money so expended and the purpose for which the expenditure was made. [1961 c 14 s 80.08.030. Prior: 1953 c 95 s 5; 1937 c 30 s 1; 1933 c 151 s 3; RRS s 10439-3.]

**RCW 80.08.040 Prior to issuance—Filing required—Contents—**

**Request for order establishing compliance.** Any public service company that undertakes to issue stocks, stock certificates, other evidence of interest or ownership, bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness shall file with the commission before such issuance:

(1) A description of the purposes for which the issuance is made, including a certification by an officer authorized to do so that the proceeds from any such financing is for one or more of the purposes allowed by this chapter;

(2) A description of the proposed issuance including the terms of financing; and

(3) A statement as to why the transaction is in the public interest.

(4) Any public service company undertaking an issuance and making a filing in conformance with this section may at any time of such filing request the commission to enter a written order that such company has complied with the requirements of this section. The commission shall enter such written order after such company has provided all information and statements required by subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section. [1994 c 251 s 1; 1987 c 106 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.08.040. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 4; RRS s 10439-4.]

**RCW 80.08.043 Issuance of notes—Compliance with RCW 80.08.040—**

**Exceptions.** A public service company may issue notes, except demand notes, for proper purposes and not in violation of any provision of this chapter, or any other law, payable at periods of not more than twelve months after the date of issuance, without complying with the requirements of RCW 80.08.040, but no such note may be refunded, in whole or in part, by any issue of stock or stock certificates or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bonds, notes, or other evidence of indebtedness, without compliance with RCW 80.08.040. However, compliance with RCW 80.08.040 is required for the issuance of any note or notes issued as part of a single borrowing transaction of one million dollars or more payable at periods of less than twelve months after the date of issuance by any public service company that is subject to the federal power act unless such note or notes aggregates together with all other then outstanding notes and drafts of a maturity of twelve months or less on which such public service company is primarily or secondarily liable not more than five percent of the par value of other securities of such company then outstanding, computed, in the case of securities having no par value, on the basis

of the fair market value as of the date of issuance. [1997 c 162 s 1.]

**RCW 80.08.047 Commission may exempt certain issuances—Order or rule—Public interest.** The commission may from time to time by order or rule, and subject to such terms and conditions as may be prescribed in the order or rule, exempt any security or any class of securities for which a filing is required under this chapter or any electrical or natural gas company or class of electrical or natural gas company from the provisions of this chapter if it finds that the application of this chapter to such security, class of securities, electrical or natural gas company, or class of electrical or natural gas company is not required by the public interest. [1997 c 15 s 1.]

**RCW 80.08.080 Capitalization of franchises or merger contracts prohibited.** The commission shall have no power to authorize the capitalization of the right to be a corporation, or to authorize the capitalization of any franchise or permit whatsoever or the right to own, operate or enjoy any such franchise or permit, in excess of the amount (exclusive of any tax or annual charge) actually paid to the state or to a political subdivision thereof as the consideration for the grant of such franchise, permit or right; nor shall any contract for consolidation or lease be capitalized, nor shall any public service company hereafter issue any bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness against or as a lien upon any contract for consolidation or merger. [1961 c 14 s 80.08.080. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 7; RRS s 10439-7.]

**RCW 80.08.090 Accounting for disposition of proceeds.** The commission shall have the power to require public service companies to account for the disposition of the proceeds of all sales of stocks and stock certificates or other evidence of interest or ownership, and bonds, notes and other evidences of indebtedness, in such form and detail as it may deem advisable, and to establish such rules and regulations as it may deem reasonable and necessary to insure the disposition of such proceeds for the purpose or purposes specified in its order. [1961 c 14 s 80.08.090. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 8; RRS s 10439-8.]

**RCW 80.08.100 Issuance made contrary to this chapter—Penalties.** If a public service company issues any stock, or other evidence of interest or ownership, bond, note, or other evidence of indebtedness contrary to the provisions of this chapter, the company may be subject to penalty under RCW 80.08.110 and 80.08.120. [1994 c 251 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.08.100. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 9; RRS s 10439-9.]

**RCW 80.08.110 Penalty against companies.** Every public service company which, directly or indirectly, issues or causes to be issued, any stock or stock certificate or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bond, note, or other evidence of indebtedness, in nonconformity with the provisions of this chapter, or which applies

the proceeds from the sale thereof, or any part thereof, to any purpose other than the purpose or purposes allowed by this chapter, shall be subject to a penalty of not more than one thousand dollars for each offense. Every violation shall be a separate and distinct offense and in case of a continuing violation every day's continuance thereof shall be deemed to be a separate and distinct offense.

The act, omission, or failure of any officer, agent, or employee of any public service company acting within the scope of his or her official duties or employment, shall in every case be deemed to be the act, omission, or failure of such public service company. [2013 c 23 s 280; 1994 c 251 s 3; 1961 c 14 s 80.08.110. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 11; RRS s 10439-11.]

**RCW 80.08.120 Penalty against individuals.** Every officer, agent, or employee of a public service company, and every other person who knowingly authorizes, directs, aids in, issues or executes, or causes to be issued or executed, any stock or stock certificate or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bond, note or other evidence of indebtedness contrary to the provisions of this chapter, or who knowingly makes any false statement or representation or with knowledge of its falsity files or causes to be filed with the commission any false statement or representation, or causes or assists to be applied the proceeds or any part thereof, from the sale of any stock or stock certificate or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bond, note or other evidence of indebtedness, to any purpose not allowed by this chapter, or who, with knowledge that any stock or stock certificate or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bond, note or other evidence of indebtedness, has been issued or executed in violation of any of the provisions of this chapter, negotiates, or causes the same to be negotiated, shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. [1994 c 251 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.08.120. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 12; RRS s 10439-12.]

**RCW 80.08.130 Assumption of obligation or liability—Compliance with filing requirements.** Any public service company that assumes any obligation or liability as guarantor, indorser, surety or otherwise in respect to the securities of any other person, firm or corporation, when such securities are payable at periods of more than twelve months after the date thereof, shall comply with the filing requirements of RCW 80.08.040. [1994 c 251 s 5; 1961 c 14 s 80.08.130. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 13; RRS s 10439-13.]

**RCW 80.08.140 State not obligated.** No provision of this chapter, and no deed or act done or performed under or in connection therewith, shall be held or construed to obligate the state of Washington to pay or guarantee, in any manner whatsoever, any stock or stock certificate or other evidence of interest or ownership, or bond, note or other evidence of indebtedness, authorized, issued or executed under the provisions of this chapter. [1961 c 14 s 80.08.140. Prior: 1933 c 151 s 14; RRS s 10439-14.]

**RCW 80.08.150 Authority of commission—Not affected by requirements of this chapter.** No action by a public service company in compliance with nor by the commission in conformance with the requirements of this chapter may in any way affect the authority of the commission over rates, service, accounts, valuations, estimates, or determinations of costs, or any matters whatsoever that may come before it. [1994 c 251 s 6.]

**RCW 80.08.160 Small local exchange company—Chapter does not apply.** Subject to RCW 80.04.530(1), this chapter does not apply to a local exchange company that serves less than two percent of the access lines in the state of Washington. [1995 c 110 s 2.]

**Chapter 80.12 RCW**  
**TRANSFERS OF PROPERTY**

**Sections**

- 80.12.010 Definitions.
- 80.12.020 Order required to sell, merge, etc.—Exemption.
- 80.12.030 Disposal without authorization void—Approval or denial within eleven months, extension permitted.
- 80.12.040 Authority required to acquire property or securities of utility.
- 80.12.045 Small local exchange company—Chapter does not apply.
- 80.12.050 Rules and regulations.
- 80.12.060 Penalty.

**RCW 80.12.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Person" means an individual, partnership, joint venture, corporation, association, firm, public service company, or any other entity, however organized.

(2) "Public service company" means every company now or hereafter engaged in business in this state as a public utility and subject to regulation as to rates and service by the utilities and transportation commission under the provisions of this title. [2009 c 24 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.12.010. Prior: 1953 c 95 s 6; 1941 c 159 s 1, part; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10440a.]

**Finding—2009 c 24:** "The legislature finds and declares that the Washington utilities and transportation commission should require that a net benefit to customers be shown in order to approve the acquisition of the franchises, properties, or facilities owned by a gas or electrical company in the state and which are necessary or useful in the performance of the duties of a gas or electrical company, and that its decision to approve or deny such an acquisition should be made within a prescribed period of time." [2009 c 24 s 1.]

**RCW 80.12.020 Order required to sell, merge, etc.—Exemption.**

(1) No public service company shall sell, lease, assign or otherwise dispose of the whole or any part of its franchises, properties or facilities whatsoever, which are necessary or useful in the performance of its duties to the public, and no public service company shall, by any means whatsoever, directly or indirectly, merge or consolidate any of its franchises, properties or facilities with any other public service company, without having secured from the commission an order authorizing it to do so. The commission shall not approve any transaction under this section that would result in a person, directly or indirectly, acquiring a controlling interest in a gas or electrical company without a finding that the transaction would provide a net benefit to the customers of the company.

(2) This section shall not apply to any sale, lease, assignment or other disposal of such franchises, properties or facilities to a special purpose district as defined in RCW 36.96.010, city, county, or town. [2009 c 24 s 3; 1981 c 117 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.12.020. Prior: 1945 c 75 s 1; 1941 c 159 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1945 s 10440b.]

**Finding—2009 c 24:** See note following RCW 80.12.010.

**RCW 80.12.030 Disposal without authorization void—Approval or denial within eleven months, extension permitted.** (1) Any such sale, lease, assignment, or other disposition, merger or consolidation made without authority of the commission shall be void.

(2) The commission shall enter an order approving or denying a transaction under RCW 80.12.020 or 80.12.040 within eleven months of the date of filing, which the commission may extend up to four months for cause. [2009 c 24 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.12.030. Prior: 1941 c 159 s 3; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10440c.]

**Finding—2009 c 24:** See note following RCW 80.12.010.

**RCW 80.12.040 Authority required to acquire property or securities of utility.** No public service company shall, directly or indirectly, purchase, acquire, or become the owner of any of the franchises, properties, facilities, capital stocks or bonds of any other public service company unless authorized so to do by the commission. Nothing contained in this chapter shall prevent the holding of stocks or other securities heretofore lawfully acquired or prohibit, upon the surrender or exchange of said stocks or other securities pursuant to a reorganization plan, the purchase, acquisition, taking or holding by the owner of a proportionate amount of the stocks or other securities of any new corporation organized to take over at foreclosure or other sale, the property of the corporation the stocks or securities of which have been thus surrendered or exchanged. Any contract by any public service company for the purchase, acquisition, assignment or transfer to it of any of the stocks or other securities of any other public service company, directly or indirectly, without the approval of the commission shall be void and of no effect. [1961 c 14 s 80.12.040. Prior: 1941 c 159 s 4; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10440d.]

**RCW 80.12.045 Small local exchange company—Chapter does not apply.** Subject to RCW 80.04.530(1), this chapter does not apply to a local exchange company that serves less than two percent of the access lines in the state of Washington. [1995 c 110 s 3.]

**RCW 80.12.050 Rules and regulations.** The commission shall have power to promulgate rules and regulations to make effective the provisions of this chapter. [1961 c 14 s 80.12.050. Prior: 1941 c 159 s 5; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10440e.]

**RCW 80.12.060 Penalty.** The provisions of RCW 80.04.380 and 80.04.385 as to penalties shall be applicable to public service companies, their officers, agents and employees failing to comply with the provisions of this chapter. [1961 c 14 s 80.12.060. Prior: 1941 c 159 s 6; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10440f.]



**Chapter 80.16 RCW**  
**AFFILIATED INTERESTS**

**Sections**

- 80.16.010 Definitions.
- 80.16.020 Dealings with affiliated interests—Prior filing with commission required—Commission may disapprove.
- 80.16.030 Payments to affiliated interest disallowed if not reasonable.
- 80.16.040 Satisfactory proof, what constitutes.
- 80.16.050 Commission's control is continuing.
- 80.16.055 Small local exchange company—Chapter does not apply.
- 80.16.060 Summary order on nonapproved payments.
- 80.16.070 Summary order on payments after disallowance.
- 80.16.080 Court action to enforce orders.
- 80.16.090 Review of orders.

**RCW 80.16.010 Definitions.** As used in this chapter the term "public service company" shall include every corporation engaged in business as a public utility and subject to regulation as to rates and service by the utilities and transportation commission under the provisions of this title.

As used in this chapter, the term "affiliated interest" means:

Every corporation and person owning or holding directly or indirectly five percent or more of the voting securities of any public service company engaged in any intrastate business in this state;

Every corporation and person, other than those above specified, in any chain of successive ownership of five percent or more of voting securities, the chain beginning with the holder of the voting securities of such public service company;

Every corporation five percent or more of whose voting securities are owned by any person or corporation owning five percent or more of the voting securities of such public service company or by any person or corporation in any such chain of successive ownership of five percent or more of voting securities;

Every corporation or person with which the public service company has a management or service contract; and

Every person who is an officer or director of such public service company or of any corporation in any chain of successive ownership of five percent or more of voting securities. [1961 c 14 s 80.16.010. Prior: 1953 c 95 s 7; 1933 c 152 s 1, part; RRS s 10440-1, part.]

**RCW 80.16.020 Dealings with affiliated interests—Prior filing with commission required—Commission may disapprove.** Every public service company shall file with the commission a verified copy, or a verified summary if unwritten, of a contract or arrangement providing for the furnishing of management, supervisory[, ] construction, engineering, accounting, legal, financial, or similar services, or any contract or arrangement for the purchase, sale, lease, or exchange of any property, right, or thing, or for the furnishing of any service, property, right, or thing, other than those enumerated in this section, hereafter made or entered into between a public service company and any affiliated interest as defined in this chapter, including open account advances from or to the affiliated interests.

The filing must be made prior to the effective date of the contract or arrangement. Modifications or amendments to the contracts or arrangements with affiliated interests must be filed with the commission prior to the effective date of the modification or amendment. Any time after receipt of the contract or arrangement, the commission may institute an investigation and disapprove the contract, arrangement, modification, or amendment thereto if the commission finds the public service company has failed to prove that it is reasonable and consistent with the public interest. The commission may disapprove any such contract or arrangement if satisfactory proof is not submitted to the commission of the cost to the affiliated interest of rendering the services or of furnishing the property or service described in this section. [1998 c 47 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.16.020. Prior: 1941 c 160 s 1; 1933 c 152 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 10440-2.]

**RCW 80.16.030 Payments to affiliated interest disallowed if not reasonable.** In any proceeding, whether upon the commission's own motion or upon complaint, involving the rates or practices of any public service company, the commission may exclude from the accounts of the public service company any payment or compensation to an affiliated interest for any services rendered or property or service furnished, as described in this section, under existing contracts or arrangements with the affiliated interest unless the public service company establishes the reasonableness of the payment or compensation. In the proceeding the commission shall disallow the payment or compensation, in whole or in part, in the absence of satisfactory proof that it is reasonable in amount. In such a proceeding, any payment or compensation may be disapproved or disallowed by the commission, in whole or in part, if satisfactory proof is not submitted to the commission of the cost to the affiliated interest of rendering the service or furnishing the property or service described in this section. [1998 c 47 s 2; 1961 c 14 s 80.16.030. Prior: 1933 c 152 s 3; RRS s 10440-3.]

**RCW 80.16.040 Satisfactory proof, what constitutes.** No proof shall be satisfactory, within the meaning of RCW 80.16.010 through 80.16.030, unless it includes the original (or verified copies) of the relevant cost records and other relevant accounts of the affiliated interest, or such abstract thereof or summary taken therefrom, as the commission may deem adequate, properly identified and duly authenticated: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the commission may, where reasonable, approve or disapprove such contracts or arrangements without the submission of such cost records or accounts. [1961 c 14 s 80.16.040. Prior: 1933 c 152 s 4; RRS s 10440-4.]

**RCW 80.16.050 Commission's control is continuing.** The commission shall have continuing supervisory control over the terms and conditions of such contracts and arrangements as are herein described so far as necessary to protect and promote the public interest. The commission shall have the same jurisdiction over the modifications or amendment of contracts or arrangements as are herein described as it has over such original contracts or arrangements. The fact that a contract or arrangement has been filed with, or the commission has approved entry into such contracts or arrangements as

described herein shall not preclude disallowance or disapproval of payments made pursuant thereto, if upon actual experience under such contract or arrangement, it appears that the payments provided for or made were or are unreasonable. Every order of the commission approving any such contract or arrangement shall be expressly conditioned upon the reserved power of the commission to revise and amend the terms and conditions thereof, if, when, and as necessary to protect and promote the public interest. [1998 c 47 s 3; 1961 c 14 s 80.16.050. Prior: 1933 c 152 s 5; RRS s 10440-5.]

**RCW 80.16.055 Small local exchange company—Chapter does not apply.** Subject to RCW 80.04.530(1), this chapter does not apply to a local exchange company that serves less than two percent of the access lines in the state of Washington. [1995 c 110 s 4.]

**RCW 80.16.060 Summary order on nonapproved payments.** Whenever the commission shall find upon investigation that any public service company is giving effect to any such contract or arrangement without such contract or arrangement having been filed or approved, the commission may issue a summary order prohibiting the public service company from treating any payments made under the terms of such contract or arrangement as operating expenses or as capital expenditures for rate or valuation purposes, unless and until such contract or arrangement has been filed with the commission or until payments have received the approval of the commission. [1998 c 47 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.16.060. Prior: 1933 c 152 s 6; RRS s 10440-6.]

**RCW 80.16.070 Summary order on payments after disallowance.** Whenever the commission finds upon investigation that any public service company is making payments to an affiliated interest, although the payments have been disallowed or disapproved by the commission in a proceeding involving the public service company's rates or practices, the commission shall issue a summary order directing the public service company to not treat the payments as operating expenses or capital expenditures for rate or valuation purposes, unless and until the payments have received the approval of the commission. [1998 c 47 s 5; 1961 c 14 s 80.16.070. Prior: 1933 c 152 s 7; RRS s 10440-7.]

**RCW 80.16.080 Court action to enforce orders.** The superior court of Thurston county is authorized to enforce such orders to cease and desist by appropriate process, including the issuance of a preliminary injunction, upon the suit of the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.16.080. Prior: 1933 c 152 s 8; RRS s 10440-8.]

**RCW 80.16.090 Review of orders.** Any public service company or affiliated interest deeming any decision or order of the commission to be in any respect or manner improper, unjust or unreasonable may have the same reviewed in the courts in the same manner and by the same procedure as is now provided by law for review of any other order or

decision of the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.16.090. Prior: 1933 c 152  
s 9; RRS s 10440-9.]

**Chapter 80.20 RCW**  
**INVESTIGATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANIES**

**Sections**

- 80.20.010 Definition.
- 80.20.020 Cost of investigation may be assessed against company.
- 80.20.030 Interest on unpaid assessment—Action to collect.
- 80.20.040 Commission's determination of necessity as evidence.
- 80.20.050 Order of commission not subject to review.
- 80.20.060 Limitation on frequency of investigation.

**RCW 80.20.010 Definition.** As used in this chapter, the term "public service company" means any person, firm, association, or corporation, whether public or private, operating a utility or public service enterprise subject in any respect to regulation by the commission under the provisions of this title. [1961 c 14 s 80.20.010. Prior: 1953 c 95 s 8; 1939 c 203 s 1; RRS s 10458-6.]

**RCW 80.20.020 Cost of investigation may be assessed against company.** Whenever the commission in any proceeding upon its own motion or upon complaint shall deem it necessary in order to carry out the duties imposed upon it by law to investigate the books, accounts, practices and activities of, or make any valuation or appraisal of the property of any public service company, or to investigate or appraise any phase of its operations, or to render any engineering or accounting service to or in connection with any public service company, and the cost thereof to the commission exceeds in amount the ordinary regulatory fees paid by such public service company during the preceding calendar year or estimated to be paid during the current year, whichever is more, such public service company shall pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to such investigation, valuation, appraisal or services. The commission shall ascertain such expenses, and, after giving notice and an opportunity to be heard, shall render a bill therefor by registered mail to the public service company, either at the conclusion of the investigation, valuation, appraisal or services, or from time to time during its progress. Within thirty days after a bill has been mailed such public service company shall pay to the commission the amount of the bill, and the commission shall transmit such payment to the state treasurer who shall credit it to the public service revolving fund. The total amount which any public service company shall be required to pay under the provisions of this section in any calendar year shall not exceed one percent of the gross operating revenues derived by such public service company from its intrastate operations during the last preceding calendar year. If such company did not operate during all of the preceding year the calculations shall be based upon estimated gross revenues for the current year. [1961 c 14 s 80.20.020. Prior: 1939 c 203 s 2(a); RRS s 10458-6a(a).]

**RCW 80.20.030 Interest on unpaid assessment—Action to collect.** Amounts so assessed against any public service company not paid within thirty days after mailing of the bill therefor, shall draw interest at the rate of six percent per annum from the date of mailing of the

bill. Upon failure of the public service company to pay the bill, the attorney general shall proceed in the name of the state by civil action in the superior court for Thurston county against such public service company to collect the amount due, together with interest and costs of suit. [1961 c 14 s 80.20.030. Prior: 1939 c 203 s 2(b); RRS s 10458-6a(b).]

**RCW 80.20.040 Commission's determination of necessity as evidence.** In such action the commission's determination of the necessity of the investigation, valuation, appraisal or services shall be conclusive evidence of such necessity, and its findings and determination of facts expressed in bills rendered pursuant to RCW 80.20.020 through 80.20.060 or in any proceedings determinative of such bills shall be prima facie evidence of such facts. [1961 c 14 s 80.20.040. Prior: 1939 c 203 s 2(c); RRS s 10458-6a(c).]

**RCW 80.20.050 Order of commission not subject to review.** In view of the civil action provided for in RCW 80.20.020 through 80.20.060 any order made by the commission in determining the amount of such bill shall not be reviewable in court, but the mere absence of such right of review shall not prejudice the rights of defendants in the civil action. [1961 c 14 s 80.20.050. Prior: 1939 c 203 s 2(d); RRS s 10458-6a(d).]

**RCW 80.20.060 Limitation on frequency of investigation.** Expenses of a complete valuation, rate and service investigation shall not be assessed against a public service company under this chapter if such company shall have been subjected to and paid the expenses of a complete valuation, rate and service investigation during the preceding five years, unless the properties or operations of the company have materially changed or there has been a substantial change in its value for rate making purposes or in any other circumstances and conditions affecting rates and services: PROVIDED, That the provisions of this section shall not be a limitation on the frequency of assessment of costs of investigation where such investigation results from a tariff filing or tariff filings by a public service company to increase rates. [1971 ex.s. c 143 s 8; 1961 c 14 s 80.20.060. Prior: 1939 c 203 s 2(e); RRS s 10458-6a(e).]

**Chapter 80.24 RCW**  
**REGULATORY FEES**

**Sections**

- 80.24.010 Companies to file reports of gross revenue and pay fees—  
Delinquent fee payments.
- 80.24.020 Fees to approximate reasonable cost of regulation.
- 80.24.030 Intent of legislature—Regulatory cost records to be kept  
by commission.
- 80.24.040 Disposition of fees.
- 80.24.050 Penalty for failure to pay fees—Disposition of fines and  
penalties.
- 80.24.060 Pipeline safety fee—Reports—Procedure to contest fees—  
Regulatory incentive program.

*Assessment of public utilities for property tax purposes: Chapter  
84.12 RCW.*

*Corporations, annual license fees for public service companies: RCW  
23B.01.590.*

*Easements of public service companies taxable as personalty: RCW  
84.20.010.*

*Public utility tax: Chapter 82.16 RCW.*

**RCW 80.24.010 Companies to file reports of gross revenue and pay fees—Delinquent fee payments.** Every public service company subject to regulation by the commission shall, on or before the date specified by the commission for filing annual reports under RCW 80.04.080, file with the commission a statement on oath showing its gross operating revenue from intrastate operations for the preceding calendar year or portion thereof and pay to the commission a fee equal to one-tenth of one percent of the first \$50,000 of gross operating revenue, plus four-tenths of one percent of any gross operating revenue in excess of \$50,000, except that a large combination utility as defined in RCW 80.86.010 shall pay a fee equal to 0.001 percent of the first \$50,000 of gross operating revenue, plus 0.005 percent of any gross operating revenue in excess of \$50,000: PROVIDED, That the commission may, by rule, set minimum fees that do not exceed the cost of collecting the fees. The commission may by rule waive any or all of the minimum fee established pursuant to this section.

The percentage rates of gross operating revenue to be paid in any year may be decreased by the commission for any class of companies subject to the payment of such fees, by general order entered before March 1st of such year, and for such purpose such companies shall be classified as follows:

Electrical, gas, water, telecommunications, and irrigation companies shall constitute class one. Every other company subject to regulation by the commission, for which regulatory fees are not otherwise fixed by law shall pay fees as herein provided and shall constitute additional classes according to kinds of businesses engaged in.

Any payment of the fee imposed by this section made after its due date shall include a late fee of two percent of the amount due.

Delinquent fees shall accrue interest at the rate of one percent per month. [2024 c 351 s 13; 2022 c 159 s 1; 2003 c 296 s 1; 1994 c 83 s 1; 1990 c 48 s 1; 1985 c 450 s 14; 1961 c 14 s 80.24.010. Prior: 1955 c 125 s 2; prior: 1939 c 123 s 1, part; 1937 c 158 s 1, part; 1929 c 107 s 1, part; 1923 c 107 s 1, part; 1921 c 113 s 1, part; RRS s 10417, part.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.24.020 Fees to approximate reasonable cost of regulation.** In fixing the percentage rates of gross operating revenue to be paid in any year, the commission shall consider all moneys then in the public service revolving fund and the fees currently to be paid into such fund, to the end that the fees collected from the several classes of companies shall be approximately the same as the reasonable cost of supervising and regulating such classes of companies. [1961 c 14 s 80.24.020. Prior: 1955 c 125 s 3; prior: 1939 c 123 s 1, part; 1937 c 158 s 1, part; RRS s 10417, part.]

**RCW 80.24.030 Intent of legislature—Regulatory cost records to be kept by commission.** It is the intent and purpose of the legislature that the several groups of public service companies shall each contribute sufficient in fees to the commission to pay the reasonable cost of regulating the several groups respectively. The commission shall keep accurate records of the costs incurred in regulating and supervising the several groups of companies subject to regulation or supervision and such records shall be open to inspection by all interested parties. The records and data upon which the commission's determination is made shall be considered prima facie correct in any proceeding instituted to challenge the reasonableness or correctness of any order of the commission fixing fees and distributing regulatory expenses. [1961 c 14 s 80.24.030. Prior: 1937 c 158 s 7; RRS s 10417-5.]

**RCW 80.24.040 Disposition of fees.** All moneys collected under the provisions of this chapter shall within thirty days be paid to the state treasurer and by the state treasurer deposited to the public service revolving fund: PROVIDED, That all fees, fines, forfeitures and penalties collected or assessed by a district court because of the violation of a state law shall be remitted as provided in chapter 3.62 RCW as now exists or is later amended. [1987 c 202 s 239; 1969 ex.s. c 199 s 36; 1961 c 14 s 80.24.040. Prior: 1937 c 158 s 6; RRS s 10417-4.]

**Intent—1987 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.04.190.

**RCW 80.24.050 Penalty for failure to pay fees—Disposition of fines and penalties.** Every person, firm, company or corporation, or the officers, agents or employees thereof, failing or neglecting to pay the fees herein required shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. All fines and penalties collected under the provisions of this chapter



shall be deposited into the public service revolving fund of the state treasury: PROVIDED, That all fees, fines, forfeitures and penalties collected or assessed by a district court because of the violation of a state law shall be remitted as provided in chapter 3.62 RCW as now exists or is later amended. [1987 c 202 s 240; 1979 ex.s. c 198 s 1; 1969 ex.s. c 199 s 37; 1961 c 14 s 80.24.050. Prior: 1923 c 107 s 2; 1921 c 113 s 3; RRS s 10419.]

**Intent—1987 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.04.190.

**RCW 80.24.060 Pipeline safety fee—Reports—Procedure to contest fees—Regulatory incentive program.** (1)(a) Every gas company and every interstate gas pipeline company subject to inspection or enforcement by the commission shall pay an annual pipeline safety fee to the commission. The pipeline safety fees received by the commission shall be deposited in the pipeline safety account created in RCW 81.88.050.

(b) The aggregate amount of fees set shall be sufficient to recover the reasonable costs of administering the pipeline safety program, taking into account federal funds used to offset the costs. The fees established under this section shall be designed to generate revenue not exceeding appropriated levels of funding for the current fiscal year. At a minimum, the fees established under this section shall be sufficient to adequately fund pipeline inspection personnel, the timely review of pipeline safety and integrity plans, the timely development of spill response plans, the timely development of accurate maps of pipeline locations, participation in federal pipeline safety efforts to the extent allowed by law, and the staffing of the citizens committee on pipeline safety.

(c) Increases in the aggregate amount of fees over the immediately preceding fiscal year are subject to the requirements of RCW 43.135.055.

(2) The commission shall by rule establish the methodology it will use to set the appropriate fee for each entity subject to this section. The methodology shall provide for an equitable distribution of program costs among all entities subject to the fee. The fee methodology shall provide for:

(a) Direct assignment of average costs associated with annual standard inspections, including the average number of inspection days per year. In establishing these directly assignable costs, the commission shall consider the requirements and guidelines of the federal government, state safety standards, and good engineering practices; and

(b) A uniform and equitable means of estimating and allocating costs of other duties relating to inspecting pipelines for safety that are not directly assignable, including but not limited to design review and construction inspections, specialized inspections, incident investigations, geographic mapping system design and maintenance, and administrative support.

(3) The commission shall require reports from those entities subject to this section in the form and at such time as necessary to set the fees. After considering the reports supplied by the entities, the commission shall set the amount of the fee payable by each entity by general order entered before a date established by rule.

(4) For companies subject to RCW 80.24.010, the commission shall collect the pipeline safety fee as part of the fee specified in RCW 80.24.010. The commission shall allocate the moneys collected under RCW 80.24.010 between the pipeline safety program and for other regulatory purposes. The commission shall adopt rules that assure that fee moneys related to the pipeline safety program are maintained separately from other moneys collected by the commission under this chapter.

(5) Any payment of the fee imposed by this section made after its due date must include a late fee of two percent of the amount due. Delinquent fees accrue interest at the rate of one percent per month.

(6) The commission shall keep accurate records of the costs incurred in administering its gas pipeline safety program, and the records are open to inspection by interested parties. The records and data upon which the commission's determination is made shall be prima facie correct in any proceeding to challenge the reasonableness or correctness of any order of the commission fixing fees and distributing regulatory expenses.

(7) If any entity seeks to contest the imposition of a fee imposed under this section, that entity shall pay the fee and request a refund within six months of the due date for the payment by filing a petition for a refund with the commission. The commission shall establish by rule procedures for handling refund petitions and may delegate the decisions on refund petitions to the secretary of the commission.

(8) After establishing the fee methodology by rule as required in subsection (2) of this section, the commission shall create a regulatory incentive program for pipeline safety programs in collaboration with the citizens committee on pipeline safety. The regulatory incentive program created by the commission shall not shift costs among companies paying pipeline safety fees and shall not decrease revenue to pipeline safety programs. [2009 c 91 s 1; 2001 c 238 s 2.]

**Intent—Finding—2001 c 238:** "The intent of this act is to ensure a sustainable, comprehensive, pipeline safety program, to protect the health and safety of the citizens of the state of Washington, and [to] maintain the quality of the state's environment. The legislature finds that public safety and the environment are best protected by securing permanent funding for this program through establishment of a regulatory fee imposed on hazardous liquids and gas pipelines." [2001 c 238 s 1.]

**Effective date—2001 c 238:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2001." [2001 c 238 s 13.]

**Chapter 80.28 RCW**  
**GAS, ELECTRICAL, AND WATER COMPANIES**

**Sections**

- 80.28.005 Definitions.
- 80.28.010 Duties as to rates, services, and facilities—Limitations on termination of utility service for residential heating and of electric or water utility service during heat-related alerts.
- 80.28.020 Commission to fix just, reasonable, and compensatory rates.
- 80.28.022 Water company rates—Reserve account.
- 80.28.024 Legislative finding.
- 80.28.025 Encouragement of energy cogeneration, conservation, and production from renewable resources—Consideration of water conservation goals.
- 80.28.030 Commission may order improved quality of commodity—Ordering improvements to the storage, distribution, or supply of water—Ordering improvements to the system of sewerage.
- 80.28.040 Commission may order improved service—Water companies, system of sewerage noncompliance, receivership.
- 80.28.050 Tariff schedules to be filed with commission—Public schedules.
- 80.28.060 Tariff changes—Statutory notice—Exception—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.
- 80.28.065 Tariff schedule—Energy conservation—Payment by successive property owners—Notice—Rules.
- 80.28.068 Rates—Low-income customers.
- 80.28.070 Sliding scale of charges permitted.
- 80.28.074 Legislative declaration.
- 80.28.075 Banded rates—Natural gas and electric services.
- 80.28.080 Published rates to be charged—Exceptions.
- 80.28.090 Unreasonable preference prohibited.
- 80.28.100 Rate discrimination prohibited—Exception.
- 80.28.110 Service to be furnished on reasonable notice.
- 80.28.120 Effect on existing contracts.
- 80.28.130 Repairs, improvements, changes, additions, or extensions may be directed.
- 80.28.140 Inspection of gas and water meters.
- 80.28.150 Inspection of electric meters.
- 80.28.160 Testing apparatus to be furnished.
- 80.28.170 Testing at consumer's request.
- 80.28.180 Rules and regulations.
- 80.28.185 Water companies or wastewater companies within counties—Commission may regulate.
- 80.28.190 Gas companies—Certificate—Violations—Commission powers—Penalty—Fees.
- 80.28.200 Gas companies—Refunds of charges.
- 80.28.220 Gas companies—Right of eminent domain—Purposes.
- 80.28.230 Gas companies—Use for purpose acquired exclusive—Disposition of property.
- 80.28.240 Recovery of damages by utility company for tampering, unauthorized connections, diversion of services.

- 80.28.250 Water companies—Fire hydrants.
- 80.28.260 Adoption of policies to provide financial incentives for energy efficiency programs.
- 80.28.270 Water or wastewater companies—Extension, installation, or connection charges.
- 80.28.275 Water or wastewater companies—Assumption of substandard water system or system of sewerage—Limited immunity from liability.
- 80.28.280 Compressed natural gas—Motor vehicle refueling stations—Public interest.
- 80.28.290 Compressed natural gas—Refueling stations—Identify barriers.
- 80.28.300 Gas, electrical companies encouraged to provide customers with landscaping information and to request voluntary donations for urban forestry.
- 80.28.303 Conservation service tariff—Contents of filing—Rate base—Duties of commission.
- 80.28.306 Conservation bonds—Conservation investment assets as collateral—Priority of security interests—Transfers.
- 80.28.309 Costs as bondable conservation investment.
- 80.28.310 Tariff for irrigation pumping service—Authority for electrical companies to buy back electricity.
- 80.28.320 Regulation of battery charging facilities.
- 80.28.330 Certificate of public convenience and necessity—Bond or equivalent surety—Rule-making authority.
- 80.28.340 Determination that a wastewater company is unfit to provide wastewater service on a system of sewerage—Commission may order transfer—Power of eminent domain.
- 80.28.350 Petition to place a wastewater company in receivership—Power of eminent domain.
- 80.28.360 Electric vehicle supply equipment—Capital expenditures—Incentive rate of return on investment.
- 80.28.365 Electric vehicle supply equipment, programs, or services—Electrification of transportation plan—Review—Issuance of acknowledgment.
- 80.28.370 Community solar companies—Definitions.
- 80.28.375 Community solar companies—Requirements to engage in business—Registration.
- 80.28.380 Gas companies—Conservation targets.
- 80.28.385 Renewable natural gas program.
- 80.28.390 Tariff—Voluntary renewable natural gas service.
- 80.28.395 Natural gas—Cost of greenhouse gas emissions—Calculation.
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- 80.28.405 Clean energy action plan—Greenhouse gas emissions—Calculation of cost.
- 80.28.410 Clean energy action plan—Account for and defer costs.
- 80.28.420 Gas company recovery of costs associated with replacing certain pipeline facilities—Information to be submitted to the commission—Definitions.
- 80.28.425 Multiyear rate plan.
- 80.28.430 Authority to enter into agreements with certain organizations—Agreement to govern manner in which

financial assistance is provided to an organization—  
Requirements.

- 80.28.435 Replacement of natural gas with hydrogen—Notice to  
commission—Tariff approval.
- 80.28.440 Wildfire mitigation plan—Review/revision.
- 80.28.450 Thermal energy networks.
- 80.28.460 Thermal energy network pilot project program.
- 80.28.470 Thermal energy network pilot project—Request for  
proposals.
- 80.28.480 Merger of gas and thermal energy rate bases.
- 80.28.900 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered  
domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.

*Construction projects in state waters: Chapter 77.55 RCW.*

*Franchises on state highways: Chapter 47.44 RCW.*

*Reduced utility rates for low-income senior citizens and other low-  
income citizens: RCW 74.38.070.*

**RCW 80.28.005 Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Bondable conservation investment" means all expenditures made by electrical, gas, or water companies with respect to energy or water conservation measures and services intended to improve the efficiency of electricity, gas, or water end use, including related carrying costs if:

(a) The conservation measures and services do not produce assets that would be bondable utility property under the general utility mortgage of the electrical, gas, or water company;

(b) The commission has determined that the expenditures were incurred in conformance with the terms and conditions of a conservation service tariff in effect with the commission at the time the costs were incurred, and at the time of such determination the commission finds that the company has proven that the costs were prudent, that the terms and conditions of the financing are reasonable, and that financing under this chapter is more favorable to the customer than other reasonably available alternatives;

(c) The commission has approved inclusion of the expenditures in rate base and has not ordered that they be currently expensed; and

(d) The commission has not required that the measures demonstrate that energy savings have persisted at a certain level for a certain period before approving the cost of these investments as bondable conservation investment.

(2) "Conservation bonds" means bonds, notes, certificates of beneficial interests in trusts, or other evidences of indebtedness or ownership that:

(a) The commission determines at or before the time of issuance are issued to finance or refinance bondable conservation investment by an electrical, gas or water company; and

(b) Rely partly or wholly for repayment on conservation investment assets and revenues arising with respect thereto.

(3) "Conservation investment assets" means the statutory right of an electrical, gas, or water company:

(a) To have included in rate base all of its bondable conservation investment and related carrying costs; and

(b) To receive through rates revenues sufficient to recover the bondable conservation investment and the costs of equity and debt capital associated with it, including, without limitation, the payment of principal, premium, if any, and interest on conservation bonds.

(4) "Finance subsidiary" means any corporation, company, association, joint stock association, or trust that is beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by an electrical, gas, or water company, or in the case of a trust issuing conservation bonds consisting of beneficial interests, for which an electrical, gas, or water company or a subsidiary thereof is the grantor, or an unaffiliated entity formed for the purpose of financing or refinancing approved conservation investment, and that acquires conservation investment assets directly or indirectly from such company in a transaction approved by the commission. [1994 c 268 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.010 Duties as to rates, services, and facilities—  
Limitations on termination of utility service for residential heating  
and of electric or water utility service during heat-related alerts.**

(1) All charges made, demanded or received by any gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company for gas, electricity or water, or for any service rendered or to be rendered in connection therewith, shall be just, fair, reasonable and sufficient. Reasonable charges necessary to cover the cost of administering the collection of voluntary donations for the purposes of supporting the development and implementation of evergreen community management plans and ordinances under RCW 80.28.300 must be deemed as prudent and necessary for the operation of a utility.

(2) Every gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, and water company shall furnish and supply such service, instrumentalities and facilities as shall be safe, adequate and efficient, and in all respects just and reasonable.

(3) All rules and regulations issued by any gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company, affecting or pertaining to the sale or distribution of its product or service, must be just and reasonable.

(4) Utility service for residential space heating shall not be terminated between November 15 through March 15 if the customer:

(a) Notifies the utility of the inability to pay the bill. This notice should be provided within five business days of receiving a payment overdue notice unless there are extenuating circumstances. If the customer fails to notify the utility within five business days and service is terminated, the customer can, by fulfilling the requirements of this section, receive the protections of this chapter;

(b) Provides self-certification of household income for the prior twelve months to a grantee of the department of commerce, which administers federally funded energy assistance programs. The grantee shall determine that the household income does not exceed the maximum allowed for eligibility under the state's plan for low-income energy assistance under 42 U.S.C. 8624 and shall provide a dollar figure that is seven percent of household income. The grantee may verify information provided in the self-certification;

(c) Has applied for home heating assistance from applicable government and private sector organizations and certifies that any

assistance received will be applied to the current bill and future utility bills;

(d) Has applied for low-income weatherization assistance to the utility or other appropriate agency if such assistance is available for the dwelling;

(e) Agrees to a payment plan and agrees to maintain the payment plan. The plan will be designed both to pay the past due bill by the following October 15th and to pay for continued utility service. If the past due bill is not paid by the following October 15, the customer is not eligible for protections under this chapter until the past due bill is paid. The plan may not require monthly payments in excess of seven percent of the customer's monthly income plus one-twelfth of any arrearage accrued from the date application is made and thereafter during November 15 through March 15. A customer may agree to pay a higher percentage during this period, but shall not be in default unless payment during this period is less than seven percent of monthly income plus one-twelfth of any arrearage accrued from the date application is made and thereafter. If assistance payments are received by the customer subsequent to implementation of the plan, the customer shall contact the utility to reformulate the plan; and

(f) Agrees to pay the moneys owed even if the customer moves.

(5) The utility shall:

(a) Include in any notice that an account is delinquent and that service may be subject to termination, a description of the customer's duties in this section;

(b) Assist the customer in fulfilling the requirements under this section;

(c) Be authorized to transfer an account to a new residence when a customer who has established a plan under this section moves from one residence to another within the same utility service area;

(d) Be permitted to disconnect service if the customer fails to honor the payment program except on the days indicated in subsection (8) of this section. Utilities may continue to disconnect service for those practices authorized by law other than for nonpayment as provided for in this subsection. Customers who qualify for payment plans under this section who default on their payment plans and are disconnected can be reconnected and maintain the protections afforded under this chapter by paying all amounts that would have been due and owing under the terms of the applicable payment plan, absent default, on the date on which service is reconnected; and

(e) Advise the customer in writing at the time it disconnects service that it will restore service if the customer contacts the utility and fulfills the other requirements of this section.

(6) A payment plan implemented under this section is consistent with RCW 80.28.080.

(7) Every gas company and electrical company shall offer residential customers the option of a budget billing or equal payment plan. The budget billing or equal payment plan shall be offered low-income customers eligible under the state's plan for low-income energy assistance prepared in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 8624(C)(1) without limiting availability to certain months of the year, without regard to the length of time the customer has occupied the premises, and without regard to whether the customer is the tenant or owner of the premises occupied.

(8) (a) Every electrical company and water company must have and must abide by the terms of a tariff approved by the commission that prohibits the electrical company or water company from effecting, due

to lack of payment, an involuntary termination of electric or water utility service to any residential user, including tenants of metered apartment buildings and residents of mobile homes, on any day for which the national weather service has issued or has announced that it intends to issue a heat-related alert, such as an excessive heat warning, a heat advisory, an excessive heat watch, or a similar alert, for the area in which the residential user's address is located.

(b) Nothing in this subsection (8) limits the authority of the commission to prohibit an electrical company or water company from terminating electric or water utility service in accordance with an approved tariff, rule, or order, in circumstances independent of the weather.

(9) (a) A residential user at whose dwelling electric or water utility service has been disconnected for lack of payment may request that the utility reconnect service on any day for which the national weather service has issued or has announced that it intends to issue a heat-related alert, such as an excessive heat warning, a heat advisory, an excessive heat watch, or a similar alert, for the area in which the residential user's address is located. The utility shall, through a process approved by the commission, inform all customers in the notice of disconnection of the ability to seek reconnection and provide clear and specific information on how to make that request, including how to contact the utility.

(b) Upon receipt of a request made pursuant to (a) of this subsection, the utility shall promptly make a reasonable attempt to reconnect service to the dwelling. The utility, in connection with a request made pursuant to (a) of this subsection, may require the residential user to enter into a payment plan prior to reconnecting service to the dwelling. If the utility requires the residential user to enter into a repayment plan, the repayment plan must comply with subsection (10) of this section.

(10) A repayment plan required by a utility pursuant to subsection (9)(b) of this section will be designed both to pay the past due bill by the following May 15th, or as soon as possible after May 15th if needed to maintain monthly payments that are no greater than six percent of the customer's monthly income, and to pay for continued utility service. The plan may not require monthly payments in excess of six percent of the customer's monthly income. A customer may agree to pay a higher percentage during this period, but will not be in default unless payment during this period is less than six percent of the customer's monthly income. If assistance payments are received by the customer subsequent to implementation of the plan, the customer shall contact the utility to reformulate the plan.

(11) Every gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, and water company shall construct and maintain such facilities in connection with the manufacture and distribution of its product, or provision of its services, as will be efficient and safe to its employees and the public.

(12) An agreement between the customer and the utility, whether oral or written, does not waive the protections afforded under this chapter.

(13) In establishing rates or charges for water service, water companies as defined in RCW 80.04.010 may consider the achievement of water conservation goals and the discouragement of wasteful water use practices.

(14) On an annual basis, each utility must submit a report to the commission that includes the total number of electric or water



disconnections that occurred on each day for which the national weather service issued, or announced that it intended to issue, a heat-related alert. [2023 c 105 s 6; 2011 c 214 s 11; 2008 c 299 s 35; 1995 c 399 s 211. Prior: 1991 c 347 s 22; 1991 c 165 s 4; 1990 1st ex.s. c 1 s 5; 1986 c 245 s 5; 1985 c 6 s 25; 1984 c 251 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.010; prior: 1911 c 117 s 26; RRS s 10362.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Short title—2008 c 299:** See note following RCW 76.15.020.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**Findings—1991 c 165:** See note following RCW 35.21.300.

**RCW 80.28.020 Commission to fix just, reasonable, and compensatory rates.** Whenever the commission shall find, after a hearing had upon its own motion, or upon complaint, that the rates or charges demanded, exacted, charged or collected by any gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company, for gas, electricity, wastewater company services, or water, or in connection therewith, or that the rules, regulations, practices or contracts affecting such rates or charges are unjust, unreasonable, unjustly discriminatory or unduly preferential, or in any wise in violation of the provisions of the law, or that such rates or charges are insufficient to yield a reasonable compensation for the service rendered, the commission shall determine the just, reasonable, or sufficient rates, charges, regulations, practices or contracts to be thereafter observed and in force, and shall fix the same by order. [2011 c 214 s 12; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.020. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 54, part; RRS s 10390, part.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.022 Water company rates—Reserve account.** In determining the rates to be charged by each water company subject to its jurisdiction, the commission may provide for the funding of a reserve account exclusively for the purpose of making capital improvements approved by the department of health as a part of a long-range plan, or required by the department to assure compliance with federal or state drinking water regulations, or to perform construction or maintenance required by the department of ecology to secure safety to life and property under RCW 43.21A.064(2). Expenditures from the fund shall be subject to prior approval by the commission, and shall be treated for rate-making purposes as customer contributions. [1991 c 150 s 1; 1990 c 132 s 6.]

**Legislative findings—Severability—1990 c 132:** See note following RCW 43.20.240.

**RCW 80.28.024 Legislative finding.** The legislature finds and declares that the potential for meeting future energy needs through conservation measures, including energy conservation loans, energy audits, the use of appropriate tree plantings for energy conservation, and the use of renewable resources, such as solar energy, wind energy, wood, wood waste, municipal waste, agricultural products and wastes, hydroelectric energy, geothermal energy, and end-use waste heat, may not be realized without incentives to public and private energy utilities. The legislature therefore finds and declares that actions and incentives by state government to promote conservation and the use of renewable resources would be of great benefit to the citizens of this state by encouraging efficient energy use and a reliable supply of energy based upon renewable energy resources. [1993 c 204 s 8; 1980 c 149 s 1.]

**Findings—1993 c 204:** See note following RCW 35.92.390.

**RCW 80.28.025 Encouragement of energy cogeneration, conservation, and production from renewable resources—Consideration of water conservation goals.** (1) In establishing rates for each gas and electric company regulated by this chapter, the commission shall adopt policies to encourage meeting or reducing energy demand through cogeneration as defined in \*RCW 82.35.020, measures which improve the efficiency of energy end use, and new projects which produce or generate energy from renewable resources, such as solar energy, wind energy, hydroelectric energy, geothermal energy, wood, wood waste, municipal wastes, agricultural products and wastes, and end-use waste heat. These policies shall include but are not limited to allowing a return on investment in measures to improve the efficiency of energy end use, cogeneration, or projects which produce or generate energy from renewable resources which return is established by adding an increment of two percent to the rate of return on common equity permitted on the company's other investment. Measures or projects encouraged under this section are those for which construction or installation is begun after June 12, 1980, and before January 1, 1990, and which, at the time they are placed in the rate base, are reasonably expected to save, produce, or generate energy at a total incremental system cost per unit of energy delivered to end use which is less than or equal to the incremental system cost per unit of energy delivered to end use from similarly available conventional energy resources which utilize nuclear energy or fossil fuels and which the gas or electric company could acquire to meet energy demand in the same time period. The rate of return increment shall be allowed for a period not to exceed thirty years after the measure or project is first placed in the rate base.

(2) In establishing rates for water companies regulated by this chapter, the commission may consider the achievement of water conservation goals and the discouragement of wasteful water use practices. [1991 c 347 s 23; 1980 c 149 s 2.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 82.35.020 was repealed by 2005 c 443 s 7, effective July 1, 2006.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

*Public utility tax exemptions relating to energy conservation and production from renewable resources: RCW 82.16.055.*

**RCW 80.28.030 Commission may order improved quality of commodity—Ordering improvements to the storage, distribution, or supply of water—Ordering improvements to the system of sewerage.** (1) Whenever the commission finds, after such hearing, that the illuminating or heating power, purity or pressure of gas, the efficiency of electric lamp supply, the voltage of the current supplied for light, heat or power, the quality of wastewater company services, or the purity, quality, volume, and pressure of water, supplied by any gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company, as the case may be, is insufficient, impure, inadequate or inefficient, it shall order such improvement in the manufacture, distribution or supply of gas, in the manufacture, transmission or supply of electricity, in the operation of the services and facilities of wastewater companies, or in the storage, distribution or supply of water, or in the methods employed by such gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company, as will in its judgment be efficient, adequate, just and reasonable. Failure of a water company to comply with state board of health standards adopted under RCW 43.20.050(2)(a) or department standards adopted under chapter 70A.100 RCW for purity, volume, and pressure is prima facie evidence that the water supplied is insufficient, impure, inadequate, or inefficient. Failure of a wastewater company to comply with standards and permit conditions adopted and implemented under chapter 70A.115 or 90.48 RCW for treatment and disposal of sewerage, is prima facie evidence that the system of sewerage is insufficient, inadequate, or inefficient.

(2) In ordering improvements in the storage, distribution, or supply of water, the commission shall consult and coordinate with the department of health. In the event that a water company fails to comply with an order of the commission within the deadline specified in the order, the commission may request that the department petition the superior court of Thurston county to place the company in receivership pursuant to chapter 7.60 RCW.

(3) In ordering improvements to the system of sewerage, the commission shall consult and coordinate with the department of health or the department of ecology, as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction. In the event that a wastewater company fails to comply with an order of the commission within the deadline specified in the order, the commission may petition the superior court of Thurston county to place the company in receivership pursuant to chapter 7.60 RCW. [2021 c 65 s 96; 2011 c 214 s 13; 1989 c 207 s 4; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.030. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 54, part; RRS s 10390, part.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.040 Commission may order improved service—Water companies, system of sewerage noncompliance, receivership.** (1) Whenever the commission finds, after hearing, that any rules,

regulations, measurements or the standard thereof, practices, acts or services of any such gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company are unjust, unreasonable, improper, insufficient, inefficient or inadequate, or that any service which may be reasonably demanded is not furnished, the commission shall fix the reasonable rules, regulations, measurements or the standard thereof, practices, acts or service to be thereafter furnished, imposed, observed and followed, and shall fix the same by order or rule.

(2) In ordering improvements to the service of any water company, the commission shall consult and coordinate with the department of health. In the event that a water company fails to comply with an order of the commission within the deadline specified in the order, the commission may request that the department petition the superior court of Thurston county to place the company in receivership pursuant to chapter 7.60 RCW.

(3) In ordering improvements to the service of any system of sewerage, the commission shall consult and coordinate with the department of health or the department of ecology, as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction. In the event that a wastewater company fails to comply with an order of the commission within the deadline specified in the order, the commission may petition the superior court of Thurston county to place the company in receivership pursuant to chapter 7.60 RCW. [2011 c 214 s 14; 1989 c 207 s 5; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.040. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 54, part; RRS s 10390, part.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.050 Tariff schedules to be filed with commission—Public schedules.** Every gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, and water company shall file with the commission and shall print and keep open to public inspection schedules in such form as the commission may prescribe, showing all rates and charges made, established or enforced, or to be charged or enforced, all forms of contract or agreement, all rules and regulations relating to rates, charges or service, used or to be used, and all general privileges and facilities granted or allowed by such gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company. [2011 c 214 s 15; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.050. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 27; RRS s 10363.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

*Duty of company to fix rate for wholesale power on request of public utility district: RCW 54.04.100.*

**RCW 80.28.060 Tariff changes—Statutory notice—Exception—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.** (1) Unless the commission otherwise orders, no change may be made in any rate or charge or in any form of contract or agreement or in any rule or regulation relating to any rate, charge or service, or in any general privilege or facility which shall have been filed and published by a gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company in compliance with the requirements of RCW 80.28.050 except after thirty

days' notice to the commission and publication for thirty days, which notice must plainly state the changes proposed to be made in the schedule then in force and the time when the change will go into effect and all proposed changes must be shown by printing, filing and publishing new schedules, or shall be plainly indicated upon the schedules in force at the time and kept open to public inspection. Proposed changes may be suspended by the commission within thirty days or before the stated effective date of the proposed change, whichever is later. The commission, for good cause shown, may allow changes without requiring the thirty days' notice by duly filing, in such manner as it may direct, an order specifying the changes so to be made and the time when it takes effect. All such changes must be immediately indicated upon its schedules by the company affected. When any change is made in any rate or charge, form of contract or agreement, or any rule or regulation relating to any rate or charge or service, or in any general privilege or facility, the effect of which is to increase any rate or charge, then in existence, attention must be directed on the copy filed with the commission to such increase by some character immediately preceding or following the item in such schedule, such character to be in form as designated by the commission.

(2) During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2011 c 214 s 16; 2008 c 181 s 402; 1989 c 152 s 1; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.060. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 28; RRS s 10364.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.28.065 Tariff schedule—Energy conservation—Payment by successive property owners—Notice—Rules.** (1) Upon request by an electrical or gas company, the commission may approve a tariff schedule that contains rates or charges for energy conservation measures, services, or payments provided to individual property owners or customers. The tariff schedule shall require the electrical or gas company to enter into an agreement with the property owner or customer receiving services at the time the conservation measures, services, or payments are initially provided. The tariff schedule may allow for the payment of the rates or charges over a period of time and for the application of the payment obligation to successive property owners or customers at the premises where the conservation measures or services were installed or performed or with respect to which the conservation payments were made.

(2) The electrical or gas company shall record a notice of a payment obligation, containing a legal description, resulting from an agreement under this section with the county auditor or recording officer as provided in RCW 65.04.030.

(3) The commission may prescribe by rule other methods by which an electrical or gas company shall notify property owners or customers of any such payment obligation. [1993 c 245 s 2.]

**Legislative findings—Intent—1993 c 245:** "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The ability of utilities to acquire cost-effective conservation measures is instrumental in assuring that Washington citizens have reasonable energy rates and that utilities have adequate energy resources to meet future energy demands;

(b) Customers may be more willing to accept investments in energy efficiency and conservation if real and perceived impediments to property transactions are avoided;

(c) Potential purchasers of real property should be notified of any utility conservation charges at the earliest point possible in the sale.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature to encourage utilities to develop innovative approaches designed to promote energy efficiency and conservation that have limited rate impacts on utility customers. It is not the intent of the legislature to restrict the authority of the utilities and transportation commission to approve tariff schedules.

(3) It is also the intent of the legislature that utilities which establish conservation tariffs should undertake measures to assure that potential purchasers of property are aware of the existence of any conservation tariffs. Measures that may be considered include, but are not limited to:

(a) Recording a notice of a conservation tariff payment obligation, containing a legal description, with the county property records;

(b) Annually notifying customers who have entered agreements of the conservation tariff obligation;

(c) Working with the real estate industry to provide for disclosure of conservation tariff obligations in standardized listing agreements and earnest money agreements; and

(d) Working with title insurers to provide recorded conservation tariff obligations as an informational note to the preliminary commitment for policy of title insurance." [1993 c 245 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.068 Rates—Low-income customers.** (1) Upon its own motion, or upon request by an electrical or gas company, or other party to a general rate case hearing, or other proceeding to set rates, the commission may approve rates, charges, services, and/or physical facilities at a discount, or through grants, for low-income senior customers and low-income customers. Expenses and lost revenues as a result of these discounts, grants, or other low-income assistance programs shall be included in the company's cost of service and recovered in rates to other customers. Each gas or electrical company must propose a low-income assistance program comprised of a discount rate for low-income senior customers and low-income customers as well as grants and other low-income assistance programs. The commission shall approve, disapprove, or approve with modifications each gas or electrical company's low-income assistance discount rate and grant program. The gas or electrical company must use reasonable and good faith efforts to seek approval for low-income program design,

eligibility, operation, outreach, and funding proposals from its low-income and equity advisory groups in advance of filing such proposals with the commission. In order to remove barriers and to expedite assistance, low-income discounts or grants approved under this section must be provided in coordination with community-based organizations in the gas or electrical company's service territory including, but not limited to, grantees of the department of commerce, community action agencies, and community-based nonprofit organizations. Nothing in this section may be construed as limiting the commission's authority to approve or modify tariffs authorizing low-income discounts or grants.

(2) Eligibility for a low-income discount rate or grant established in this section may be established upon verification of a low-income customer's receipt of any means-tested public benefit, or verification of eligibility for the low-income home energy assistance program, or its successor program, for which eligibility does not exceed the low-income definition set by the commission pursuant to RCW 19.405.020. The public benefits may include, but are not limited to, assistance that provides cash, housing, food, or medical care including, but not limited to, temporary assistance for needy families, supplemental security income, emergency assistance to elders, disabled, and children, supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, public housing, federally subsidized or state-subsidized housing, the low-income home energy assistance program, veterans' benefits, and similar benefits.

(3) Each gas or electrical company shall conduct substantial outreach efforts to make the low-income discounts or grants available to eligible customers and must provide annual reports to the commission as to the gas or electrical company's outreach activities and results. Such outreach: (a) Shall be made at least semiannually to inform customers of available rebates, discounts, credits, and other cost-saving mechanisms that can help them lower their monthly bills for gas or electrical service; and (b) may be in the form of any customary and usual methods of communication or distribution including, without limitation, widely broadcast communications with customers, direct mailing, telephone calls, electronic communications, social media postings, in-person contacts, websites of the gas or electrical company, press releases, and print and electronic media, that are designed to increase access to and participation in bill assistance programs.

(4) Outreach may include establishing an automated program of matching customer accounts with lists of recipients of the means-tested public benefit programs and, based on the results of the matching program, to presumptively offer a low-income discount rate or grant to eligible customers so identified. However, the gas or electrical company must within 60 days of the presumptive enrollment inform such a low-income customer of the presumptive enrollment and all rights and obligations of a customer under the program, including the right to withdraw from the program without penalty.

(5) A residential customer eligible for a low-income discount rate must receive the service on demand.

(6) A residential customer may not be charged for initiating or terminating low-income discount rates, grants, or any other form of energy assistance.

(7) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Energy burden" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 19.405.020.

(b) "Low-income" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 19.405.020.

(c) "Physical facilities" includes, but may not be limited to, a community solar project as defined in RCW 80.28.370. [2021 c 188 s 3; 2009 c 32 s 1; 1999 c 62 s 1.]

**Legislative directive—2021 c 188:** See note following RCW 80.28.425.

**RCW 80.28.070 Sliding scale of charges permitted.** Nothing in this chapter shall be taken to prohibit a gas company, electrical company or water company from establishing a sliding scale of charges, whereby a greater charge is made per unit for a lesser than a greater quantity for gas, electricity or water, or any service rendered or to be rendered. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.070. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 32; RRS s 10368.]

**RCW 80.28.074 Legislative declaration.** The legislature declares it is the policy of the state to:

- (1) Preserve affordable energy services to the residents of the state;
- (2) Maintain and advance the efficiency and availability of energy services to the residents of the state of Washington;
- (3) Ensure that customers pay only reasonable charges for energy services;
- (4) Permit flexible pricing of energy services. [2021 c 188 s 5; 1988 c 166 s 1.]

**Legislative directive—2021 c 188:** See note following RCW 80.28.425.

**RCW 80.28.075 Banded rates—Natural gas and electric services.** Upon request by a natural gas company or an electrical company, the commission may approve a tariff that includes banded rates for any nonresidential natural gas or electric service that is subject to effective competition from energy suppliers not regulated by the utilities and transportation commission. "Banded rate" means a rate that has a minimum and maximum rate. Rates may be changed within the rate band upon such notice as the commission may order. [1988 c 166 s 2.]

**RCW 80.28.080 Published rates to be charged—Exceptions.** (1) (a) Except as provided otherwise in this subsection, no gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company may charge, demand, collect or receive a greater or less or different compensation for any service rendered or to be rendered than the rates and charges applicable to such service as specified in its schedule filed and in effect at the time, nor may any such company directly or indirectly refund or remit in any manner or by any device any portion of the rates or charges so specified, or furnish its product at free or reduced rates except to its employees and their families, and its officers, attorneys, and agents; to hospitals, charitable and



eleemosynary institutions and persons engaged in charitable and eleemosynary work; to indigent and destitute persons; to national homes or state homes for disabled volunteer soldiers and soldiers' and sailors' homes.

For the purposes of this subsection (1):

(i) "Employees" includes furloughed, pensioned and superannuated employees, persons who have become disabled or infirm in the service of any such company; and

(ii) "Families" includes the families of those persons named in this proviso, the families of persons killed or dying in the service, also the families of persons killed, and the surviving spouse prior to remarriage, and the minor children during minority of persons who died while in the service of any of the companies named in this subsection (1).

(b) Water companies may furnish free or at reduced rates water for the use of the state, or for any project in which the state is interested.

(c) Gas companies, electrical companies, wastewater companies, and water companies may charge the defendant for treble damages awarded in lawsuits successfully litigated under RCW 80.28.240.

(2) No gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company may extend to any person or corporation any form of contract or agreement or any rule or regulation or any privilege or facility except such as are regularly and uniformly extended to all persons and corporations under like circumstances. [2011 c 214 s 17; 1985 c 427 s 2; 1973 1st ex.s. c 154 s 116; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.080. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 29; RRS s 10365.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Severability—1973 1st ex.s. c 154:** See note following RCW 2.12.030.

**RCW 80.28.090 Unreasonable preference prohibited.** No gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company may make or grant any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any person, corporation, or locality, or to any particular description of service in any respect whatsoever, or subject any particular person, corporation or locality or any particular description of service to any undue or unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage in any respect whatsoever. [2011 c 214 s 18; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.090. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 30; RRS s 10366.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.100 Rate discrimination prohibited—Exception.** No gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company may, directly or indirectly, or by any special rate, rebate, drawback or other device or method, charge, demand, collect or receive from any person or corporation a greater or less compensation for gas, electricity, wastewater company services, or water, or for any service rendered or to be rendered, or in connection therewith, except as

authorized in this chapter, than it charges, demands, collects or receives from any other person or corporation for doing a like or contemporaneous service with respect thereto under the same or substantially similar circumstances or conditions. [2011 c 214 s 19; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.100. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 31; RRS s 10367.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

*Reduced utility rates for low-income senior citizens and other low-income citizens: RCW 74.38.070.*

**RCW 80.28.110 Service to be furnished on reasonable notice.**

Every gas company, electrical company, wastewater company, or water company, engaged in the sale and distribution of gas, electricity or water or the provision of wastewater company services, shall, upon reasonable notice, furnish to all persons and corporations who may apply therefor and be reasonably entitled thereto, suitable facilities for furnishing and furnish all available gas, electricity, wastewater company services, and water as demanded, except that: (1) A water company may not furnish water contrary to the provisions of water system plans approved under chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW; (2) wastewater companies may not provide services contrary to the approved general sewer plan; and (3) exclusively upon petition of a gas company, and subject to the commission's approval, a gas company's obligation to serve gas to customers that have access to the gas company's thermal energy network may be met by providing thermal energy through a thermal energy network. [2024 c 348 s 6; 2021 c 65 s 97; 2011 c 214 s 20; 1990 c 132 s 5; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.110. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 33; RRS s 10369.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Legislative findings—Severability—1990 c 132:** See note following RCW 43.20.240.

*Duty of company to fix rate for wholesale power on request of public utility district: RCW 54.04.100.*

**RCW 80.28.120 Effect on existing contracts.** Every gas, water, wastewater, or electrical company owning, operating or managing a plant or system for the distribution and sale of gas, water or electricity, or the provision of wastewater company services to the public for hire is, and is held to be, a public service company as to such plant or system and as to all gas, water, wastewater company services, or electricity distributed or furnished therefrom, whether such gas, water, wastewater company services, or electricity be sold wholesale or retail or be distributed wholly to the general public or in part as surplus gas, water, wastewater company services, or electricity to manufacturing or industrial concerns or to other public

service companies or municipalities for redistribution. Nothing in this title may be construed to prevent any gas company, electrical company or water company from continuing to furnish its product or the use of its lines, equipment or service under any contract or contracts in force on June 7, 1911, at the rates fixed in such contract or contracts. However, the commission has power, in its discretion, to direct by order that such contract or contracts be terminated by the company party thereto and thereupon such contract or contracts must be terminated by such company as and when directed by such order. [2011 c 214 s 21; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.120. Prior: 1933 c 165 s 1; 1911 c 117 s 34; RRS s 10370.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.130 Repairs, improvements, changes, additions, or extensions may be directed.** Whenever the commission finds, after hearing had upon its own motion or upon complaint, that repairs or improvements, to, or changes in, any gas plant, electrical plant, system of sewerage, or water system ought to be made, or that any additions or extensions should reasonably be made thereto, in order to promote the security or convenience of the public or employees, or in order to secure adequate service or facilities for manufacturing, distributing or supplying gas, electricity, wastewater company services, or water, the commission may enter an order directing that such reasonable repairs, improvements, changes, additions or extensions of such gas plant, electrical plant, system of sewerage, or water system be made. The commission may require a large combination utility as defined in RCW 80.86.010 to incorporate any existing pipeline safety and replacement plans under this section into an integrated system plan established under RCW 80.86.020. [2024 c 351 s 15; 2011 c 214 s 22; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.130. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 70; RRS s 10406.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.140 Inspection of gas and water meters.** The commission may appoint inspectors of gas and water meters whose duty it shall be when required by the commission to inspect, examine, prove and ascertain the accuracy of any and all gas and water meters used or intended to be used for measuring or ascertaining the quantity of gas for light, heat or power, or the quantity of water furnished for any purpose by any public service company to or for the use of any person or corporation, and when found to be or made to be correct such inspectors shall seal all such meters and each of them with some suitable device to be prescribed by the commission.

No public service company shall thereafter furnish, set or put in use any gas or water meter which shall not have been inspected, proved and sealed by an inspector of the commission under such rules and

regulations as the commission may prescribe. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.140. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 74, part; RRS s 10410, part.]

**RCW 80.28.150 Inspection of electric meters.** The commission may appoint inspectors of electric meters whose duty it shall be when required by the commission to inspect, examine, prove and ascertain the accuracy of any and all electric meters used or intended to be used for measuring and ascertaining the quantity of electric current furnished for light, heat or power by any public service company to or for the use of any person or corporation, and to inspect, examine and ascertain the accuracy of all apparatus for testing and proving the accuracy of electric meters, and when found to be or made to be correct the inspector shall stamp or mark all such meters and apparatus with some suitable device to be prescribed by the commission. No public service company shall furnish, set or put in use any electric meters the type of which shall not have been approved by the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.150. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 74, part; RRS s 10410, part.]

**RCW 80.28.160 Testing apparatus to be furnished.** Every gas company, electrical company and water company shall prepare and maintain such suitable premises, apparatus and facilities as may be required and approved by the commission for testing and proving the accuracy of gas, electric or water meters furnished for use by it by which apparatus every meter may be tested. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.160. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 74, part; RRS s 10410, part.]

**RCW 80.28.170 Testing at consumer's request.** If any consumer to whom a meter has been furnished shall request the commission in writing to inspect such meter, the commission shall have the same inspected and tested, and if the same, on being so tested, shall be found to be more than four percent if an electric meter, or more than two percent if a gas meter, or more than two percent if a water meter, defective or incorrect to the prejudice of the consumer, the expense of such inspection and test shall be borne by the gas company, electrical company or water company, and if the same, on being so tested shall be found to be correct within the limits of error prescribed by the provisions of this section, the expense of such inspection and test shall be borne by the consumer. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.170. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 74, part; RRS s 10410, part.]

**RCW 80.28.180 Rules and regulations.** The commission shall prescribe such rules and regulations to carry into effect the provisions of RCW 80.28.140 through 80.28.170 as it may deem necessary, and shall fix the uniform and reasonable charges for the inspection and testing of meters upon complaint. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.180. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 74, part; RRS s 10410, part.]

**RCW 80.28.185 Water companies or wastewater companies within counties—Commission may regulate.** The commission may develop and enter into an agreement with a county to carry out the regulatory

functions of this chapter with regard to water companies or wastewater companies located within the boundary of that county. The duration of the agreement, the duties to be performed, and the remuneration to be paid by the commission are subject to agreement by the commission and the county. [2011 c 214 s 23; 1989 c 207 s 6.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.190 Gas companies—Certificate—Violations—Commission powers—Penalty—Fees.** (1) No gas company shall, after January 1, 1956, operate in this state any gas plant for hire without first having obtained from the commission under the provisions of this chapter a certificate declaring that public convenience and necessity requires or will require such operation and setting forth the area or areas within which service is to be rendered; but a certificate shall be granted where it appears to the satisfaction of the commission that such gas company was actually operating in good faith, within the confines of the area for which such certificate shall be sought, on June 8, 1955. Any right, privilege, certificate held, owned or obtained by a gas company may be sold, assigned, leased, transferred or inherited as other property, only upon authorization by the commission. The commission shall have power, after hearing, when the applicant requests a certificate to render service in an area already served by a certificate holder under this chapter only when the existing gas company or companies serving such area will not provide the same to the satisfaction of the commission and in all other cases, with or without hearing, to issue the certificate as prayed for; or for good cause shown to refuse to issue same, or to issue it for the partial exercise only of the privilege sought, and may attach to the exercise of the rights granted by the certificate such terms and conditions as, in its judgment, the public convenience and necessity may require.

(2) The commission may, at any time, by its order duly entered after a hearing had upon notice to the holder of any certificate hereunder, and an opportunity to such holder to be heard, at which it shall be proven that such holder willfully violates or refuses to observe any of its proper orders, rules or regulations, suspend, revoke, alter or amend any certificate issued under the provisions of this section, but the holder of such certificate shall have all the rights of rehearing, review and appeal as to such order of the commission as is provided herein.

(3) In all respects in which the commission has power and authority under this chapter applications and complaints may be made and filed with it, process issued, hearings held, opinions, orders and decisions made and filed, petitions for rehearing filed and acted upon, and petitions for writs of review to the superior court filed therewith, appeals or mandate filed with the supreme court or the court of appeals of this state considered and disposed of by such courts in the manner, under the conditions, and subject to the limitations and with the effect specified in the Washington utilities and transportation commission laws of this state.

(4) Every officer, agent, or employee of any corporation, and every other person who violates or fails to comply with, or who procures, aids or abets in the violation of any of the provisions of

this section or who fails to obey, observe or comply with any order, decision, rule or regulation, directive, demand or requirements, or any provision of this section, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

(5) Neither this section, RCW 80.28.200, \*80.28.210, nor any provisions thereof shall apply or be construed to apply to commerce with foreign nations or commerce among the several states of this union except insofar as the same may be permitted under the provisions of the Constitution of the United States and acts of congress.

(6) The commission shall collect the following miscellaneous fees from gas companies: Application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity or to amend a certificate, twenty-five dollars; application to sell, lease, mortgage or transfer a certificate of public convenience and necessity or any interest therein, ten dollars. [2003 c 53 s 383; 1971 c 81 s 141; 1961 c 14 s 80.28.190. Prior: 1955 c 316 s 4.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 80.28.210 was repealed by 2007 c 142 s 11.

**Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53:** See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

**RCW 80.28.200 Gas companies—Refunds of charges.** Whenever any gas company whose rates are subject to the jurisdiction of the commission shall receive any refund of amounts charged and collected from it on account of natural gas purchased by it, by reason of any reduction of rates or disallowance of an increase in rates of the seller of such natural gas pursuant to an order of the federal power commission, whether such refund shall be directed by the federal power commission or by any court upon review of such an order or shall otherwise accrue to such company, the commission shall have power after a hearing, upon its own motion, upon complaint, or upon the application of such company, to determine whether or not such refund should be passed on, in whole or in part, to the consumers of such company and to order such company to pass such refund on to its consumers, in the manner and to the extent determined just and reasonable by the commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.200. Prior: 1955 c 316 s 5.]

**RCW 80.28.220 Gas companies—Right of eminent domain—Purposes.** Every corporation having for one of its principal purposes the transmission, distribution, sale, or furnishing of natural gas or other type gas for light, heat, or power and holding and owning a certificate of public convenience and necessity from the utilities and transportation commission authorizing the operation of a gas plant, may appropriate, by condemnation, lands and property and interests therein, for the transmission, distribution, sale, or furnishing of such natural gas or other type gas through gas mains or pipelines under the provisions of chapter 8.20 RCW. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.220. Prior: 1957 c 191 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.230 Gas companies—Use for purpose acquired exclusive—Disposition of property.** Any property or interest acquired as provided in RCW 80.28.220 shall be used exclusively for the purposes for which it was acquired: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That if any such

property be sold or otherwise disposed of by said corporations, such sale or disposition shall be by public sale or disposition and advertised in the manner of public sales in the county where such property is located. [1961 c 14 s 80.28.230. Prior: 1957 c 191 s 2.]

**RCW 80.28.240 Recovery of damages by utility company for tampering, unauthorized connections, diversion of services.** (1) A utility may bring a civil action for damages against any person who commits, authorizes, solicits, aids, abets, or attempts to:

(a) Divert, or cause to be diverted, utility services by any means whatsoever;

(b) Make, or cause to be made, any connection or reconnection with property owned or used by the utility to provide utility service without the authorization or consent of the utility;

(c) Prevent any utility meter or other device used in determining the charge for utility services from accurately performing its measuring function by tampering or by any other means;

(d) Tamper with any property owned or used by the utility to provide utility services; or

(e) Use or receive the direct benefit of all or a portion of the utility service with knowledge of, or reason to believe that, the diversion, tampering, or unauthorized connection existed at the time of the use or that the use or receipt was without the authorization or consent of the utility.

(2) In any civil action brought under this section, the utility may recover from the defendant as damages three times the amount of actual damages, if any, plus the cost of the suit and reasonable attorney's fees, plus the costs incurred on account of the bypassing, tampering, or unauthorized reconnection, including but not limited to costs and expenses for investigation, disconnection, reconnection, service calls, and expert witnesses.

(3) Any damages recovered under this section in excess of the actual damages sustained by the utility may be taken into account by the utilities and transportation commission or other applicable rate-making agency in establishing utility rates.

(4) As used in this section:

(a) "Customer" means the person in whose name a utility service is provided;

(b) "Divert" means to change the intended course or path of electricity, gas, or water without the authorization or consent of the utility;

(c) "Person" means any individual, partnership, firm, association, or corporation or government agency;

(d) "Reconnection" means the commencement of utility service to a customer or other person after service has been lawfully disconnected by the utility;

(e) "Tamper" means to rearrange, injure, alter, interfere with, or otherwise prevent from performing the normal or customary function;

(f) "Utility" means any electrical company, gas company, wastewater company, or water company as those terms are defined in RCW 80.04.010, and includes any electrical, gas, system of sewerage, or water system operated by any public agency; and

(g) "Utility service" means the provision of electricity, gas, water, wastewater company services, or any other service or commodity furnished by the utility for compensation. [2011 c 214 s 24; 1989 c 11 s 30; 1985 c 427 s 1.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Severability—1989 c 11:** See note following RCW 9A.56.220.

**RCW 80.28.250 Water companies—Fire hydrants.** A city, town or county may, by ordinance or resolution, require a water company to maintain fire hydrants in the area served by the water company. The utilities and transportation commission has no authority to waive this obligation. [1986 c 119 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.260 Adoption of policies to provide financial incentives for energy efficiency programs.** (1) The commission shall adopt a policy allowing an incentive rate of return on investment for programs that improve the efficiency of energy end use if priority is given to senior citizens and low-income citizens in the course of carrying out such programs. The incentive rate of return on investments set forth in this subsection is established by adding an increment of two percent to the rate of return on common equity permitted on the company's other investments.

(2) The commission shall consider and may adopt a policy allowing an incentive rate of return on investment in additional programs to improve the efficiency of energy end use including, but not limited to, tree planting programs and cool roof programs, or other incentive policies to encourage utility investment in such programs. Any tree planting program where energy reduction is a goal for which an electrical company seeks an incentive rate of return on investment under this subsection (2) should accomplish the following:

(a) Reduce the peak-load demand for electricity in residential and commercial business areas during the summer months through direct shading of buildings provided by strategically planted trees;

(b) Reduce wintertime demand for energy in residential areas by blocking cold winds from reaching homes, which lowers interior temperatures and drives heating demand;

(c) Protect public health by removing harmful pollution from the air and prioritize in communities with environmental health disparities;

(d) Utilize the natural photosynthetic and transpiration process of trees to lower ambient temperatures and absorb carbon dioxide;

(e) Lower electric bills for residential and commercial business ratepayers by limiting electricity consumption without reducing benefits;

(f) Relieve financial and demand pressure on the utility that stems from large peak-load electricity demand;

(g) Protect water quality and public health by reducing and cooling stormwater runoff and keeping harmful pollutants from entering waterways, with special attention given to waterways vital for the preservation of threatened and endangered salmon;

(h) Ensure that trees are planted in locations that limit the amount of public funding needed to maintain public and electric infrastructure;

(i) Measure program performance in terms of the estimated present value benefit per tree planted and equitable and accessible community engagement consistent with the department of health's environmental



health disparities map recommendations 12 and 13, and with the community engagement plan guidance appendix C of the final report of the environmental justice task force established under chapter 415, Laws of 2019;

(j) Give special consideration to achieving environmental justice in goals and policies, avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities, and make use of the department of health's environmental health disparities map to help guide engagement and actions; and

(k) Coordinate with the department of natural resources urban and community forestry program's efforts to identify areas of need related to urban tree canopy and to provide technical assistance and capacity building to encourage urban tree canopy.

(3) The commission shall consider and may adopt other policies to protect a company from a reduction of short-term earnings that may be a direct result of utility programs to increase the efficiency of energy use. These policies may include allowing a periodic rate adjustment for investments in end use efficiency or allowing changes in price structure designed to produce additional new revenue. [2021 c 11 s 6; 1996 c 186 s 520; 1990 c 2 s 9.]

**Findings—Intent—2021 c 11:** See note following RCW 35.92.355.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 186:** See notes following RCW 43.330.904.

**Effective dates—1990 c 2:** See note following RCW 19.27.040.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 2:** See notes following RCW 19.27A.015.

**RCW 80.28.270 Water or wastewater companies—Extension, installation, or connection charges.** The commission's jurisdiction over the rates, charges, practices, acts or services of any water company or wastewater company includes any aspect of line extension, service installation, or service connection. If the charges for such services are not set forth by specific amount in the company's tariff filed with the commission pursuant to RCW 80.28.050, the commission shall determine the fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient charge for such extension, installation, or connection. In any such proceeding in which there is no specified tariffed rate, the burden is on the company to prove that its proposed charges are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient. [2011 c 214 s 25; 1991 c 101 s 2.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.275 Water or wastewater companies—Assumption of substandard water system or system of sewerage—Limited immunity from liability.** A water company or a wastewater company assuming responsibility for a water system or system of sewerage that is not in compliance with state or federal requirements, and its agents and employees, are immune from lawsuits or causes of action, based on noncompliance with state or federal requirements, which predate the

date of assuming responsibility and continue after the date of assuming responsibility, provided that the water company or wastewater company has submitted and is complying with a plan and schedule of improvements approved by the department of health or the department of ecology, as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction. This immunity expires on the earlier of the date the plan of improvements is completed or four years from the date of assuming responsibility. This immunity does not apply to intentional injuries, fraud, or bad faith and is subject to the provisions of law governing clean water as referenced by the commission by rule. [2011 c 214 s 26; 1994 c 292 s 9.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**Findings—Intent—1994 c 292:** See note following RCW 57.04.050.

**RCW 80.28.280 Compressed natural gas—Motor vehicle refueling stations—Public interest.** (1) The legislature finds that compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas offers [offer] significant potential to reduce vehicle and vessel emissions and to significantly decrease dependence on petroleum-based fuels. The legislature also finds that well-developed and convenient refueling systems are imperative if compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas are to be widely used by the public. The legislature declares that the development of compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas motor vehicle refueling stations and vessel refueling facilities are in the public interest. Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, nothing in this section and RCW 80.28.290 is intended to alter the regulatory practices of the commission or allow the subsidization of one ratepayer class by another.

(2) When a liquefied natural gas facility owned by a natural gas company serves both a private customer operating marine vessels and the Washington state ferries or any other public entity, the rate charged by the natural gas company to the Washington state ferries or other public entity may not be more than the rate charged to the private customer operating marine vessels. [2014 c 216 s 501; 1991 c 199 s 216.]

**Effective date—Findings—Tax preference performance statement—2014 c 216:** See notes following RCW 82.38.030.

**Finding—1991 c 199:** See note following RCW 70A.15.1005.

**Effective dates—1991 c 199:** See RCW 70A.15.9003.

*Clean fuel: RCW 70A.25.120.*

**RCW 80.28.290 Compressed natural gas—Refueling stations—Identify barriers.** The commission shall identify barriers to the development of refueling stations for vehicles operating on compressed natural gas, and shall develop policies to remove such barriers. In developing such policies, the commission shall consider providing rate incentives to encourage natural gas companies to invest in the

infrastructure required by such refueling stations. [1991 c 199 s 217.]

**Finding—1991 c 199:** See note following RCW 70A.15.1005.

**Effective dates—1991 c 199:** See RCW 70A.15.9003.

**RCW 80.28.300 Gas, electrical companies encouraged to provide customers with landscaping information and to request voluntary donations for urban forestry.** (1) Gas companies and electrical companies under this chapter are highly encouraged to provide information to their customers regarding landscaping that includes tree planting for energy conservation.

(2) (a) Gas companies and electrical companies under this chapter may request voluntary donations from their customers for the purposes of urban forestry. The request may be in the form of a check-off on the billing statement or other form of a request for a voluntary donation.

(b) Voluntary donations collected by gas companies and electrical companies under this section may be used by the gas companies and electrical companies to:

(i) Support the development and implementation of urban forestry ordinances, as that term is defined in RCW 76.15.010, for cities, towns, or counties within their service areas;

(ii) Complete projects consistent with the urban forestry management plans and ordinances developed under RCW 76.15.090; or

(iii) Fund a tree planting program for energy conservation that accomplishes the goals established under RCW 80.28.260(2) (a) through (k).

(c) Donations received under this section do not contribute to the gross income of a light and power business or gas distribution business under chapter 82.16 RCW. [2021 c 209 s 14; 2021 c 11 s 7; 2008 c 299 s 21; 1993 c 204 s 4.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2021 c 11 s 7 and by 2021 c 209 s 14, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Findings—Intent—2021 c 209:** See note following RCW 76.15.005.

**Findings—Intent—2021 c 11:** See note following RCW 35.92.355.

**Short title—2008 c 299:** See note following RCW 76.15.020.

**Findings—1993 c 204:** See note following RCW 35.92.390.

**RCW 80.28.303 Conservation service tariff—Contents of filing—Rate base—Duties of commission.** (1) An electrical, gas, or water company may file a conservation service tariff with the commission. The tariff shall provide:

(a) The terms and conditions upon which the company will offer the conservation measures and services specified in the tariff;

(b) The period of time during which the conservation measures and services will be offered; and

(c) The maximum amount of expenditures to be made during a specified time period by the company on conservation measures and services specified in the tariff.

(2) The commission has the same authority with respect to a proposed conservation service tariff as it has with regard to any other schedule or classification the effect of which is to change any rate or charge, including, without limitation, the power granted by RCW 80.04.130 to conduct a hearing concerning a proposed conservation service tariff and the reasonableness and justness thereof, and pending such hearing and the decision thereon the commission may suspend the operation of the tariff for a period not exceeding ten months from the time the tariff would otherwise go into effect.

(3) An electrical, gas, or water company may from time to time apply to the commission for a determination that specific expenditures may under its tariff constitute bondable conservation investment. A company may request this determination by the commission in separate proceedings for this purpose or in connection with a general rate case. The commission may designate the expenditures as bondable conservation investment as defined in RCW 80.28.005(1) if it finds that such designation is in the public interest.

(4) The commission shall include in rate base all bondable conservation investment. The commission shall approve rates for service by electrical, gas, and water companies at levels sufficient to recover all of the expenditures of the bondable conservation investment included in rate base and the costs of equity and debt capital associated therewith, including, without limitation, the payment of principal, premium, if any, and interest on conservation bonds. The rates so determined may be included in general rate schedules or may be expressed in one or more separate rate schedules. The commission shall not revalue bondable conservation investment for rate-making purposes, to determine that revenues required to recover bondable conservation investment and associated equity and debt capital costs are unjust, unreasonable, or in any way impair or reduce the value of conservation investment assets or that would impair the timing or the amount of revenues arising with respect to conservation investment assets that have been pledged to secure conservation bonds.

(5) Nothing in this chapter precludes the commission from adopting or continuing other conservation policies and programs intended to provide incentives for and to encourage utility investment in improving the efficiency of energy or water end use. However, the policies or programs shall not impair conservation investment assets. This chapter is not intended to be an exclusive or mandatory approach to conservation programs for electrical, gas, and water companies, and no such company is obligated to file conservation service tariffs under this chapter, to apply to the commission for a determination that conservation costs constitute bondable conservation investment within the meaning of this chapter, or to issue conservation bonds.

(6) (a) If a customer of an electrical, gas, or water company for whose benefit the company made expenditures for conservation measures or services ceases to be a customer of such company for one or more of the following reasons, the commission may require that the portion of such conservation expenditures that had been included in rate base but not theretofore recovered in the rates of such company be removed from the rate base of the company:

(i) The customer ceases to be a customer of the supplier of energy or water, and the customer repays to the company the portion of the conservation expenditures made for the benefit of such customer that has not theretofore been recovered in rates of the company; or

(ii) The company sells its property used to serve such customer and the customer ceases to be a customer of the company as a result of such action.

(b) An electrical, gas, or water company may include in a contract for a conservation measure or service, and the commission may by rule or order require to be included in such contracts, a provision requiring that, if the customer ceases to be a customer of that supplier of energy or water, the customer shall repay to the company the portion of the conservation expenditures made for the benefit of such customer that has not theretofore been recovered in rates of the company. [1994 c 268 s 2.]

**RCW 80.28.306 Conservation bonds—Conservation investment assets as collateral—Priority of security interests—Transfers. (1)**

Electrical, gas, and water companies, or finance subsidiaries, may issue conservation bonds upon approval by the commission.

(2) Electrical, gas, and water companies, or finance subsidiaries may pledge conservation investment assets as collateral for conservation bonds by obtaining an order of the commission approving an issue of conservation bonds and providing for a security interest in conservation investment assets. A security interest in conservation investment assets is created and perfected only upon entry of an order by the commission approving a contract governing the granting of the security interest and the filing with the department of licensing of a UCC-1 financing statement, showing such pledgor as "debtor" and identifying such conservation investment assets and the bondable conservation investment associated therewith. The security interest is enforceable against the debtor and all third parties, subject to the rights of any third parties holding security interests in the conservation investment assets perfected in the manner described in this section, if value has been given by the purchasers of conservation bonds. An approved security interest in conservation investment assets is a continuously perfected security interest in all revenues and proceeds arising with respect to the associated bondable conservation investment, whether or not such revenues have accrued. Upon such approval, the priority of such security interest shall be as set forth in the contract governing the conservation bonds. Conservation investment assets constitute property for the purposes of contracts securing conservation bonds whether or not the related revenues have accrued.

(3) The relative priority of a security interest created under this section is not defeated or adversely affected by the commingling of revenues arising with respect to conservation investment assets with other funds of the debtor. The holders of conservation bonds shall have a perfected security interest in all cash and deposit accounts of the debtor in which revenues arising with respect to conservation investment assets pledged to such holders have been commingled with other funds, but such perfected security interest is limited to an amount not greater than the amount of such revenues received by the debtor within twelve months before (a) any default under the conservation bonds held by the holders or (b) the

institution of insolvency proceedings by or against the debtor, less payments from such revenues to the holders during such twelve-month period. If an event of default occurs under an approved contract governing conservation bonds, the holders of conservation bonds or their authorized representatives, as secured parties, may foreclose or otherwise enforce the security interest in the conservation investment assets securing the conservation bonds, subject to the rights of any third parties holding prior security interests in the conservation investment assets perfected in the manner provided in this section. Upon application by the holders of [or] their representatives, without limiting their other remedies, the commission shall order the sequestration and payment to the holders or their representatives of revenues arising with respect to the conservation investment assets pledged to such holders. Any such order shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any bankruptcy, reorganization, or other insolvency proceedings with respect to the debtor. Any surplus in excess of amounts necessary to pay principal, premium, if any, interest, and expenses arising under the contract governing the conservation bonds shall be remitted to the debtor electrical, gas, or water company or the debtor finance subsidiary.

(4) The granting, perfection, and enforcement of security interests in conservation investment assets to secure conservation bonds is governed by this chapter rather than by \*chapter 62A.9 RCW.

(5) A transfer of conservation investment assets by an electrical, gas, or water company to a finance subsidiary, which such parties have in the governing documentation expressly stated to be a sale or other absolute transfer, in a transaction approved in an order issued by the commission and in connection with the issuance by such finance subsidiary of conservation bonds, shall be treated as a true sale, and not as a pledge or other financing, of such conservation investment assets. According the holders of conservation bonds a preferred right to revenues of the electrical, gas, or water company, or the provision by such company of other credit enhancement with respect to conservation bonds, does not impair or negate the characterization of any such transfer as a true sale.

(6) Any successor to an electrical, gas, or water company pursuant to any bankruptcy, reorganization, or other insolvency proceeding shall perform and satisfy all obligations of the company under an approved contract governing conservation bonds, in the same manner and to the same extent as such company before any such proceeding, including, without limitation, collecting and paying to the bondholders or their representatives revenues arising with respect to the conservation investment assets pledged to secure the conservation bonds. [1994 c 268 s 3.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Chapter 62A.9 RCW was repealed in its entirety by 2000 c 250 s 9A-901, effective July 1, 2001. For later enactment, see chapter 62A.9A RCW.

**RCW 80.28.309 Costs as bondable conservation investment.** (1) Costs incurred before June 9, 1994, by electrical, gas, or water companies with respect to energy or water conservation measures and services intended to improve the efficiency of energy or water end use shall constitute bondable conservation investment for purposes of RCW 80.28.005, 80.28.303, 80.28.306, and this section, if:

(a) The commission has previously issued a rate order authorizing the inclusion of such costs in rate base; and

(b) The commission authorizes the issuance of conservation bonds secured by conservation investment assets associated with such costs.

(2) If costs incurred before June 9, 1994, by electrical, gas, or water companies with respect to energy or water conservation measures intended to improve the efficiency of energy or water end use have not previously been considered by the commission for inclusion in rate base, an electrical, gas, or water company may apply to the commission for approval of such costs. If the commission finds that the expenditures are a bondable conservation investment, the commission shall by order designate such expenditures as bondable conservation investment, which shall be subject to RCW 80.28.005, 80.28.303, 80.28.306, and this section. [1994 c 268 s 4.]

**RCW 80.28.310 Tariff for irrigation pumping service—Authority for electrical companies to buy back electricity.** Upon request by an electrical company, the commission may approve a tariff for irrigation pumping service that allows the company to buy back electricity from customers to reduce electricity usage by those customers during the electrical company's particular irrigation season. [2001 c 122 s 1.]

**Effective date—2001 c 122:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 27, 2001]." [2001 c 122 s 7.]

**RCW 80.28.320 Regulation of battery charging facilities.** The commission shall not regulate the rates, services, facilities, and practices of an entity that offers battery charging facilities to the public for hire; if: (1) That entity is not otherwise subject to commission jurisdiction as an electrical company; or (2) that entity is otherwise subject to commission jurisdiction as an electrical company, but its battery charging facilities and services are not subsidized by any regulated service. An electrical company may offer battery charging facilities as a regulated service, subject to commission approval. [2011 c 28 s 2.]

**RCW 80.28.330 Certificate of public convenience and necessity—Bond or equivalent surety—Rule-making authority.** (1) A wastewater company may not own or develop a system of sewerage for the purpose of providing service for compensation without first having obtained from the commission a certificate declaring that the public convenience and necessity requires such service.

(2) Issuance of the certificate of public convenience and necessity must be determined on, but not limited to, the following factors:

(a) A comprehensive business plan detailing the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed service system;

(b) Demonstration of sufficient financial resources to properly operate and maintain the proposed system, and to replace and upgrade capital assets;

(c) The need to develop a new stand-alone system instead of connecting to an existing system;

(d) A statement of prior experience, if any, in such field by the petitioner, set out in an affidavit or declaration;

(e) A certification from the municipal corporation that it is not willing and able to provide the sewerage services being proposed; and

(f) A certification from the municipal corporation that the company's proposed service is consistent with the locally approved general sewer plan.

(3) The commission may, after providing notice and an opportunity for public comment, issue certificates, or for good cause shown refuse to issue them, or issue them for the partial exercise only of the privilege sought, and may attach to the exercise of the rights granted such terms and conditions as, in its judgment, the public convenience and necessity may require.

(4) No certificate may be transferred to any private or nonprofit entity unless authorized by the commission.

(5) (a) Prior to the commission approving a wastewater company to provide new service or extend existing service, the wastewater company must file and continuously maintain in effect, a bond, or equivalent surety as determined by the commission, with the commission to ensure that there are sufficient funds to:

(i) Design, construct, operate, and maintain the proposed system;

(ii) Replace and upgrade capital assets as required by federal or state law or by order of the department of health or department of ecology; and

(iii) Allow additional connections to the system, if approved by the department of health or the department of ecology.

(b) The bond, or its equivalent surety, is payable under this section to the commission upon:

(i) An order under RCW 80.28.340 to transfer a system or systems of sewerage to a capable wastewater company;

(ii) Notice that the wastewater company does not intend to renew the bond or its equivalent surety or has failed to renew the bond or its equivalent surety; or

(iii) A petition by the commission under RCW 80.28.350, 80.28.030, or 80.28.040 to place a wastewater company in receivership.

(c) The commission must hold the payment in trust until an acquiring wastewater company is designated under RCW 80.28.340 or a receiving entity is designated under RCW 80.28.350, 80.28.030, or 80.28.040, at which point the funds will be made available to the company or entity to expend as directed by the commission.

(6) For purposes of issuing certificates under this chapter, the commission may adopt rules to implement this section.

(7) A wastewater company must obtain commission approval before expanding an existing system beyond the approved capacity set forth in its certificate or acquiring new systems, either by construction or purchase. [2011 c 214 s 3.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.340 Determination that a wastewater company is unfit to provide wastewater service on a system of sewerage—Commission may order transfer—Power of eminent domain.** (1) If the commission



determines, after providing notice and opportunity for a hearing in the manner required for complaints under RCW 80.04.110, that a wastewater company is unfit to provide wastewater service on any system of sewerage, under its ownership, the commission may order the transfer of any such system or systems to a capable wastewater company.

(2) In determining whether a wastewater company is unfit to provide wastewater service on a system of sewerage in consultation with the department of health or the department of ecology as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction, the commission may consider the company's technical and managerial expertise to operate the system of sewerage, the company's financial soundness and the company's willingness and ability to make ongoing investments necessary to maintain compliance with statutory and regulatory standards for the safety, adequacy, efficiency, and reasonableness of the service provided.

(3) Before ordering the transfer of a system of sewerage owned by a wastewater company that is unfit to provide service, the commission must first determine that:

(a) Alternatives to the transfer are impractical or not economically feasible;

(b) The acquiring wastewater company is willing and able to acquire the system or systems of sewerage, [is] financially sound, and has the technical and managerial expertise to own and operate the system or systems of sewerage in compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory standards; and

(c) Rates paid by existing customers served by the acquiring wastewater company will not increase unreasonably because of the acquisition of the system of sewerage or because of expenditures that may be necessary to assure compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory standards for the safety, adequacy, efficiency, and reasonableness of the service provided.

(4) The sale price for the unfit wastewater company's system or systems of sewerage assets must be determined by agreement between the unfit wastewater company and the acquiring capable wastewater company subject to a finding by the commission that the agreed price is reasonable. A price is deemed reasonable if it does not exceed the original cost of plant in service, minus accumulated depreciation, minus contributions in aid to construction. If the unfit wastewater company and the acquiring capable wastewater company are unable to agree on the sale price or the commission finds that the agreed sale price is not reasonable, the acquiring capable wastewater company may initiate a condemnation proceeding in superior court in the manner provided by chapter 8.04 RCW to determine the compensation to be paid by the acquiring capable wastewater company for the failed system or systems of sewerage assets.

(5) The capable wastewater company acquiring an unfit wastewater company's system or systems shall have the same immunity from liability as wastewater companies assuming substandard systems as set forth in RCW 80.28.275.

(6) The commission must provide copies of the notice required by subsection (1) of this section to the department of health or the department of ecology, as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction, and all proximate public entities providing wastewater utility service.

(7) Any capable wastewater company approved by the commission to acquire the system or systems of sewerage of an unfit wastewater

company must submit to the commission, for approval, a financial plan, including a timetable, for bringing the acquired system of sewerage assets into compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory standards. The acquiring capable wastewater company must also provide a copy of the plan to the department of health or the department of ecology, as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction, and other state or local agency as the commission may direct. The commission must give the department of health or the department of ecology, as appropriate to the agencies' jurisdiction, adequate opportunity to comment on the plan and must consider any comments submitted in deciding whether or not to approve the plan.

(8) The legislature grants to any private entity the power of eminent domain, for exercise only under the circumstances described in this section. However, a private entity must obtain authorization from the city, town, or county with jurisdiction over the subject property after the legislative authority of the city, town, or county has passed an ordinance requiring that property be taken for public use. This subsection does not limit eminent domain authority granted by any other provision of law. [2011 c 214 s 5.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.350 Petition to place a wastewater company in receivership—Power of eminent domain.** (1) The commission may petition the Thurston county superior court pursuant to chapter 7.60 RCW to place a wastewater company in receivership. The petition must include the names of one or more qualified candidates for receiver who have consented to assume operation of the system of sewerage. The petition must also include a list of interested and qualified individuals, municipal corporations, and wastewater companies with experience in providing wastewater service and a history of satisfactory operation of a system of sewerage. If no other entity is willing and able to be appointed as the receiver, the court must appoint the county or other municipal corporation whose geographic boundaries include, in whole or in part, the system of sewerage at issue. The municipal corporation may designate one of its agencies or divisions to operate the system, or it may contract with another entity to operate the system. The department of health or department of ecology, whichever has jurisdiction, must provide regulatory oversight for managing the system of sewerage.

(2) In any petition for receivership under subsection (1) of this section, the commission must recommend that the court grant the receiver full authority to act in the best interests of the customers served by the system of sewerage. The receiver must assess the capability, in conjunction with the department of health or ecology, whichever has jurisdiction, and local government, for the system to operate in compliance with health and safety standards. The receiver must report to the court and the commission its recommendations for the company's future operation of the system, including the formation of a water-sewer district or other public entity, or ownership by another existing wastewater company capable of providing service.

(3) If a petition for receivership and verifying affidavit executed by an appropriate official allege an immediate and serious danger to residents constituting an emergency, the court must set the

matter for hearing within three days and may appoint a temporary receiver ex parte upon the strength of such petition and affidavit pending a full evidentiary hearing, which must be held within fourteen days after receipt of the petition.

(4) If the court imposes a bond upon a receiver, the amount must reasonably relate to the level of operating revenue generated by, and the capital value of, the wastewater company. Any receiver appointed pursuant to this section may not be held personally liable for any good faith, reasonable effort to assume possession of, and to operate, the system in compliance with the court's orders, subject to the provisions of law governing clean water as referenced by the commission by rule.

(5) The court must authorize the receiver to impose reasonable assessments on the customers of the system of sewerage to recover expenditures for improvements necessary for the public health and safety.

(6) The commission must develop a plan for transfer of the system of sewerage to a new operator and submit its plan to the court. The commission must develop the plan after notice to, and an opportunity to participate by, the receiver, the municipal corporations whose geographic boundaries, in whole or in part, include the system of sewerage at issue, and the public. The commission must complete the plan no later than twelve months after appointment of a receiver.

(a) If the commission finds that no private entity is able or willing to take over the system of sewerage and decides the system of sewerage should be taken over by a municipal corporation whose geographic boundaries include the system of sewerage at issue, in whole or in part, the commission must provide its findings to the court and the court may issue an order to that effect. If the court orders a municipal corporation to take over the system of sewerage, the municipal corporation must promptly institute negotiations to purchase the system. If, within six months of the court's order, the negotiations fail or otherwise do not result in a purchase, the municipal corporation must promptly initiate a condemnation proceeding to acquire the system. The court must terminate the receivership once the purchase is complete.

(b) If the commission decides the system of sewerage should be taken over by a private entity, such as an individual or business, the commission must provide its findings to the court and the court may issue an order to that effect. If the court orders a private entity to take over the system of sewerage, the private entity must promptly institute negotiations to purchase the system. If, within six months of the court's order, the negotiations fail or otherwise do not result in a purchase, the private entity must promptly exercise its power of eminent domain granted by the legislature in subsection (9) of this section to acquire the system. The court must terminate the receivership once the purchase is complete.

(7) Other than pursuant to subsection (6) (a) and (b) of this section, the court may not terminate the receivership, and order the return of the system to the owners, unless the commission approves that action. The court may impose reasonable conditions upon the return of the system to the owner, including the posting of a bond or other security, routine performance and financial audits, employment of qualified operators and other staff or contracted services, compliance with financial viability requirements, or other measures sufficient to ensure the ongoing proper operation of the system.

(8) If, as part of the ultimate disposition of the system, a condemnation proceeding is commenced to acquire the system of sewerage, the court shall oversee any appraisal of the system conducted under Title 7 RCW to assure that the appraised value properly reflects any reduced value because of the necessity to make improvements to the system. The court has the authority to approve the appraisal and to modify the appraisal based on any information provided at an evidentiary hearing. The court's determination of the proper value of the system, based on the appraisal, is final and only appealable if not supported by substantial evidence. If the appraised value is appealed, the court may order the system's ownership to be transferred upon payment of the approved appraised value.

(9) The legislature grants any municipal corporation, and any private entity the power of eminent domain under the circumstances described in this section. However, a private entity must obtain authorization from the city, town, or county with jurisdiction over the subject property after the legislative authority of the city, town, or county has passed an ordinance requiring that property be taken for public use. This subsection does not limit eminent domain authority granted by any other provision of law. [2011 c 214 s 6.]

**Findings—Purpose—Limitation of chapter—Effective date—2011 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.04.010.

**RCW 80.28.360 Electric vehicle supply equipment—Capital expenditures—Incentive rate of return on investment.** (1) In establishing rates for each electrical company regulated under this title, the commission may allow an incentive rate of return on investment through December 31, 2030, on capital expenditures for electric vehicle supply equipment that is deployed for the benefit of ratepayers, provided that the capital expenditures of the utilities' programs or plans in RCW 80.28.365(1) do not increase the annual retail revenue requirement of the utility, after accounting for the benefits of transportation electrification in each year of the plan, in excess of one-quarter of one percent. The commission must consider and may adopt other policies to improve access to and promote fair competition in the provision of electric vehicle supply equipment.

(2) An incentive rate of return on investment under this section may be allowed only if the company chooses to pursue capital investment in electric vehicle supply equipment on a fully regulated basis similar to other capital investments behind a customer's meter. In the case of an incentive rate of return on investment allowed under this section, an increment of up to two percent must be added to the rate of return on common equity allowed on the company's other investments.

(3) The incentive rate of return on investment authorized in subsection (2) of this section applies only to projects which have been installed after July 1, 2015.

(4) The incentive rate of return on investment increment pursuant to this section may be earned only for a period up to the depreciable life of the electric vehicle supply equipment as defined in the depreciation schedules developed by the company and submitted to the commission for review. When the capital investment has fully depreciated, an electrical company may gift the electric vehicle supply equipment to the owner of the property on which it is located.

(5) By December 31, 2017, the commission must report to the appropriate committees of the legislature with regard to the use of any incentives allowed under this section, the quantifiable impacts of the incentives on actual electric vehicle deployment, and any recommendations to the legislature about utility participation in the electric vehicle market. [2019 c 287 s 6; 2019 c 109 s 5; 2015 c 220 s 2.]

**Effective date—2019 c 287:** See note following RCW 82.29A.125.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 287:** See note following RCW 28B.30.903.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 109:** See note following RCW 35.92.450.

**Findings—Intent—2015 c 220:** "(1) The legislature finds that the transportation sector is Washington's largest contributor to greenhouse emissions and hazardous air pollutants as defined by federal national ambient air quality standards and mobile source air toxics rules. The sector's portion is considerably higher than the national average because our state relies heavily on hydropower for electricity generation, unlike other states that rely on fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum, and natural gas to generate electricity.

(2) The legislature also finds that federal clean air act regulations and complementary Washington policies supporting renewable energy generation, energy efficiency, and energy conservation are likely to result in further reduction of emissions in the electricity and in the combined residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. The legislature finds that state policy can achieve the greatest return on investment in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality by expediting the transition to alternative fuel vehicles, including electric vehicles.

(3) The legislature finds that utilities, who [that] are traditionally responsible for understanding and engineering the electrical grid for safety and reliability, must be fully empowered and incentivized to be engaged in electrification of our transportation system. The legislature further finds that it has given utilities other policy directives to promote energy conservation which do not make the benefits of building out electric vehicle infrastructure, as well as any subsequent increase in energy consumption, readily apparent. Therefore the legislature intends to provide a clear policy directive and financial incentive to utilities for electric vehicle infrastructure build-out." [2015 c 220 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.365 Electric vehicle supply equipment, programs, or services—Electrification of transportation plan—Review—Issuance of acknowledgment.** (1) An electric utility regulated by the utilities and transportation commission under this chapter may submit to the commission an electrification of transportation plan that deploys electric vehicle supply equipment or provides other electric transportation programs, services, or incentives to support electrification of transportation. The plans should align to a period consistent with either the utility's planning horizon under its most recent integrated resource plan or the time frame of the actions contemplated in the plan, and may include:

(a) Any programs that the utility is proposing contemporaneously with the plan filing or anticipates later in the plan period;

(b) Anticipated benefits of transportation electrification, based on a forecast of electric transportation in the utilities' service territory; and

(c) Anticipated costs of programs, subject to the restrictions in RCW 80.28.360.

(2) In reviewing an electrification of transportation plan under subsection (1) of this section, the commission may consider the following: (a) The applicability of multiple options for electrification of transportation across all customer classes; (b) the impact of electrification on the utility's load, and whether demand response or other load management opportunities, including direct load control and dynamic pricing, are operationally appropriate; (c) system reliability and distribution system efficiencies; (d) interoperability concerns, including the interoperability of hardware and software systems in electrification of transportation proposals; and (e) the benefits and costs of the planned actions.

(3) The commission must issue an acknowledgment of an electrification of transportation plan within six months of the submittal of the plan. The commission may establish by rule the requirements for preparation and submission of an electrification of transportation plan. An electric utility may submit a plan under this section before or during rule-making proceedings.

(4) The commission may require a large combination utility as defined in RCW 80.86.010 to incorporate the requirements of this section into an integrated system plan established under RCW 80.86.020. [2024 c 351 s 16; 2019 c 287 s 5; 2019 c 109 s 4.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**Effective date—2019 c 287:** See note following RCW 82.29A.125.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 287:** See note following RCW 28B.30.903.

**Findings—Intent—2019 c 109:** See note following RCW 35.92.450.

**RCW 80.28.370 Community solar companies—Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this section and RCW 80.28.375 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Community solar company" means a person, firm, or corporation, other than an electric utility or a community solar cooperative, that owns a community solar project and provides community solar project services to project participants.

(2) "Community solar project" means a solar energy system that has a direct current nameplate generating capacity that is no larger than one thousand kilowatts.

(3) "Community solar project services" means the provision of electricity generated by a community solar project, or the provision of the financial benefits associated with electricity generated by a community solar project, to multiple project participants, and may include other services associated with the use of the community solar project such as system monitoring and maintenance, warranty provisions, performance guarantees, and customer service.

(4) "Electric utility" means a consumer-owned utility or investor-owned utility as those terms are defined in RCW 19.280.020.

(5) "Project participant" means a customer who enters into a lease, power purchase agreement, loan, or other financial agreement with a community solar company in order to obtain a beneficial interest in, other than direct ownership of, a community solar project.

(6) "Solar energy system" means any device or combination of devices or elements that rely upon direct sunlight as an energy source for use in the generation of electricity. [2017 3rd sp.s. c 36 s 10.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 36:** See notes following RCW 82.16.130.

**RCW 80.28.375 Community solar companies—Requirements to engage in business—Registration.** (1) No community solar company may engage in business in this state except in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. Engaging in business as a community solar company includes advertising, soliciting, offering, or entering into an agreement to own a community solar project and provide community solar project services to electric utility customers.

(2) A community solar company must register with the commission before engaging in business in this state or applying for certification from the Washington State University extension energy program under RCW 82.16.165(1). Registration with the commission as a community solar company must occur on an annual basis. The registration must be on a form prescribed by the commission and contain that information as the commission may by rule require, but must include at a minimum:

- (a) The name and address of the community solar company;
- (b) The name and address of the community solar company's registered agent, if any;
- (c) The name, address, and title of each officer or director;
- (d) The community solar company's most current balance sheet;
- (e) The community solar company's latest annual report, if any;
- (f) A description of the services the community solar company offers or intends to offer, including financing models; and
- (g) Disclosure of any pending litigation against it.

(3) As a precondition to registration, the commission may require the procurement of a performance bond or other mechanism sufficient to cover any advances or deposits the community solar company may collect from project participants or order that the advances or deposits be held in escrow or trust.

(4) The commission may deny registration to any community solar company that:

- (a) Does not provide the information required by this section;
- (b) Fails to provide a performance bond or other mechanism, if required;
- (c) Does not possess adequate financial resources to provide the proposed service; or
- (d) Does not possess adequate technical competency to provide the proposed service.

(5) The commission must take action to approve or issue a notice of hearing concerning any application for registration within thirty days after receiving the application. The commission may approve an

application with or without a hearing. The commission may deny an application after a hearing.

(6) The commission may charge a community solar company an annual application fee to recover the cost of processing applications for registration under this section.

(7) The commission may adopt rules that describe the manner by which it will register a community solar company, ensure that the terms and conditions of community solar projects or community solar project services comply with the requirements of chapter 36, Laws of 2017 3rd sp. sess., establish the community solar company's responsibilities for responding to customer complaints and disputes, and adopt annual reporting requirements. In addition to the application fee authorized under subsection (6) of this section, the commission may adopt regulatory fees applicable to community solar companies pursuant to RCW 80.04.080, 80.24.010, and 80.24.020. Such fees may not exceed the cost of ensuring compliance with this chapter.

(8) The commission may suspend or revoke a registration upon complaint by any interested party, or upon the commission's own motion after notice and opportunity for hearing, when it finds that a registered community solar company or its agent has violated this chapter or the rules of the commission, or that the community solar company or its agent has been found by a court or governmental agency to have violated the laws of a state or the United States.

(9) For the purpose of ensuring compliance with this chapter, the commission may issue penalties against community solar companies for violations of this chapter as provided for public service companies pursuant to chapter 80.04 RCW.

(10) Upon request of the commission, a community solar company registered under this section must provide information about its community solar projects or community solar project services.

(11) A violation of this section constitutes an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce in violation of chapter 19.86 RCW, the consumer protection act. Acts in violation of chapter 36, Laws of 2017 3rd sp. sess. are not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business, and constitute matters vitally affecting the public interest for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW.

(12) For the purposes of RCW 19.86.170, actions or transactions of a community solar company may not be deemed otherwise permitted, prohibited, or regulated by the commission. [2017 3rd sp.s. c 36 s 11.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 36:** See notes following RCW 82.16.130.

**RCW 80.28.380 Gas companies—Conservation targets.** (1) Each gas company must identify and acquire all conservation measures that are available and cost-effective. Each company must establish an acquisition target every two years and must demonstrate that the target will result in the acquisition of all resources identified as available and cost-effective. The cost-effectiveness analysis required by this section must include the costs of greenhouse gas emissions established in RCW 80.28.395. The targets must be based on a conservation potential assessment prepared by an independent third party and approved by the commission. Conservation targets must be



approved by order by the commission. The initial conservation target must take effect by 2022.

(2) The commission may require a large combination utility as defined in RCW 80.86.010 to incorporate the requirements of this section into an integrated system plan established under RCW 80.86.020. [2024 c 351 s 17; 2019 c 285 s 11.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**Findings—2019 c 285:** "(1) The legislature finds and declares that:

(a) Renewable natural gas provides benefits to natural gas utility customers and to the public; and

(b) The development of renewable natural gas resources should be encouraged to support a smooth transition to a low carbon energy economy in Washington.

(2) It is the policy of the state to provide clear and reliable guidelines for gas companies that opt to supply renewable natural gas resources to serve their customers and that ensure robust ratepayer protections." [2019 c 285 s 12.]

**RCW 80.28.385 Renewable natural gas program.** (1) A natural gas company may propose a renewable natural gas program under which the company would supply renewable natural gas for a portion of the natural gas sold or delivered to its retail customers. The renewable natural gas program is subject to review and approval by the commission. The customer charge for a renewable natural gas program may not exceed five percent of the amount charged to retail customers for natural gas.

(2) The environmental attributes of renewable natural gas provided under this section must be retired using procedures established by the commission and may not be used for any other purpose. The commission must approve procedures for banking and transfer of environmental attributes.

(3) As used in this section, "renewable natural gas" includes renewable natural gas as defined in RCW 54.04.190. The commission may approve inclusion of other sources of gas if those sources are produced without consumption of fossil fuels. [2019 c 285 s 13.]

**Findings—2019 c 285:** See note following RCW 80.28.380.

**RCW 80.28.390 Tariff—Voluntary renewable natural gas service.**

(1) Each gas company must offer by tariff a voluntary renewable natural gas service available to all customers to replace any portion of the natural gas that would otherwise be provided by the gas company. The tariff may provide reasonable limits on participation based on the availability of renewable natural gas and may use environmental attributes of renewable natural gas combined with natural gas. The voluntary renewable natural gas service must include delivery to, or the retirement on behalf of, the customer of all environmental attributes associated with the renewable natural gas.

(2) For the purposes of this section, "renewable natural gas" includes renewable natural gas as defined in RCW 54.04.190. The

commission may approve inclusion of other sources of gas if those sources are produced without consumption of fossil fuels. [2019 c 285 s 14.]

**Findings—2019 c 285:** See note following RCW 80.28.380.

**RCW 80.28.395 Natural gas—Cost of greenhouse gas emissions—Calculation.** For the purposes of RCW 80.28.380, the cost of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the use of natural gas, including the effect of emissions occurring in the gathering, transmission, and distribution of natural gas to the end user is equal to the cost per metric ton of carbon dioxide emissions, using the two and one-half percent discount rate, listed in table 2, Technical Support Document: Technical update of the social cost of carbon for regulatory impact analysis under Executive Order 12866, published by the interagency working group on social cost of greenhouse gases of the United States government, August 2016. The commission must adjust the costs established in this section to reflect the effect of inflation. [2019 c 285 s 15.]

**Findings—2019 c 285:** See note following RCW 80.28.380.

**RCW 80.28.400 Commission—Monitoring greenhouse gas emissions—Report.** The commission must monitor the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from natural gas and renewable natural gas delivered by each gas company to its customers, relative to a proportionate share of the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal. The commission must report to the governor by January 1, 2020, and every three years thereafter, an assessment of whether the gas companies are on track to meet a proportionate share of the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal. The commission may rely on reports submitted by gas companies to the United States environmental protection agency or other governmental agencies in complying with this section. [2019 c 285 s 16.]

**Findings—2019 c 285:** See note following RCW 80.28.380.

**RCW 80.28.405 Clean energy action plan—Greenhouse gas emissions—Calculation of cost.** For the purposes of chapter 288, Laws of 2019, the cost of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the generation of electricity, including the effect of emissions, is equal to the cost per metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, using the two and one-half percent discount rate, listed in table 2, technical support document: Technical update of the social cost of carbon for regulatory impact analysis under Executive Order No. 12866, published by the interagency working group on social cost of greenhouse gases of the United States government, August 2016. The commission must adjust the costs established in this section to reflect the effect of inflation. [2019 c 288 s 15.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 288:** See RCW 19.405.010 and 19.405.901.

**RCW 80.28.410 Clean energy action plan—Account for and defer costs.** (1) An electrical company may account for and defer for later consideration by the commission costs incurred in connection with major projects in the electrical company's clean energy action plan pursuant to RCW 19.280.030(1)(1), or selected in the electrical company's solicitation of bids for delivering electric capacity, energy, capacity and energy, or conservation. The deferral in this subsection begins with the date on which the resource begins commercial operation or the effective date of the power purchase agreement and continues for a period not to exceed thirty-six months. However, if during such a period the electrical company files a general rate case or other proceeding for the recovery of such costs, deferral ends on the effective date of the final decision by the commission in such a proceeding. Creation of such a deferral account does not by itself determine the actual costs of the resource or power purchase agreement, whether recovery of any or all of these costs is appropriate, or other issues to be decided by the commission in a general rate case or other proceeding.

(2) The costs that an electrical company may account for and defer for later consideration by the commission pursuant to subsection (1) of this section include all operating and maintenance costs, depreciation, taxes, cost of capital associated with the applicable resource or the execution of a power purchase agreement. Such costs of capital include:

(a) The electrical company's authorized return on equity for any resource acquired or developed by the electrical company; or

(b) For the duration of a power purchase agreement, a rate of return of no less than the authorized cost of debt and no greater than the authorized rate of return of the electrical company, which would be multiplied by the operating expense incurred by the electrical company under the power purchase agreement. [2019 c 288 s 21.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 288:** See RCW 19.405.010 and 19.405.901.

**RCW 80.28.420 Gas company recovery of costs associated with replacing certain pipeline facilities—Information to be submitted to the commission—Definitions.** (1) The commission must initiate a proceeding to provide conditions concerning the interim recovery between rate cases by a gas company of the costs associated with replacing pipeline facilities that are demonstrated to have an elevated risk of failure and the costs associated with measures to expedite the reduction of hazardous leaks and reduce as practicable nonhazardous leaks from the gas company's gas pipelines.

(2) A gas company seeking an interim recovery between rate cases may submit to the commission, as part of a general rate case or a commission-approved interim rate treatment mechanism regarding the replacement of pipeline facilities, a description of equipment and new facilities that aid in the reduction of methane emissions and a list of projects and changes to operational procedures including, but not limited to, venting, blowdowns, and others, to expedite the replacement of pipeline facilities that present an elevated risk of failure and expedite the repairs of hazardous leaks and nonhazardous leaks. Items on the list must be ranked according to risk, severity, complexity, and impact to the environment and public health. A gas

company may also include in its filing methods to implement and deploy leak detection technology capable of rapidly identifying leaks. As part of its filing, the gas company must include a cost-effectiveness analysis and propose a cap for annual expenditures recoverable through a cost recovery mechanism to be approved by the commission. The cost-effectiveness analysis must include considerations of risk and impacts to the environment and public health. A gas company may consider a percent of rate base, percent of revenues, total expenditures, or other basis for its proposed cap. As part of the proposal, the gas company must address the expected impact to ratepayers and other factors that may be required by the commission by rule.

(3) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Gas pipeline" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 81.88.010.

(b) "Hazardous leak" means a leak that represents an existing or probable hazard to persons or property and requires immediate repair or continuous action until the conditions are no longer hazardous.

(c) "Nonhazardous leak" includes a leak that is:

(i) Recognized as being not hazardous at the time of detection but justifies scheduled repair based on the potential for creating a future hazard; and

(ii) Not hazardous at the time of detection and can reasonably be expected to remain not hazardous.

(4) Nothing in this section may be construed to preempt the process by which a gas company is required to petition relevant state or local authorities when seeking to expand the capacity of the company's gas transmission or distribution lines.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to impose requirements or restrictions on or otherwise regulate interstate pipelines. [2020 c 32 s 2.]

**Intent—2020 c 32:** "It is the intent of the legislature to encourage a safer and more efficient natural gas transmission and distribution system through investments that address and minimize leaks in the natural gas pipeline system." [2020 c 32 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.425 Multiyear rate plan.** (1) Beginning January 1, 2022, every general rate case filing of a gas or electrical company must include a proposal for a multiyear rate plan as provided in this chapter. The commission may, by order after an adjudicative proceeding as provided by chapter 34.05 RCW, approve, approve with conditions, or reject, a multiyear rate plan proposal made by a gas or electrical company or an alternative proposal made by one or more parties, or any combination thereof. The commission's consideration of a proposal for a multiyear rate plan is subject to the same standards applicable to other rate filings made under this title, including the public interest and fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient rates. In determining the public interest, the commission may consider such factors including, but not limited to, environmental health and greenhouse gas emissions reductions, health and safety concerns, economic development, and equity, to the extent such factors affect the rates, services, and practices of a gas or electrical company regulated by the commission.

(2) The commission may approve, disapprove, or approve with modifications any proposal to recover from ratepayers up to five percent of the total revenue requirement approved by the commission for each year of a multiyear rate plan for tariffs that reduce the energy burden of low-income residential customers including, but not limited to: (a) Bill assistance programs; or (b) one or more special rates. For any multiyear rate plan approved under this section resulting in a rate increase, the commission must approve an increase in the amount of low-income bill assistance to take effect in each year of the rate plan where there is a rate increase. At a minimum, the amount of such low-income assistance increase must be equal to double the percentage increase, if any, in the residential base rates approved for each year of the rate plan. The commission may approve a larger increase to low-income bill assistance based on an appropriate record.

(3) (a) If it approves a multiyear rate plan, the commission shall separately approve rates for each of the initial rate year, the second rate year and, if applicable, the third rate year, and the fourth rate year.

(b) The commission shall ascertain and determine the fair value for rate-making purposes of the property of any gas or electrical company that is or will be used and useful under RCW 80.04.250 for service in this state by or during each rate year of the multiyear rate plan. For the initial rate year, the commission shall, at a minimum, ascertain and determine the fair value for rate-making purposes of the property of any gas or electrical company that is used and useful for service in this state as of the rate effective date. The commission may order refunds to customers if property expected to be used and useful by the rate effective date when the commission approves a multiyear rate plan is in fact not used and useful by such a date.

(c) The commission shall ascertain and determine the revenues and operating expenses for rate-making purposes of any gas or electrical company for each rate year of the multiyear rate plan.

(d) In ascertaining and determining the fair value of property of a gas or electrical company pursuant to (b) of this subsection and projecting the revenues and operating expenses of a gas or electrical company pursuant to (c) of this subsection, the commission may use any standard, formula, method, or theory of valuation reasonably calculated to arrive at fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient rates.

(e) If the commission approves a multiyear rate plan with a duration of three or four years, then the electrical company must update its power costs as of the rate effective date of the third rate year. The proceeding to update the electrical company's power costs is subject to the same standards that apply to other rate filings made under this title.

(4) Subject to subsection (5) of this section, the commission may by order establish terms, conditions, and procedures for a multiyear rate plan and ensure that rates remain fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient during the course of the plan.

(5) Notwithstanding subsection (4) of this section, a gas or electrical company is bound by the terms of the multiyear rate plan approved by the commission for each of the initial rate year and the second rate year. A gas or electrical company may file a new multiyear rate plan in accordance with this section for the third rate year and fourth rate year, if any, of a multiyear rate plan.

(6) If the annual commission basis report for a gas or electrical company demonstrates that the reported rate of return on rate base of the company for the 12-month period ending as of the end of the period for which the annual commission basis report is filed is more than .5 percent higher than the rate of return authorized by the commission in the multiyear rate plan for such a company, the company shall defer all revenues that are in excess of .5 percent higher than the rate of return authorized by the commission for refunds to customers or another determination by the commission in a subsequent adjudicative proceeding. If a multistate electrical company with fewer than 250,000 customers in Washington files a multiyear rate plan that provides for no increases in base rates in consecutive years beyond the initial rate year, the commission shall waive the requirements of this subsection provided that such a waiver results in just and reasonable rates.

(7) The commission must, in approving a multiyear rate plan, determine a set of performance measures that will be used to assess a gas or electrical company operating under a multiyear rate plan. These performance measures may be based on proposals made by the gas or electrical company in its initial application, by any other party to the proceeding in its response to the company's filing, or in the testimony and evidence admitted in the proceeding. In developing performance measures, incentives, and penalty mechanisms, the commission may consider factors including, but not limited to, lowest reasonable cost planning, affordability, increases in energy burden, cost of service, customer satisfaction and engagement, service reliability, clean energy or renewable procurement, conservation acquisition, demand side management expansion, rate stability, timely execution of competitive procurement practices, attainment of state energy and emissions reduction policies, rapid integration of renewable energy resources, and fair compensation of utility employees.

(8) Nothing in this section precludes any gas or electrical company from making filings required or permitted by the commission.

(9) The commission shall align, to the extent practical, the timing of approval of a multiyear rate plan of an electrical company submitted pursuant to this section with the clean energy implementation plan of the electrical company filed pursuant to RCW 19.405.060.

(10) The provisions of this section may not be construed to limit the existing rate-making authority of the commission.

(11) The commission may require a large combination utility as defined in RCW 80.86.010 to incorporate the requirements of this section into an integrated system plan established under RCW 80.86.020. [2024 c 351 s 18; 2021 c 188 s 2.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**Legislative directive—2021 c 188:** "(1) To provide clarity and certainty to stakeholders on the details of performance-based regulation, the utilities and transportation commission is directed to conduct a proceeding to develop a policy statement addressing alternatives to traditional cost of service rate making, including performance measures or goals, targets, performance incentives, and penalty mechanisms. As part of such a proceeding, the utilities and

transportation commission must consider factors including, but not limited to, lowest reasonable cost planning, affordability, increases in energy burden, cost of service, customer satisfaction and engagement, service reliability, clean energy or renewable procurement, conservation acquisition, demand side management expansion, rate stability, timely execution of competitive procurement practices, attainment of state energy and emissions reduction policies, rapid integration of renewable energy resources, and fair compensation of utility employees.

(2) In developing its policy statement, the utilities and transportation commission must in its proceeding allow for participation and consultation with regulated utilities, the attorney general's office, and other interested stakeholders including, but not limited to, residential, industrial, commercial, and low-income customers and organizations, as well as environmental or community organizations and stakeholders.

(3) By January 1, 2022, the utilities and transportation commission shall notify the chairs and ranking members of the appropriate committees of the legislature of the process to date, the expected duration of, and work plan associated with this proceeding." [2021 c 188 s 1.]

**RCW 80.28.430 Authority to enter into agreements with certain organizations—Agreement to govern manner in which financial assistance is provided to an organization—Requirements.** (1) A gas company or electrical company shall, upon request, enter into one or more written agreements with organizations that represent broad customer interests in regulatory proceedings conducted by the commission, subject to commission approval in accordance with subsection (2) of this section, including but not limited to organizations representing low-income, commercial, and industrial customers, vulnerable populations, or highly impacted communities. The agreement must govern the manner in which financial assistance may be provided to the organization. More than one gas company, electrical company, or organization representing customer interests may join in a single agreement. Any agreement entered into under this section must be approved, approved with modifications, or rejected by the commission. The commission must consider whether the agreement is consistent with a reasonable allocation of financial assistance provided to organizations pursuant to this section among classes of customers of the gas or electrical company.

(2) Before administering an agreement entered into under subsection (1) of this section, the commission shall, by rule or order, determine:

(a) The amount of financial assistance, if any, that may be provided to any organization;

(b) The manner in which the financial assistance is distributed;

(c) The manner in which the financial assistance is recovered in the rates of the gas company or electrical company under subsection (3) of this section; and

(d) Other matters necessary to administer the agreement.

(3) The commission shall allow a gas company or electrical company that provides financial assistance under this section to recover the amounts provided in rates. The commission shall allow a gas company or electrical company to defer inclusion of those amounts

in rates if the gas company or electrical company so elects. An agreement under this section may not provide for payment of any amounts to the commission.

(4) Organizations representing vulnerable populations or highly impacted communities must be prioritized for funding under this section. [2021 c 188 s 4.]

**Legislative directive—2021 c 188:** See note following RCW 80.28.425.

**RCW 80.28.435 Replacement of natural gas with hydrogen—Notice to commission—Tariff approval.** (1) A gas company must file a notice with the utilities and transportation commission prior to replacing natural gas with renewable hydrogen or green electrolytic hydrogen to serve customers. The notice must establish that the company has received all necessary siting and permitting approvals. The notice must also include a description of the following:

(a) Whether the use of clean electricity to produce hydrogen is consistent with the company's most recent integrated resource plan;

(b) Potential impacts to electrical grid reliability, including resource adequacy, resulting from renewable hydrogen and green electrolytic hydrogen production and deployment; and

(c) Standards, including safety standards, for blending of green electrolytic hydrogen and renewable hydrogen into natural gas distribution infrastructure.

(2) The commission shall consider the recommendations made by the department of commerce through its work outlined in RCW 43.330.570(1)(d), the information contained in the notice, and additional relevant data and analyses when making a determination on a company's request for approval of any tariff related to the use of green electrolytic hydrogen or renewable hydrogen as a replacement for natural gas. [2022 c 292 s 601.]

**Findings—Intent—2022 c 292:** See note following RCW 43.330.565.

**RCW 80.28.440 Wildfire mitigation plan—Review/revision.** (1) By October 31, 2024, and every three years thereafter, each investor-owned utility must review and, if appropriate, revise its wildfire mitigation plan. When reviewing or revising a wildfire mitigation plan, an investor-owned utility must use the recommended format and elements pursuant to RCW 76.04.185.

(a) Local fire protection districts must be provided the opportunity to provide input for each wildfire mitigation plan. Each investor-owned utility must submit its wildfire mitigation plan to the utilities and transportation commission for review, and the commission will confirm whether or not the plan contains the recommended elements. Each investor-owned utility must provide a copy of their wildfire mitigation plan to the department of natural resources, along with a list and description of wildland fires involving utility equipment over the previous two years as reported by the department of natural resources. The wildfire mitigation plan must be submitted to the utility wildland fire prevention advisory committee created in RCW 76.04.780 to be posted on their website as specified in RCW 76.04.780.



(b) The utilities and transportation commission is not liable for an investor-owned utility's implementation of its wildfire mitigation plan. An investor-owned utility may pursue recovery of costs and investments associated with a wildfire mitigation plan through a proceeding to set rates at the commission.

(c) Investor-owned utilities are encouraged to submit any 2023 wildfire mitigation plans to the utility wildland fire prevention advisory committee created in RCW 76.04.780 prior to the revision date required in this subsection.

(2) Nothing in this section prohibits an investor-owned utility from reviewing or updating its wildfire mitigation plan more often than required in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) For the purposes of this section, the term "investor-owned utility" means a corporation owned by investors that meets the definition of "corporation" as defined in RCW 80.04.010 and is engaged in distributing electricity to more than one retail electric customer in the state. [2023 c 132 s 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2023 c 132:** See note following RCW 76.04.185.

**RCW 80.28.450 Thermal energy networks.** (1) Any gas company and any electrical company may deploy a thermal energy network within their service territories, in accordance with RCW 80.28.460. If a gas company or electrical company intends to deploy a thermal energy network, the company must submit the project for review and validation of costs assessments to the commission, in the case of an investor-owned gas company or electrical company, or to the governing body of the utility, in the case of a consumer-owned gas company or electrical company.

(2) For an investor-owned gas company or investor-owned electrical company, if the commission validates the costs assessments selection of a thermal energy network, the company may propose to recover the costs of building and operating the project from ratepayers in a rate case filing before the commission. The commission's validation of the utility's costs assessment of a thermal energy network resource does not constitute a prudency finding by the commission or a finding that the resource is used and useful for rate-making purposes.

(3) Companies exempt from commission oversight under RCW 80.04.550 are not subject to regulation by the commission under this chapter. [2024 c 348 s 2.]

**RCW 80.28.460 Thermal energy network pilot project program.** A thermal energy network pilot project program is established.

(1) The department of commerce may award grants for the thermal energy network pilot project program in accordance with RCW 43.31.033.

(2) (a) A gas company has priority for developing thermal energy network pilot projects in the gas company's service territory, but the gas company must announce in writing to the commission its intention to deploy a pilot project in a specific location within 12 months of June 6, 2024, and then must deploy a pilot project within 30 months of June 6, 2024, to maintain this priority. The gas company may request an extension of these deadlines and the commission may approve the

extension if the commission determines the gas company is making substantial progress towards deploying a thermal energy network.

(b) In a specific location where an existing thermal energy company has deployed or is developing a thermal energy network, the commission may opt to not provide priority to the gas company for that location.

(3) When reviewing a thermal energy network pilot project for approval, the commission must consider the following information related to the pilot project:

(a) The number and type of customers served, including the percent of low-income customers served;

(b) The use of the existing natural gas workforce and other labor considerations, such as efforts to transition the natural gas workforce to thermal energy work, training, recruiting, job creation and retention, payment of prevailing wages, and state-registered apprenticeship utilization;

(c) The ability to maintain infrastructure safety and reliability;

(d) The ability to meet 100 percent of the pilot project customers' demand for space heating;

(e) Whether the pilot project creates benefits to customers, communities, and society at large including, but not limited to, public health benefits such as improved air quality in areas with disproportionate environmental or public health burdens and disadvantaged communities as identified by the environmental health disparities map described in RCW 43.70.815, and increased affordability of thermal energy options;

(f) Coordination with any electric utility providing electrical service to areas served by the pilot project;

(g) Whether the pilot project furthers the climate justice mandates of chapter 70A.02 RCW and the emissions reduction mandates of chapter 70A.45 RCW;

(h) Whether the pilot project advances financial and technical approaches to equitable and affordable building electrification;

(i) Whether the pilot project will develop information useful for the commission's adoption of rules governing thermal energy networks;

(j) Enrollment in an electric utility demand response program;

(k) The potential to enable gas pipeline decommissioning and its potential to supplant the need for gas pipeline replacement and the need to spend on gas pipeline replacement programs; and

(l) Whether the thermal energy network is a distributed system that uses ambient temperature fluid and high-efficiency heat pump equipment in each building in the network.

(4) When reviewing a thermal energy network pilot project for approval, the commission may also consider the following information related to the pilot project:

(a) Greenhouse gas emissions reductions;

(b) The use of waste heat, ground-source heat, geothermal resources, or other nonfossil fuel and noncombustion sources, and the use of electric heat pumps;

(c) The ability to provide the pilot project customers' hot water demands;

(d) The ability to provide the pilot project customers' cooling demands; and

(e) The consideration of options to provide thermal energy storage.

(5) Thermal energy network pilot projects under review by the commission are subject to a public comment period of no less than 30 days.

(6) When submitting a thermal energy network pilot project to the commission for review, a gas or electrical company must include specific metrics that the company proposes to use to evaluate the pilot project. These metrics are intended to help inform the commission's rule making and rate making and specifically to help inform any future standardized metrics that the commission may adopt for thermal energy network pilot projects. [2024 c 348 s 3.]

**RCW 80.28.470 Thermal energy network pilot project—Request for proposals.** (1) Prior to deploying a thermal energy network pilot project, an investor-owned gas company must issue a request for proposals for a thermal energy network pilot project. When reviewing the proposals, the investor-owned gas company must compare the cost of deployment of a proposed thermal energy network pilot project to the lowest reasonable cost alternative resource for heating services under the gas company's current business practices. This cost comparison must be shared with the commission and considered in calculating grant award amounts as determined pursuant to RCW 43.31.033(4).

(2) An investor-owned gas company may petition the commission to use an alternative process from the process described in subsection (1) of this section to estimate the cost to deploy a thermal energy network pilot project. The commission must review such a petition and then accept, deny, or accept with modifications such an alternative process. [2024 c 348 s 5.]

**RCW 80.28.480 Merger of gas and thermal energy rate bases.** (1) In any multiyear rate plan proposed by a natural gas company or combination utility, the company may propose a merger into a single rate base of its regulated gas operations with its operation of a thermal energy network. The commission may approve the merger of gas and thermal energy rate bases if the commission finds that such a merger is in the public interest.

(2) For a natural gas company or combination utility that has merged gas and thermal energy rate bases, the natural gas company or combination utility must monetize benefits received from any applicable federal and state tax and other incentives for the benefit of customers. These benefits must be separately accounted for and amortized on a schedule designed to mitigate the rate impacts to customers after the rate bases are combined. These credits may not be used for any other purpose, unless directed by the commission. [2024 c 348 s 7.]

**RCW 80.28.900 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.** For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered

domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 s 186.]

**Chapter 80.32 RCW**  
**ELECTRIC FRANCHISES AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

**Sections**

- 80.32.010 Cities and counties may grant franchises—Procedure—  
Liability to restore road for travel.
- 80.32.040 Grant of franchise subject to referendum.
- 80.32.050 Sale or lease of plant and franchises.
- 80.32.060 Eminent domain.
- 80.32.070 Right of entry.
- 80.32.080 Duties of electrical companies exercising power of eminent  
domain.
- 80.32.090 Limitation on use of electricity.
- 80.32.100 Remedy for violations.

*Franchises on state highways: Chapter 47.44 RCW.*

**RCW 80.32.010 Cities and counties may grant franchises—  
Procedure—Liability to restore road for travel.** The legislative authority of the city or town having control of any public street or road, or, where the street or road is not within the limits of any incorporated city or town, then the county legislative authority of the county wherein the road or street is situated, may grant authority for the construction, maintenance and operation of transmission lines for transmitting electric power, together with poles, wires and other appurtenances, upon, over, along and across any such public street or road, and in granting this authority the legislative authority of the city or town, or the county legislative authority, as the case may be, may prescribe the terms and conditions on which the transmission line and its appurtenances, shall be constructed, maintained and operated upon, over, along and across the road or street, and the grade or elevation at which the same shall be constructed, maintained and operated: PROVIDED, That on application being made to the county legislative authority for such authority, the county legislative authority shall fix a time and place for hearing the same, and shall cause the county auditor to give public notice thereof at the expense of the applicant, by posting written or printed notices in three public places in the county seat of the county, and in at least one conspicuous place on the road or street or part thereof, for which application is made, at least fifteen days before the day fixed for such hearing, and by publishing a like notice once a week for two consecutive weeks in the official county newspaper, the last publication to be at least five days before the day fixed for the hearing, which notice shall state the name or names of the applicant or applicants, a description of the roads or streets or parts thereof for which the application is made, and the time and place fixed for the hearing. The hearing may be adjourned from time to time by order of the county legislative authority. If after such hearing the county legislative authority shall deem it to be for the public interest to grant the authority in whole or in part, it may make and enter the proper order granting the authority applied for or such part thereof as it deems to be for the public interest, and shall require the transmission line and its appurtenances to be placed in such location on or along the road or street as it finds will cause the least interference with other uses of the road or street. In case any such

transmission line is or shall be located in part on private right-of-way, the owner thereof shall have the right to construct and operate the same across any county road or county street which intersects the private right-of-way, if the crossing is so constructed and maintained as to do no unnecessary damage: PROVIDED, That any person or corporation constructing the crossing or operating the transmission line on or along the county road or county street shall be liable to the county for all necessary expense incurred in restoring the county road or county street to a suitable condition for travel. [1985 c 469 s 62; 1961 c 14 s 80.32.010. Prior: 1903 c 173 s 1; RRS s 5430. Formerly RCW 80.32.010, 80.32.020, and 80.32.030.]

**RCW 80.32.040 Grant of franchise subject to referendum.** All grants of franchises or rights for the conduct or distribution of electric energy, electric power, or electric light within any city or town of the state of Washington by the city council or other legislative body or legislative authority thereof, whether granted by ordinance, resolution, or other form of grant, contract, permission or license, shall be subject to popular referendum under the general laws of this state heretofore or hereafter enacted, or as may be provided by the charter provisions, heretofore or hereafter adopted, of any such city or town: PROVIDED, That no petition for referendum may be filed after six months from the date of ordinance, resolution, or other form of grant, contract, permission, or license granting such franchise. [1961 c 14 s 80.32.040. Prior: (i) 1941 c 114 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 5430-1. (ii) 1941 c 114 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 5430-2.]

**RCW 80.32.050 Sale or lease of plant and franchises.** Any corporation incorporated or that may hereafter be incorporated under the laws of this state or any state or territory of the United States, for the purpose of manufacturing, transmitting or selling electric power, may lease or purchase and operate (except in cases where such lease or purchase is prohibited by the Constitution of this state) the whole or any part of the plant for manufacturing or distributing electric power or energy of any other corporation, heretofore or hereafter constructed, together with the franchises, powers, immunities and all other property or appurtenances appertaining thereto: PROVIDED, That such lease or purchase has been or shall be consented to by stockholders of record holding at least two-thirds in amount of the capital stock or the lessor or grantor corporation; and all such leases and purchases made or entered into prior to the effective date of chapter 173, Laws of 1903, by consent of stockholders as aforesaid are for all intents and purposes hereby ratified and confirmed, saving, however, any vested rights of private parties. [1961 c 14 s 80.32.050. Prior: 1903 c 173 s 3; RRS s 5431.]

**RCW 80.32.060 Eminent domain.** Every corporation, incorporated or that may hereafter be incorporated under the laws of this state, or of any other state or territory of the United States, and doing business in this state, for the purpose of manufacturing or transmitting electric power, shall have the right to appropriate real estate and other property for right-of-way or for any corporate purpose, in the same manner and under the same procedure as now is or may hereafter be provided by law in the case of ordinary railroad

corporations authorized by the laws of this state to exercise the right of eminent domain: PROVIDED, That such right of eminent domain shall not be exercised with respect to any public road or street until the location of the transmission line thereon has been authorized in accordance with RCW 80.32.010. [1961 c 14 s 80.32.060. Prior: 1903 c 173 s 2; No RRS.]

*Eminent domain by corporations generally: Chapter 8.20 RCW.*

**RCW 80.32.070 Right of entry.** Every such corporation shall have the right to enter upon any land between the termini of the proposed lines for the purpose of examining, locating and surveying such lines, doing no unnecessary damage thereby. [1961 c 14 s 80.32.070. Prior: 1899 c 94 s 2; RRS s 11085.]

**RCW 80.32.080 Duties of electrical companies exercising power of eminent domain.** Any corporation authorized to do business in this state, which, under the present laws of the state, is authorized to condemn property for the purpose of generating and transmitting electrical power for the operation of railroads or railways, or for municipal lighting, and which by its charter or articles of incorporation, assumes the additional right to sell electric power and electric light to private consumers outside the limits of a municipality and to sell electric power to private consumers within the limits of a municipality, which shall provide in its articles that in respect of the purposes mentioned in this section it will assume and undertake to the state and to the inhabitants thereof the duties and obligations of a public service corporation, shall be deemed to be in respect of such purposes a public service corporation, and shall be held to all the duties, obligations and control, which by law are or may be imposed upon public service corporations. Any such corporation shall have the right to sell electric light outside the limits of a municipality and electric power both inside and outside such limits to private consumers from the electricity generated and transmitted by it for public purposes and not needed by it therefor: PROVIDED, That such corporation shall furnish such excess power at equal rates, quantity and conditions considered, to all consumers alike, and shall supply it to the first applicants therefor until the amount available shall be exhausted: PROVIDED FURTHER, That no such corporation shall be obliged to furnish such excess power to any one consumer to an amount exceeding twenty-five percent of the total amount of such excess power generated or transmitted by it. In exercising the power of eminent domain for public purposes it shall not be an objection thereto that a portion of the electric current generated will be applied to private purposes, provided the principal uses intended are public: PROVIDED, That all public service or quasi public service corporations shall at no time sell, deliver and dispose of electrical power in bulk to manufacturing concerns at the expense of its public service functions, and any person, firm or corporation that is a patron of such corporation as to such public function, shall have the right to apply to any court of competent jurisdiction to correct any violation of the provisions of RCW 80.32.080 through 80.32.100. [1961 c 14 s 80.32.080. Prior: 1907 c 159 s 1; RRS s 5432.]

**RCW 80.32.090 Limitation on use of electricity.** Whenever any corporation has acquired any property by decree of appropriation based on proceedings in court under the provisions of RCW 80.32.080 through 80.32.100, no portion of the electricity generated or transmitted by it by means of the property appropriated under the provisions of RCW 80.32.080 through 80.32.100 shall be used or applied by such corporation for or to a business or trade not under the present laws deemed public or quasi public conducted by itself. [1961 c 14 s 80.32.090. Prior: 1907 c 159 s 2; RRS s 5433.]

**RCW 80.32.100 Remedy for violations.** In the event of the violation of any of the requirements of RCW 80.32.080 and 80.32.090 by any corporation availing itself of its provisions, an appropriate suit may be maintained in the name of the state upon the relation of the attorney general, or, if he or she shall refuse or neglect to act, upon the relation of any individual aggrieved by the violation, or violations, complained of, to compel such corporation to comply with the requirements of RCW 80.32.080 and 80.32.090. A violation of RCW 80.32.080 and 80.32.090 shall cause the forfeiture of the corporate franchise if the corporation refuses or neglects to comply with the orders with respect thereto made in the suit herein provided for. [2013 c 23 s 281; 1961 c 14 s 80.32.100. Prior: 1907 c 159 s 3; RRS s 5434.]



**Chapter 80.36 RCW**  
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**Sections**

- 80.36.005 Definitions.
- 80.36.010 Eminent domain.
- 80.36.020 Right of entry.
- 80.36.030 Extent of appropriation.
- 80.36.040 Use of road, street, and railroad right-of-way—When consent of city necessary.
- 80.36.050 Use of railroad right-of-way—Penalty for refusal by railroad.
- 80.36.060 Liability for wilful injury to telecommunications property.
- 80.36.070 Liability for negligent injury to property—Notice of underwater cable.
- 80.36.080 Rates, services, and facilities.
- 80.36.090 Service to be furnished on demand.
- 80.36.100 Tariff schedules to be filed and open to public—Exceptions.
- 80.36.110 Tariff changes—Statutory notice—Exception—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.
- 80.36.120 Joint rates, contracts, etc.
- 80.36.130 Published rates to be charged—Exceptions.
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*Arrest by telegraph, validity of telegraphic copy: RCW 10.31.060.*

*Bills and notes drawn by telegraph, preservation of original: RCW  
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*Divulging telegraph message: RCW 9.73.010.*

*Telegraph and telephone companies: State Constitution Art. 12 s 19.*

*Telegraph communications, generally: Chapter 5.52 RCW.*

*Use of slugs to operate coin telephones: RCW 9.26A.120.*

**RCW 80.36.005 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 80.36.410 through \*80.36.475, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Community action agency" means local community action agencies or local community service agencies designated by the department of commerce under chapter 43.63A RCW.

(2) "Community agency" means local community agencies that administer community service voice mail programs.

(3) "Community service voice mail" means a computerized voice mail system that provides low-income recipients with: (a) An individually assigned telephone number; (b) the ability to record a personal greeting; and (c) a private security code to retrieve messages.

(4) "Department" means the department of social and health services.

(5) "Service year" means the period between July 1st and June 30th. [2009 c 565 s 53; 2003 c 134 s 1; 2002 c 104 s 1; 1993 c 249 s 1.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 80.36.475 was repealed by 2009 c 518 s 10.

(2) The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2003." [2003 c 134 s 12.]

**Effective date—1993 c 249:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [May 7, 1993]." [1993 c 249 s 4.]

**RCW 80.36.010 Eminent domain.** The right of eminent domain is hereby extended to all telecommunications companies organized or doing business in this state. [1985 c 450 s 15; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.010. Prior: 1890 p 292 s 1; RRS s 11338.]

**RCW 80.36.020 Right of entry.** Every corporation incorporated under the laws of this state or any state or territory of the United States for the purpose of constructing, operating or maintaining any telecommunications line in this state shall have the right to enter upon any land between the termini of its proposed telecommunications lines for the purpose of examining, locating and surveying the telecommunications line, doing no unnecessary damage thereby. [1985 c 450 s 16; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.020. Prior: 1888 p 65 s 1; RRS s 11339.]

**RCW 80.36.030 Extent of appropriation.** Such telecommunications company may appropriate so much land as may be actually necessary for its telecommunications line, with the right to enter upon lands immediately adjacent thereto, for the purpose of constructing, maintaining and operating its line and making all necessary repair. Such telecommunications company may also, for the purpose aforesaid, enter upon and appropriate such portion of the right-of-way of any railroad company as may be necessary for the construction, maintenance and operation of its telecommunications line: PROVIDED, That such appropriation shall not obstruct such railroad of the travel thereupon, nor interfere with the operation of such railroad. [1985 c 450 s 17; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.030. Prior: 1888 p 66 s 2; RRS s 11342.]

**RCW 80.36.040 Use of road, street, and railroad right-of-way—When consent of city necessary.** Any telecommunications company, or the lessees thereof, doing business in this state, shall have the right to construct and maintain all necessary telecommunications lines for public traffic along and upon any public road, street or highway, along or across the right-of-way of any railroad corporation, and may erect poles, posts, piers or abutments for supporting the insulators, wires and any other necessary fixture of their lines, in such manner and at such points as not to incommode the public use of the railroad or highway, or interrupt the navigation of the waters: PROVIDED, That when the right-of-way of such corporation has not been acquired by or through any grant or donation from the United States, or this state, or any county, city or town therein, then the right to construct and maintain such lines shall be secured only by the exercise of right of eminent domain, as provided by law: PROVIDED FURTHER, That where the

right-of-way as herein contemplated is within the corporate limits of any incorporated city, the consent of the city council thereof shall be first obtained before such telecommunications lines can be erected thereon. [1985 c 450 s 18; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.040. Prior: 1890 p 292 s 5; RRS s 11352.]

**RCW 80.36.050 Use of railroad right-of-way—Penalty for refusal by railroad.** Every railroad operated in this state, and carrying freight and passengers for hire, or doing business in this state, is and shall be designated a "post road," and the corporation or company owning the same shall allow telecommunications companies to construct and maintain telecommunications lines on and along the right-of-way of such railroad.

In case of the refusal or neglect of any railroad company or corporation to comply with the provisions of this section, said company or corporation shall be liable for damages in the sum of not less than one thousand dollars nor more than five thousand dollars for each offense, and one hundred dollars per day during the continuance thereof. [1985 c 450 s 19; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.050. Prior: (i) 1890 p 292 s 3; RRS s 11340. (ii) 1890 p 293 s 9; RRS s 11356.]

**RCW 80.36.060 Liability for wilful injury to telecommunications property.** Any person who wilfully and maliciously does any injury to any telecommunications property mentioned in RCW 80.36.070, is liable to the company for five times the amount of actual damages sustained thereby, to be recovered in any court of competent jurisdiction. [1985 c 450 s 20; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.060. Prior: 1890 p 293 s 7; RRS s 11354.]

**RCW 80.36.070 Liability for negligent injury to property—Notice of underwater cable.** Any person who injures or destroys, through want of proper care, any necessary or useful fixtures of any telecommunications company, is liable to the company for all damages sustained thereby. Any vessel which, by dragging its anchor or otherwise, breaks, injures or destroys the subaqueous cable of a telecommunications company, subjects its owners to the damages hereinbefore specified.

No telecommunications company can recover damages for the breaking or injury of any subaqueous telecommunications cable, unless such company has previously erected on either bank of the waters under which the cable is placed, a monument indicating the place where the cable lies, and publishes for one month, in some newspaper most likely to give notice to navigators, a notice giving a description and the purpose of the monuments, and the general course, landings and termini of the cable. [1985 c 450 s 21; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.070. Prior: (i) 1890 p 293 s 6; RRS s 11353. (ii) 1890 p 293 s 10; RRS s 11357.]

**RCW 80.36.080 Rates, services, and facilities.** All rates, tolls, contracts and charges, rules and regulations of telecommunications companies, for messages, conversations, services rendered and equipment and facilities supplied, whether such message, conversation or service to be performed be over one company or line or

over or by two or more companies or lines, shall be fair, just, reasonable and sufficient, and the service so to be rendered any person, firm or corporation by any telecommunications company shall be rendered and performed in a prompt, expeditious and efficient manner and the facilities, instrumentalities and equipment furnished by it shall be safe, kept in good condition and repair, and its appliances, instrumentalities and service shall be modern, adequate, sufficient and efficient. [1985 c 450 s 22; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.080. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 35, part; RRS s 10371, part.]

**RCW 80.36.090 Service to be furnished on demand.** Every telecommunications company operating in this state shall provide and maintain suitable and adequate buildings and facilities therein, or connected therewith, for the accommodation, comfort and convenience of its patrons and employees.

Every telecommunications company shall, upon reasonable notice, furnish to all persons and corporations who may apply therefor and be reasonably entitled thereto suitable and proper facilities and connections for telephonic communication and furnish telephone service as demanded. [1985 c 450 s 23; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.090. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 35, part; RRS s 10371, part.]

**RCW 80.36.100 Tariff schedules to be filed and open to public—**  
**Exceptions.** (1) Every telecommunications company shall file with the commission and shall print and keep open to public inspection at such points as the commission may designate, schedules showing the rates, tolls, rentals, and charges of such companies for messages, conversations and services rendered and equipment and facilities supplied for messages and services to be performed within the state between each point upon its line and all other points thereon, and between each point upon its line and all points upon every other similar line operated or controlled by it, and between each point on its line or upon any line leased, operated or controlled by it and all points upon the line of any other similar company, whenever a through service and joint rate shall have been established or ordered between any two such points.

(2) If no joint rate covering a through service has been established, the several companies in such through service shall file, print and keep open to public inspection as aforesaid the separately established rates, tolls, rentals, and charges applicable for such through service.

(3) The schedules printed as aforesaid shall plainly state the places between which telecommunications service, or both, will be rendered, and shall also state separately all charges and all privileges or facilities granted or allowed, and any rules or regulations which may in anywise change, affect or determine any of the aggregate of the rates, tolls, rentals or charges for the service rendered.

(4) A schedule shall be plainly printed in large type, and a copy thereof shall be kept by every telecommunications company readily accessible to and for convenient inspection by the public at such places as may be designated by the commission, which schedule shall state the rates charged from such station to every other station on

such company's line, or on any line controlled and used by it within the state.

(a) All or any of such schedules kept as aforesaid shall be immediately produced by such telecommunications company upon the demand of any person.

(b) A notice printed in bold type, and stating that such schedules are on file and open to inspection by any person, the places where the same are kept, and that the agent will assist such person to determine from such schedules any rate, toll, rental, rule or regulation which is in force shall be kept posted by every telecommunications company in a conspicuous place in every station or office of such company.

(5) This section does not apply to telecommunications companies classified as competitive under RCW 80.36.320 or to telecommunications services classified as competitive under RCW 80.36.330. [2006 c 347 s 1; 1989 c 101 s 9; 1985 c 450 s 24; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.100. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 36; RRS s 10372.]

**RCW 80.36.110 Tariff changes—Statutory notice—Exception—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, unless the commission otherwise orders, no change shall be made in any rate, toll, rental, or charge, that was filed and published by any telecommunications company in compliance with the requirements of RCW 80.36.100, except after notice as required in this subsection.

(a) For changes to any rate, toll, rental, or charge filed and published in a tariff, the company shall provide thirty days' notice to the commission and publication for thirty days as required in the case of original schedules in RCW 80.36.100. The notice shall plainly state the changes proposed to be made in the schedule then in force, and the time when the changed rate, toll, or charge will go into effect, and all proposed changes shall be shown by printing, filing and publishing new schedules, or shall be plainly indicated upon the schedules in force at the time and kept open to public inspection. Proposed changes may be suspended by the commission within thirty days or before the stated effective date of the proposed change, whichever is later.

(b) The commission for good cause shown may allow changes in rates, charges, tolls, or rentals without requiring the notice and publication provided for in (a) of this subsection, by an order or rule specifying the change to be made and the time when it takes effect, and the manner in which the change will be filed and published.

(c) When any change is made in any rate, toll, rental, or charge, the effect of which is to increase any rate, toll, rental, or charge then existing, attention shall be directed on the copy filed with the commission to the increase by some character immediately preceding or following the item in the schedule, which character shall be in such a form as the commission may designate.

(2) (a) A telecommunications company may file a tariff that decreases any rate, charge, rental, or toll with ten days' notice to the commission and publication without receiving a special order from the commission when the filing does not contain an offsetting increase to another rate, charge, rental, or toll, and the filing company agrees not to file for an increase to any rate, charge, rental, or

toll to recover the revenue deficit that results from the decrease for a period of one year.

(b) A telecommunications company may file a promotional offering to be effective, without receiving a special order from the commission, upon filing with the commission and publication. For the purposes of this section, "promotional offering" means a tariff that, for a period of up to ninety days, waives or reduces charges or conditions of service for existing or new subscribers for the purpose of retaining or increasing the number of customers who subscribe to or use a service.

[(3)] During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 403; 2006 c 347 s 2; 2003 c 189 s 2; 1997 c 166 s 1. Prior: 1989 c 152 s 2; 1989 c 101 s 10; 1985 c 450 s 25; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.110; prior: 1911 c 117 s 37; RRS s 10373.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.36.120 Joint rates, contracts, etc.** The names of the several companies which are parties to any joint rates, tolls, contracts or charges of telecommunications companies for messages, conversations and service to be rendered shall be specified therein, and each of the parties thereto, other than the one filing the same, shall file with the commission such evidence of concurrence therein or acceptance thereof as may be required or approved by the commission; and where such evidence of concurrence or acceptance is filed, it shall not be necessary for the companies filing the same to also file copies of the tariff in which they are named as parties. [1985 c 450 s 26; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.120. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 38; RRS s 10374.]

**RCW 80.36.130 Published rates to be charged—Exceptions.** (1) Except as provided in RCW 80.04.130 and 80.36.150, no telecommunications company shall charge, demand, collect or receive different compensation for any service rendered or to be rendered than the charge applicable to such service as specified in its schedule on file and in effect at that time, nor shall any telecommunications company refund or remit, directly or indirectly, any portion of the rate or charge so specified, nor extend to any person or corporation any form of contract or agreement or any rule or regulation or any privilege or facility except such as are specified in its schedule filed and in effect at the time, and regularly and uniformly extended to all persons and corporations under like circumstances for like or substantially similar service.

(2) No telecommunications company subject to the provisions of this title shall, directly or indirectly, give any free or reduced service or any free pass or frank for the transmission of messages by telecommunications between points within this state, except to its officers, employees, agents, pensioners, surgeons, physicians, attorneys-at-law, and their families, and persons and corporations



exclusively engaged in charitable and eleemosynary work, and ministers of religion, Young Men's Christian Associations, Young Women's Christian Associations; to indigent and destitute persons, and to officers and employees of other telecommunications companies, railroad companies, and street railroad companies.

(3) The commission may accept a tariff that gives free or reduced rate services for a temporary period of time in order to promote the use of the services. [1992 c 68 s 2; 1989 c 101 s 11; 1985 c 450 s 27; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.130. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 40; RRS s 10376. FORMER PART OF SECTION: 1929 c 96 s 1, part now codified in RCW 81.28.080.]

**RCW 80.36.135 Alternative regulation of telecommunications companies—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.** (1) The legislature declares that:

(a) Changes in technology and the structure of the telecommunications industry may produce conditions under which traditional rate of return, rate base regulation of telecommunications companies may not in all cases provide the most efficient and effective means of achieving the public policy goals of this state as declared in RCW 80.36.300, this section, and RCW 80.36.145. The commission should be authorized to employ an alternative form of regulation if that alternative is better suited to achieving those policy goals.

(b) Because of the great diversity in the scope and type of services provided by telecommunications companies, alternative regulatory arrangements that meet the varying circumstances of different companies and their ratepayers may be desirable.

(2) Subject to the conditions set forth in this chapter and RCW 80.04.130, the commission may regulate telecommunications companies subject to traditional rate of return, rate base regulation by authorizing an alternative form of regulation. The commission may determine the manner and extent of any alternative forms of regulation as may in the public interest be appropriate. In addition to the public policy goals declared in RCW 80.36.300, the commission shall consider, in determining the appropriateness of any proposed alternative form of regulation, whether it will:

(a) Facilitate the broad deployment of technological improvements and advanced telecommunications services to underserved areas or underserved customer classes;

(b) Improve the efficiency of the regulatory process;

(c) Preserve or enhance the development of effective competition and protect against the exercise of market power during its development;

(d) Preserve or enhance service quality and protect against the degradation of the quality or availability of efficient telecommunications services;

(e) Provide for rates and charges that are fair, just, reasonable, sufficient, and not unduly discriminatory or preferential; and

(f) Not unduly or unreasonably prejudice or disadvantage any particular customer class.

(3) A telecommunications company or companies subject to traditional rate of return, rate base regulation may petition the commission to establish an alternative form of regulation. The company or companies shall submit with the petition a plan for an alternative

form of regulation. The plan shall contain a proposal for transition to the alternative form of regulation and the proposed duration of the plan. The plan must also contain a proposal for ensuring adequate carrier-to-carrier service quality, including service quality standards or performance measures for interconnection, and appropriate enforcement or remedial provisions in the event the company fails to meet service quality standards or performance measures. The commission also may initiate consideration of alternative forms of regulation for a company or companies on its own motion. The commission, after notice and hearing, shall issue an order accepting, modifying, or rejecting the plan within nine months after the petition or motion is filed, unless extended by the commission for good cause. The commission shall order implementation of the alternative plan of regulation unless it finds that, on balance, an alternative plan as proposed or modified fails to meet the considerations stated in subsection (2) of this section.

(4) Not later than sixty days from the entry of the commission's order, the company or companies affected by the order may file with the commission an election not to proceed with the alternative form of regulation as authorized by the commission.

(5) The commission may waive such regulatory requirements under Title 80 RCW for a telecommunications company subject to an alternative form of regulation as may be appropriate to facilitate the implementation of this section. However, the commission may not waive any grant of legal rights to any person contained in this chapter and chapter 80.04 RCW. The commission may waive different regulatory requirements for different companies or services if such different treatment is in the public interest.

(6) Upon petition by the company, and after notice and hearing, the commission may rescind or modify an alternative form of regulation in the manner requested by the company.

(7) The commission or any person may file a complaint under RCW 80.04.110 alleging that a telecommunications company under an alternative form of regulation has not complied with the terms and conditions set forth in the alternative form of regulation. The complainant shall bear the burden of proving the allegations in the complaint.

(8) During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 414; 2000 c 82 s 1; 1995 c 110 s 5; 1989 c 101 s 1.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.36.140 Rates and services fixed by commission, when.**

Whenever the commission shall find, after a hearing had upon its own motion or upon complaint, that the rates, charges, tolls or rentals demanded, exacted, charged or collected by any telecommunications company for the transmission of messages by telecommunications, or for the rental or use of any telecommunications line, instrument, wire, appliance, apparatus or device or any telecommunications receiver,

transmitter, instrument, wire, cable, apparatus, conduit, machine, appliance or device, or any telecommunications extension or extension system, or that the rules, regulations or practices of any telecommunications company affecting such rates, charges, tolls, rentals or service are unjust, unreasonable, unjustly discriminatory or unduly preferential, or in anywise in violation of law, or that such rates, charges, tolls or rentals are insufficient to yield reasonable compensation for the service rendered, the commission shall determine the just and reasonable rates, charges, tolls or rentals to be thereafter observed and in force, and fix the same by order as provided in this title.

Whenever the commission shall find, after such hearing that the rules, regulations or practices of any telecommunications company are unjust or unreasonable, or that the equipment, facilities or service of any telecommunications company is inadequate, inefficient, improper or insufficient, the commission shall determine the just, reasonable, proper, adequate and efficient rules, regulations, practices, equipment, facilities and service to be thereafter installed, observed and used, and fix the same by order or rule as provided in this title. [1985 c 450 s 28; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.140. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 55; RRS s 10391.]

**RCW 80.36.145 Formal investigation and fact-finding—Alternative to full adjudicative proceeding—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.**

(1) The legislature declares that the availability of an alternative abbreviated formal procedure for use by the commission instead of a full adjudicative proceeding may in appropriate circumstances advance the public interest by reducing the time required by the commission for decision and the costs incurred by interested parties and ratepayers. Therefore, the commission is authorized to use formal investigation and fact-finding instead of an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW when it determines that its use is in the public interest and that a full adjudicative hearing is not necessary to fully develop the facts relevant to the proceeding and the positions of the parties, including intervenors.

(2) The commission may use formal investigation and fact-finding instead of the hearing provided in the following circumstances:

(a) A complaint proceeding under RCW 80.04.110 with concurrence of the respondent when the commission is the complainant or with concurrence of the complainant and respondent when not the commission;

(b) A tariff suspension under RCW 80.04.130; or

(c) A competitive classification proceeding under RCW 80.36.320 and 80.36.330.

(3) In formal investigation and fact-finding the commission may limit the record to written submissions by the parties, including intervenors. The commission shall review the written submissions and, based thereon, shall enter appropriate findings of fact and conclusions of law and its order. When there is a reasonable expression of public interest in the issues under consideration, the commission shall hold at least one public hearing for the receipt of information from members of the public that are not formal intervenors in the proceeding and may elect to convert the proceeding to an adjudicative proceeding at any stage. The assignment of an agency employee or administrative law judge to preside at such public hearing shall not require the entry of an initial order.

(4) The commission shall adopt rules of practice and procedure including rules for discovery of information necessary for the use of formal investigation and fact-finding and for the filing of written submissions. The commission may provide by rule for a number of rounds of written comments: PROVIDED, That the party with the burden of proof shall always have the opportunity to file reply comments.

(5) During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 407; 1989 c 101 s 3.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.36.150 Contracts filed with commission.** (1) Every telecommunications company shall file with the commission, as and when required by it, a copy of any contract, agreement or arrangement in writing with any other telecommunications company, or with any other corporation, association or person relating in any way to the construction, maintenance or use of a telecommunications line or service by, or rates and charges over and upon, any such telecommunications line. The commission shall adopt rules that provide for the filing by telecommunications companies on the public record of the essential terms and conditions of every contract for service. The commission shall not require that customer proprietary information contained in contracts be disclosed on the public record.

(2) The commission shall not treat contracts as tariffs or price lists. The commission may require noncompetitive service to be tariffed unless the company demonstrates that the use of a contract is in the public interest based upon a customer requirement or a competitive necessity for deviation from tariffed rates, terms and conditions, or that the contract is for a new service with limited demand.

(3) Contracts shall be for a stated time period and shall cover the costs for the service contracted for, as determined by commission rule or order. Contracts shall be enforceable by the contracting parties according to their terms, unless the contract has been rejected by the commission before its stated effective date as improper under the commission's rules and orders, or the requirements of this chapter. If the commission finds a contract to be below cost after it has gone into effect, based on commission rules or orders or the requirements of this chapter in effect at the time of the execution of the contract, it may make the appropriate adjustment to the contracting company's revenue requirement in a subsequent proceeding.

(4) Contracts executed and filed prior to July 23, 1989, are deemed lawful and enforceable by the contracting parties according to the contract terms. If the commission finds that any existing contract provides for rates that are below cost, based on commission rules or orders or the requirements of this chapter in effect at the time of the execution of the contract, it may make the appropriate adjustment to the contracting company's revenue requirement in a subsequent proceeding.

(5) If a contract covers competitive and noncompetitive services, the noncompetitive services shall be unbundled and priced separately from all other services and facilities in the contract. Such noncompetitive services shall be made available to all purchasers under the same or substantially the same circumstances at the same rate, terms, and conditions. [1989 c 101 s 8; 1985 c 450 s 29; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.150. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 39; RRS s 10375.]

**RCW 80.36.160 Physical connections may be ordered, routing prescribed, and joint rates established.** In order to provide toll telephone service where no such service is available, or to promote the most expeditious handling or most direct routing of toll messages and conversations, or to prevent arbitrary or unreasonable practices which may result in the failure to utilize the toll facilities of all telecommunications companies equitably and effectively, the commission may, on its own motion, or upon complaint, notwithstanding any contract or arrangement between telecommunications companies, investigate, ascertain and, after hearing, by order (1) require the construction and maintenance of suitable connections between telephone lines for the transfer of messages and conversations at a common point or points and, if the companies affected fail to agree on the proportion of the cost thereof to be borne by each such company, prescribe said proportion of cost to be borne by each; and/or (2) prescribe the routing of toll messages and conversations over such connections and the practices and regulations to be followed with respect to such routing; and/or (3) establish reasonable joint rates or charges by or over said lines and connections and just, reasonable and equitable divisions thereof as between the telecommunications companies participating therein.

This section shall not be construed as conferring on the commission jurisdiction, supervision or control of the rates, service or facilities of any mutual, cooperative or farmer line company or association, except for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this section. [1985 c 450 s 30; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.160. Prior: 1943 c 68 s 1; 1923 c 118 s 1; 1911 c 117 s 73; Rem. Supp. 1943 s 10409.]

**RCW 80.36.170 Unreasonable preference prohibited.** No telecommunications company shall make or give any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any person, corporation or locality, or subject any particular person, corporation or locality to any undue or unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage in any respect whatsoever. The commission shall have primary jurisdiction to determine whether any rate, regulation, or practice of a telecommunications company violates this section. This section shall not apply to contracts offered by a telecommunications company classified as competitive or to contracts for services classified as competitive under RCW 80.36.320 and 80.36.330. [1989 c 101 s 4; 1985 c 450 s 31; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.170. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 42; RRS s 10378.]

**RCW 80.36.180 Rate discrimination prohibited.** No telecommunications company shall, directly or indirectly, or by any special rate, rebate, drawback or other device or method, unduly or unreasonably charge, demand, collect or receive from any person or

corporation a greater or less compensation for any service rendered or to be rendered with respect to communication by telecommunications or in connection therewith, except as authorized in this title or Title 81 RCW than it charges, demands, collects or receives from any other person or corporation for doing a like and contemporaneous service with respect to communication by telecommunications under the same or substantially the same circumstances and conditions. The commission shall have primary jurisdiction to determine whether any rate, regulation, or practice of a telecommunications company violates this section. This section shall not apply to contracts offered by a telecommunications company classified as competitive or to contracts for services classified as competitive under RCW 80.36.320 or 80.36.330. [1989 c 101 s 5; 1985 c 450 s 32; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.180. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 41; RRS s 10377.]

**RCW 80.36.183 Discounted message toll rates prohibited—**

**Availability of statewide, averaged toll rates.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, no telecommunications company shall offer a discounted message toll service based on volume that prohibits aggregation of volumes across all territory with respect to which that company functions as an interexchange carrier. The commission shall continue to have the authority to require statewide, averaged toll rates to be made available by any telecommunications company subject to its jurisdiction. [1989 c 101 s 6.]

**RCW 80.36.186 Pricing of or access to noncompetitive services—**

**Unreasonable preference or advantage prohibited.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, no telecommunications company providing noncompetitive services shall, as to the pricing of or access to noncompetitive services, make or grant any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to itself or to any other person providing telecommunications service, nor subject any telecommunications company to any undue or unreasonable prejudice or competitive disadvantage. The commission shall have primary jurisdiction to determine whether any rate, regulation, or practice of a telecommunications company violates this section. [1989 c 101 s 7.]

**RCW 80.36.190 Long and short distance provision.**

No telecommunications company subject to the provisions of this title shall charge or receive any greater compensation in the aggregate for the transmission of any long distance conversation or message of like kind for a shorter than for a longer distance over the same line, in the same direction, within this state, the shorter being included within the longer distance, or charge any greater compensation for a through service than the aggregate of the intermediate rates subject to the provision of this title, but this shall not be construed as authorizing any such telecommunications company to charge and receive as great a compensation for a shorter as for a longer distance. Upon application of any telecommunications company the commission may, by order, authorize it to charge less for longer than for a shorter distance service for the transmission of conversation or messages in special cases after investigation, but the order must specify and prescribe the extent to which the telecommunications company making

such application is relieved from the operation of this section, and only to the extent so specified and prescribed shall any telecommunications company be relieved from the requirements of this section. [1985 c 450 s 33; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.190. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 44; RRS s 10380.]

**RCW 80.36.195 Telecommunications relay system—Long distance discount rates.** Each telecommunications company providing intrastate interexchange voice transmission service shall offer discounts from otherwise applicable long distance rates for service used in conjunction with the statewide relay service authorized under RCW 43.20A.725. Such long distance discounts shall be determined in relation to the additional time required to translate calls through relay operators. In the case of intrastate long distance services provided pursuant to tariff, the commission shall require the incorporation of such discounts. [1992 c 144 s 5.]

**Legislative findings—Severability—1992 c 144:** See notes following RCW 43.20A.720.

**RCW 80.36.200 Transmission of messages of other lines.** Every telecommunications company operating in this state shall receive, transmit and deliver, without discrimination or delay, the messages of any other telecommunications company. [1985 c 450 s 34; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.200. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 45; RRS s 10381.]

**RCW 80.36.210 Order of sending messages.** It shall be the duty of any telegraph company, doing business in this state, to transmit all dispatches in the order in which they are received, under the penalty of one hundred dollars, to be recovered with costs of suit, by the person or persons whose dispatch is postponed out of its order: PROVIDED, That communications to and from public officers on official business, may have precedence over all other communications: AND, PROVIDED FURTHER, That intelligence of general and public interest may be transmitted for publication out of its order. [1961 c 14 s 80.36.210. Prior: Code 1881 s 2361; RRS s 11344; prior: 1866 p 77 s 20.]

**RCW 80.36.220 Duty to transmit messages—Penalty for refusal or neglect.** Telecommunications companies shall receive, exchange and transmit each other's messages without delay or discrimination, and all telecommunications companies shall receive and transmit messages for any person.

In case of the refusal or neglect of any telecommunications company to comply with the provisions of this section, the penalty for the same shall be a fine of not more than five hundred nor less than one hundred dollars for each offense. [1985 c 450 s 35; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.220. Prior: (i) 1890 p 292 s 2; RRS s 11343. (ii) 1890 p 293 s 8; RRS s 11355.]

**RCW 80.36.225 Pay telephones—Calls to operator without charge or coin insertion to be provided.** All telecommunications companies and customer-owned, pay telephone providers doing business in this state and utilizing pay telephones shall provide a system whereby calls may be made to the operator without charge and without requiring the use of credit cards or other payment devices, or insertion of any coins into such pay telephone. [1985 c 450 s 36; 1975 c 21 s 1.]

*Emergency calls, yielding line: Chapter 70.85 RCW.*

**RCW 80.36.230 Exchange areas for telecommunications companies.** The commission is hereby granted the power to prescribe exchange area boundaries and/or territorial boundaries for telecommunications companies. [1985 c 450 s 37; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.230. Prior: 1941 c 137 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 11358-1.]

**RCW 80.36.240 Exchange areas for telephone companies—Procedure to establish.** The commission in conducting hearings, promulgating rules, and otherwise proceeding to make effective the provisions of RCW 80.36.230 and 80.36.240, shall be governed by, and shall have the powers provided in this title, as amended; all provisions as to review of the commission's orders and appeals to the supreme court or the court of appeals contained in said title, as amended, shall be available to all companies and parties affected by the commission's orders issued under authority of RCW 80.36.230 and 80.36.240. [1971 c 81 s 142; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.240. Prior: 1941 c 137 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1941 s 11358-2.]

**RCW 80.36.250 Commission may complain of interstate rates.** The commission may investigate all interstate rates and charges, classifications, or rules or practices relating thereto, for or in relation to the transmission of messages or conversations. Where any acts in relation thereto take place within this state which, in the opinion of the commission, are excessive or discriminatory, or are levied or laid in violation of the federal communications act of June 19, 1934, and acts amendatory thereof or supplementary thereto, or are in conflict with the rulings, orders, or regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, the commission shall apply by petition to the Federal Communications Commission for relief, and may present to such federal commission all facts coming to its knowledge respecting violations of such act or the rulings, orders, or regulations of the federal commission. [1961 c 14 s 80.36.250. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 58; RRS s 10394.]

**RCW 80.36.260 Betterments may be ordered.** Whenever the commission shall find, after a hearing had on its own motion or upon complaint, that repairs or improvements to, or changes in, any telecommunications line ought reasonably be made, or that any additions or extensions should reasonably be made thereto in order to promote the security or convenience of the public or employees, or in order to secure adequate service or facilities for telecommunications communications, the commission shall make and serve an order directing



that such repairs, improvements, changes, additions or extensions be made in the manner to be specified therein. [1985 c 450 s 38; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.260. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 71; RRS s 10407.]

**RCW 80.36.270 Effect on existing contracts.** Nothing in this title shall be construed to prevent any telecommunications company from continuing to furnish the use of its line, equipment or service under any contract or contracts in force on June 7, 1911 or upon the taking effect of any schedule or schedules of rates subsequently filed with the commission, as herein provided, at the rates fixed in such contract or contracts. [1989 c 101 s 12; 1985 c 450 s 39; 1961 c 14 s 80.36.270. Prior: 1911 c 117 s 43; RRS s 10379.]

**RCW 80.36.300 Policy declaration.** The legislature declares it is the policy of the state to:

- (1) Preserve affordable universal telecommunications service;
- (2) Maintain and advance the efficiency and availability of telecommunications service;
- (3) Ensure that customers pay only reasonable charges for telecommunications service;
- (4) Ensure that rates for noncompetitive telecommunications services do not subsidize the competitive ventures of regulated telecommunications companies;
- (5) Promote diversity in the supply of telecommunications services and products in telecommunications markets throughout the state; and
- (6) Permit flexible regulation of competitive telecommunications companies and services. [1985 c 450 s 1.]

**RCW 80.36.310 Classification as competitive telecommunications companies, services—Initiation of proceedings—Notice and publication—Effective date—Date for final order.** (1) Telecommunications companies may petition to be classified as competitive telecommunications companies under RCW 80.36.320 or to have services classified as competitive telecommunications services under RCW 80.36.330. The commission may initiate classification proceedings on its own motion. The commission may require all regulated telecommunications companies potentially affected by a classification proceeding to appear as parties for a determination of their classification.

(2) Any company petition or commission motion for competitive classification shall state an effective date not sooner than thirty days from the filing date. The company must provide notice and publication of the proposed competitive classification in the same manner as provided in RCW 80.36.110 for tariff changes. The proposed classification shall take effect on the stated effective date unless suspended by the commission and set for hearing under chapter 34.05 RCW or set for a formal investigation and fact-finding under RCW 80.36.145. The commission shall enter its final order with respect to any suspended classification within six months from the date of filing of a company's petition or the commission's motion. [1998 c 337 s 4; 1989 c 101 s 14; 1985 c 450 s 3.]

**RCW 80.36.320 Classification as competitive telecommunications companies, services—Factors considered—Minimal regulation—**

**Reclassification—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency. (1)**

The commission shall classify a telecommunications company as a competitive telecommunications company if the services it offers are subject to effective competition. Effective competition means that the company's customers have reasonably available alternatives and that the company does not have a significant captive customer base. In determining whether a company is competitive, factors the commission shall consider include but are not limited to:

- (a) The number and sizes of alternative providers of service;
- (b) The extent to which services are available from alternative providers in the relevant market;
- (c) The ability of alternative providers to make functionally equivalent or substitute services readily available at competitive rates, terms, and conditions; and
- (d) Other indicators of market power which may include market share, growth in market share, ease of entry, and the affiliation of providers of services.

The commission shall conduct the initial classification and any subsequent review of the classification in accordance with such procedures as the commission may establish by rule.

(2) Competitive telecommunications companies shall be subject to minimal regulation. The commission may waive any regulatory requirement under this title for competitive telecommunications companies when it determines that competition will serve the same purposes as public interest regulation. The commission may waive different regulatory requirements for different companies if such different treatment is in the public interest. A competitive telecommunications company shall at a minimum:

- (a) Keep its accounts according to regulations as determined by the commission;
- (b) File financial reports with the commission as required by the commission and in a form and at times prescribed by the commission; and
- (c) Cooperate with commission investigations of customer complaints.

(3) The commission may revoke any waivers it grants and may reclassify any competitive telecommunications company if the revocation or reclassification would protect the public interest.

(4) The commission may waive the requirements of RCW 80.36.170 and 80.36.180 in whole or in part for a competitive telecommunications company if it finds that competition will serve the same purpose and protect the public interest.

(5) During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 408; 2006 c 347 s 3; 2003 c 189 s 3; 1998 c 337 s 5; 1989 c 101 s 15; 1985 c 450 s 4.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.36.330 Classification as competitive telecommunications companies, services—Effective competition defined—Minimal regulation—Prices and rates—Reclassification—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.**

(1) The commission may classify a telecommunications service provided by a telecommunications company as a competitive telecommunications service if the service is subject to effective competition. Effective competition means that customers of the service have reasonably available alternatives and that the service is not provided to a significant captive customer base. In determining whether a service is competitive, factors the commission shall consider include but are not limited to:

(a) The number and size of alternative providers of services, including those not subject to commission jurisdiction;

(b) The extent to which services are available from alternative providers in the relevant market;

(c) The ability of alternative providers to make functionally equivalent or substitute services readily available at competitive rates, terms, and conditions; and

(d) Other indicators of market power, which may include market share, growth in market share, ease of entry, and the affiliation of providers of services.

(2) Competitive telecommunications services are subject to minimal regulation. The commission may waive any regulatory requirement under this title for companies offering a competitive telecommunications service when it determines that competition will serve the same purposes as public interest regulation. The commission may waive different regulatory requirements for different companies if such different treatment is in the public interest. A company offering a competitive telecommunications service shall at a minimum:

(a) Keep its accounts according to rules adopted by the commission;

(b) File financial reports for competitive telecommunications services with the commission as required by the commission and in a form and at times prescribed by the commission; and

(c) Cooperate with commission investigations of customer complaints.

(3) Prices or rates charged for competitive telecommunications services shall cover their cost. The commission shall determine proper cost standards to implement this section, provided that in making any assignment of costs or allocating any revenue requirement, the commission shall act to preserve affordable universal telecommunications service.

(4) The commission may investigate prices for competitive telecommunications services upon complaint. In any complaint proceeding initiated by the commission, the telecommunications company providing the service shall bear the burden of proving that the prices charged cover cost, and are fair, just, and reasonable.

(5) Telecommunications companies shall provide the commission with all data it deems necessary to implement this section.

(6) No losses incurred by a telecommunications company in the provision of competitive services may be recovered through rates for noncompetitive services. The commission may order refunds or credits to any class of subscribers to a noncompetitive telecommunications service which has paid excessive rates because of below cost pricing of competitive telecommunications services.

(7) The commission may reclassify any competitive telecommunications service if reclassification would protect the public interest.

(8) The commission may waive the requirements of RCW 80.36.170 and 80.36.180 in whole or in part for a service classified as competitive if it finds that competition will serve the same purpose and protect the public interest.

(9) During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 409; 2007 c 26 s 1; 2006 c 347 s 4; 2003 c 189 s 4; 1998 c 337 s 6; 1989 c 101 s 16; 1985 c 450 s 5.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.36.332 Noncompetitive telecommunications companies, services—Minimal regulation.** (1) A noncompetitive telecommunications company may petition to have packages or bundles of telecommunications services it offers be subject to minimal regulation. The commission shall grant the petition where:

(a) Each noncompetitive service in the packages or bundle is readily and separately available to customers at fair, just, and reasonable prices;

(b) The price of the package or bundle is equal to or greater than the cost for tariffed services plus the cost of any competitive services as determined in accordance with RCW 80.36.330(3); and

(c) The availability and price of the stand-alone noncompetitive services are displayed in the company's tariff and on its website consistent with commission rules.

(2) For purposes of this section, "minimal regulation" shall have the same meaning as under RCW 80.36.330.

(3) The commission may waive any regulatory requirement under this title with respect to packages or bundles of telecommunications services if it finds those requirements are no longer necessary to protect public interest. [2007 c 26 s 2.]

**RCW 80.36.333 Price lists in effect before June 7, 2006—Extension.** (1) Until June 30, 2007, a telecommunications company may continue to maintain on file with the commission any price list that, pursuant to RCW 80.36.100, 80.36.320, and 80.36.330, was on file and in effect before June 7, 2006. The price list is subject to the statutes and rules in effect immediately before June 7, 2006.

(2) The commission may, upon petition by a company with a price list on file before June 7, 2006, extend the deadline in subsection (1) of this section until June 30, 2008. The commission may approve an extension only if the petitioning company demonstrates that it cannot reasonably implement a replacement for its price list by June 30, 2007, and that the extension of time will not result in harm to customers or competition. [2006 c 347 s 5.]

**RCW 80.36.338 Withdrawal of price list—Customer information, opportunity to accept changes in rates, terms, or conditions—Cancellation period.** Each company withdrawing a filed price list shall provide each customer receiving service under the price list with information about the rates, terms, and conditions under which the service will continue to be provided. If the rates, terms, and conditions do not change upon withdrawal of the price list, such rates, terms, and conditions shall be binding to the same extent as the price list. If any of the rates, terms, and conditions do change upon withdrawal of the price list, the company must provide each customer with a reasonable opportunity to decide whether to accept the changed rate, term, or condition. If a customer does not cancel service within thirty days after notice of the change is given, the customer will be deemed to have accepted all the rates, terms, and conditions offered by the company. [2006 c 347 s 6.]

**RCW 80.36.340 Banded rates.** The commission may approve a tariff which includes banded rates for any telecommunications service if such tariff is in the public interest. "Banded rate" means a rate which has a minimum and a maximum rate. The minimum rate in the rate band shall cover the cost of the service. Rates may be changed within the rate band upon such notice as the commission may order. [1985 c 450 s 6.]

**RCW 80.36.350 Registration of new companies—Waiver of provisions during state of emergency.** Each telecommunications company not operating under tariff in Washington on January 1, 1985, shall register with the commission before beginning operations in this state. The registration shall be on a form prescribed by the commission and shall contain such information as the commission may by rule require, but shall include as a minimum the name and address of the company; the name and address of its registered agent, if any; the name, address, and title of each officer or director; its most current balance sheet; its latest annual report, if any; and a description of the telecommunications services it offers or intends to offer.

The commission may require as a precondition to registration the procurement of a performance bond sufficient to cover any advances or deposits the telecommunications company may collect from its customers, or order that such advances or deposits be held in escrow or trust.

The commission may deny registration to any telecommunications company which:

- (1) Does not provide the information required by this section;
- (2) Fails to provide a performance bond, if required;
- (3) Does not possess adequate financial resources to provide the proposed service; or
- (4) Does not possess adequate technical competency to provide the proposed service.

The commission shall take action to approve or issue a notice of hearing concerning any application for registration within thirty days after receiving the application. The commission may approve an application with or without a hearing. The commission may deny an application after a hearing.

A telecommunications company may also submit a petition for competitive classification under RCW 80.36.310 at the time it applies

for registration. The commission may act on the registration application and the competitive classification petition at the same time.

During a state of emergency declared under RCW 43.06.010(12), the governor may waive or suspend the operation or enforcement of this section or any portion of this section or under any administrative rule, and issue any orders to facilitate the operation of state or local government or to promote and secure the safety and protection of the civilian population. [2008 c 181 s 410; 1990 c 10 s 1; 1985 c 450 s 7.]

**Part headings not law—2008 c 181:** See note following RCW 43.06.220.

**RCW 80.36.360 Exempted actions or transactions.** For the purposes of RCW 19.86.170, actions or transactions of competitive telecommunications companies, or associated with competitive telecommunications services, shall not be deemed otherwise permitted, prohibited, or regulated by the commission. [1985 c 450 s 8.]

**RCW 80.36.370 Certain services not regulated.** The commission shall not regulate the following:

- (1) One way broadcast or cable television transmission of television or radio signals;
- (2) Private telecommunications systems;
- (3) Telegraph services;
- (4) Any sale, lease, or use of customer premises equipment except such equipment as is regulated on July 28, 1985;
- (5) Private shared telecommunications services, unless the commission finds, upon notice and investigation, that customers of such services have no alternative access to local exchange telecommunications companies. If the commission makes such a finding, it may require the private shared telecommunications services provider to make alternative facilities or conduit space available on reasonable terms and conditions at reasonable prices;
- (6) Radio communications services provided by a regulated telecommunications company, except that when those services are the only voice grade, local exchange telecommunications service available to a customer of the company the commission may regulate the radio communication service of that company. [1990 c 118 s 1; 1985 c 450 s 9.]

**RCW 80.36.375 Personal wireless services—Siting microcells, minor facilities, or a small cell network—Definitions.** (1) If a personal wireless service provider applies to site several microcells, minor facilities, or a small cell network in a single geographical area:

- (a) If one or more of the microcells and/or minor facilities are not exempt from the requirements of RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c), local governmental entities are encouraged: (i) To allow the applicant, at the applicant's discretion, to file a single set of documents required by chapter 43.21C RCW that will apply to all the microcells and/or minor facilities to be sited; and (ii) to render decisions under

chapter 43.21C RCW regarding all the microcells and/or minor facilities in a single administrative proceeding;

(b) Local governmental entities are encouraged: (i) To allow the applicant, at the applicant's discretion, to file a single set of documents for land use permits that will apply to all the microcells and/or minor facilities to be sited; and (ii) to render decisions regarding land use permits for all the microcells and/or minor facilities in a single administrative proceeding; and

(c) For small cell networks involving multiple individual small cell facilities, local governmental entities may allow the applicant, if the applicant so chooses, to file a consolidated application and receive a single permit for the small cell network in a single jurisdiction instead of filing separate applications for each individual small cell facility.

(2) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Personal wireless services" means commercial mobile services, unlicensed wireless services, and common carrier wireless exchange access services, as defined by federal laws and regulations.

(b) "Microcell" means a wireless communication facility consisting of an antenna that is either: (i) Four feet in height and with an area of not more than five hundred eighty square inches; or (ii) if a tubular antenna, no more than four inches in diameter and no more than six feet in length.

(c) "Minor facility" means a wireless communication facility consisting of up to three antennas, each of which is either: (i) Four feet in height and with an area of not more than five hundred eighty square inches; or (ii) if a tubular antenna, no more than four inches in diameter and no more than six feet in length; and the associated equipment cabinet that is six feet or less in height and no more than forty-eight square feet in floor area.

(d) "Small cell facility" means a personal wireless services facility that meets both of the following qualifications:

(i) Each antenna is located inside an antenna enclosure of no more than three cubic feet in volume or, in the case of an antenna that has exposed elements, the antenna and all of its exposed elements could fit within an imaginary enclosure of no more than three cubic feet; and

(ii) Primary equipment enclosures are no larger than seventeen cubic feet in volume. The following associated equipment may be located outside the primary equipment enclosure and if so located, are not included in the calculation of equipment volume: Electric meter, concealment, telecomm demarcation box, ground-based enclosures, battery backup power systems, grounding equipment, power transfer switch, and cut-off switch.

(e) "Small cell network" means a collection of interrelated small cell facilities designed to deliver personal wireless services. [2014 c 118 s 1; 1997 c 219 s 2; 1996 c 323 s 3.]

**Findings—1996 c 323:** See note following RCW 43.70.600.

**RCW 80.36.390 Telephone solicitation—Penalty.** (1) (a) As used in this section, "telephone solicitation" means the unsolicited initiation of a telephone call by a commercial or nonprofit company or organization to a person for the purpose of encouraging the person to purchase property, goods, or services, wrongfully obtaining anything

of value, or soliciting donations of money, property, goods, or services.

(b) "Telephone solicitation" does not include:

(i) Calls made in response to a request or inquiry by the called party. This includes calls regarding an item that has been purchased by the called party from the company or organization during a period not longer than 12 months prior to the telephone contact;

(ii) Calls made by a not-for-profit organization, as defined by 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501 of the federal internal revenue code, to its own list of bona fide or active members of the organization;

(iii) Calls made by a membership or labor organization to its own list of bona fide or active members of the organization;

(iv) Calls limited to polling or soliciting the expression of ideas, opinions, or votes; or

(v) Business-to-business contacts.

(c) "Telephone call" means any communication made through a telephone that uses a live person, artificial voice, or recorded message.

(2) (a) For purposes of this section, each individual real estate agent or insurance agent who maintains a separate list from other individual real estate or insurance agents shall be treated as a company or organization.

(b) For purposes of this section, an organization as defined in RCW 29A.04.086 or 29A.04.097 and organized pursuant to chapter 29A.80 RCW shall not be considered a commercial or nonprofit company or organization.

(3) A person making a telephone solicitation must identify him or herself and the company or organization on whose behalf the solicitation is being made and the purpose of the call within the first 30 seconds of the telephone call.

(4) As used in this section, "telephone solicitor" means a commercial or nonprofit company or organization engaged in telephone solicitation.

(5) If the telephone solicitor is requesting a donation or gift of money, the telephone solicitor must ask the called party whether they want to continue the call, end the call, or be removed from the solicitor's telephone lists.

(6) If, at any time during the telephone contact, the called party states or indicates they want to end the call, the telephone solicitor must end the call within 10 seconds.

(7) If, at any time during the telephone contact, the called party states or indicates that he or she does not want to be called again by the telephone solicitor or wants to have his or her name, individual telephone number, or other contact information removed from the telephone lists used by the telephone solicitor:

(a) The telephone solicitor shall inform the called party that his or her contact information will be removed from the telephone solicitor's telephone lists for at least one year;

(b) The telephone solicitor shall end the call within 10 seconds;

(c) The telephone solicitor shall not make any additional telephone solicitation of the called party at any telephone number that the called party has requested be removed from the solicitor's telephone lists for a period of at least one year; and

(d) The telephone solicitor shall not sell or give the called party's name, telephone number, and other contact information to another company or organization: PROVIDED, That the telephone solicitor may return the list, including the called party's name,



telephone number, and other contact information to the company or organization from which it received the list.

(8) A telephone solicitor shall not place calls to any person which will be received before 8:00 a.m. or after 8:00 p.m. at the call recipient's local time.

(9) No person may initiate, or cause to be initiated, a telephone solicitation to a telephone number registered on the do not call registry maintained by the federal government pursuant to telephone consumer protection act, 47 U.S.C. Sec. 227 and related regulations, as currently enacted or subsequently amended. This subsection applies to all telephone solicitation intended to be received by telephone customers within the state.

(10) It is unlawful for a person to initiate, or cause to be initiated, a telephone solicitation that violates 47 U.S.C. Sec. 227(e)(1), as currently written or as subsequently amended or interpreted by the federal government. This subsection applies to all telephone solicitation intended to be received by telephone customers within the state.

(11) A violation of subsection (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), or (10) of this section is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 for each violation.

(12) The attorney general may bring actions to enforce compliance with this section. The legislature finds that the practices covered by this section are matters vitally affecting the public interest for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. A violation of this section is not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business and is an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW.

(13) A person aggrieved by repeated violations of this section may bring a civil action in superior court to enjoin future violations, to recover damages, or both. The court shall award damages of at least \$1,000 for each individual violation of this section. If the aggrieved person prevails in a civil action under this subsection, the court shall award the aggrieved person reasonable attorneys' fees and cost of the suit.

(14) The utilities and transportation commission shall by rule ensure that telecommunications companies inform their residential customers of the provisions of this section. The notification may be made by (a) annual notice in the billing statements sent to residential customers, or (b) conspicuous publication of the notice in the consumer information pages of local telephone directories. [2023 c 103 s 3; 2022 c 195 s 1; 2015 c 53 s 95; 1987 c 229 s 13; 1986 c 277 s 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2023 c 103:** See note following RCW 80.36.400.

**Legislative finding—1986 c 277:** "The legislature finds that certain kinds of telephone solicitation are increasing and that these solicitations interfere with the legitimate privacy rights of the citizens of the state. A study conducted by the utilities and transportation commission, as directed by the forty-ninth legislature, has found that the level of telephone solicitation in this state is significant to warrant regulatory action to protect the privacy rights of the citizens of the state. It is the intent of the legislature to

clarify and establish the rights of individuals to reject unwanted telephone solicitations." [1986 c 277 s 1.]

*Charitable solicitations: Chapter 19.09 RCW.*

*Commercial telephone solicitation: Chapter 19.158 RCW.*

**RCW 80.36.400 Automatic dialing and announcing device—  
Commercial solicitation by.** (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) (i) "Assist in the transmission" means actions taken to provide substantial assistance or support, which enables any person to formulate, originate, initiate, or transmit a commercial solicitation when the person providing the assistance knows or consciously avoids knowing that the initiator of the commercial solicitation is engaged, or intends to engage, in any practice that violates chapter 19.86 RCW, the consumer protection act.

(ii) "Assist in the transmission" does not include any of the following:

(A) Activities of an entity relating to the design, manufacture, or distribution of any technology, product, or component that has a commercially significant use other than to violate or circumvent this section;

(B) Activities of a telecommunications provider or other entity that are limited to providing access to the internet for purposes excluding initiation of a telephone communication; or

(C) Activities of a terminating provider relating to the transmission of a telephone communication.

(b) "Automatic dialing and announcing device" is a system which automatically dials telephone numbers and transmits a recorded or artificial voice message once a connection is made. A recorded or artificial message is transmitted even if the recorded or artificial message goes directly to a recipient's voicemail.

(c) "Commercial solicitation" means the unsolicited initiation of a telephone communication made for the purpose of encouraging a person to purchase property, goods, or services, or wrongfully obtaining anything of value.

(d) "Terminating provider" means a telecommunications provider that provides voice services to an end user customer.

(2) No person may use an automatic dialing and announcing device for purposes of commercial solicitation. This section applies to all commercial solicitation intended to be received by telephone customers within the state.

(3) No person may assist in the transmission of a commercial solicitation described in subsection (2) of this section. In any action arising out of a violation of this subsection, it shall be an affirmative defense that a telecommunications provider both:

(a) Acted in compliance with 47 U.S.C. Sec. 227, 16 C.F.R. Part 310, and related regulations; and

(b) Implemented a reasonably effective plan to mitigate origination, initiation, or transmission of a commercial solicitation described in subsection (2) of this section.

(4) The legislature finds that the practices covered by this section are matters vitally affecting the public interest for the

purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. A violation of this section is not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business and is an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. In addition to all remedies available in chapter 19.86 RCW, a person who is injured under this section may bring a civil action in the superior court to enjoin further violations and shall recover actual damages or \$1,000 per violation of this section, whichever is greater.

(5) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Washington utilities and transportation commission from adopting additional rules regulating automatic dialing and announcing devices. [2023 c 103 s 2; 1986 c 281 s 2.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in subsection (1) of this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.125(2)(k).

**Findings—Intent—2023 c 103:** "(1) The legislature finds that robocalls are increasingly used by entities to mislead and deceive Washington residents and induce them into providing personal information to wrongfully obtain something of value. It is the intent of the legislature to expand the scope of existing provisions in RCW 80.36.390, 80.36.400, and 19.158.020 regulating robocalls and telephone solicitations to prohibit abusive telephone communications that mislead or harm Washington residents.

(2) The legislature further finds that the most effective way to prevent illegal robocalling is to ensure that those calls never originate or enter the telephone network. Therefore, it is further the intent of the legislature to extend liability to those persons who provide substantial assistance or support in the origination and transmission of robocalls that violate RCW 80.36.400.

(3) It is also the intent of the legislature to:

(a) Include a provision in RCW 80.36.390 to prohibit the initiation of unwanted telephone calls to Washington telephone numbers on the do not call registry maintained by the federal government pursuant to the telemarketing sales rule, 16 C.F.R. Part 310, and related regulations; and

(b) Combat fraudulent or misleading caller identification." [2023 c 103 s 1.]

**Legislative finding—1986 c 281:** "The legislature finds that the use of automatic dialing and announcing devices for purposes of commercial solicitation: (1) Deprives consumers of the opportunity to immediately question a seller about the veracity of their claims; (2) subjects consumers to unwarranted invasions of their privacy; and (3) encourages inefficient and potentially harmful use of the telephone network. The legislature further finds that it is in the public interest to prohibit the use of automatic dialing and announcing devices for purposes of commercial solicitation." [1986 c 281 s 1.]

**RCW 80.36.410 Washington telephone assistance program—Findings.**

(1) The legislature finds that universal telephone service is an important policy goal of the state. The legislature further finds that: (a) Recent changes in the telecommunications industry, such as federal access charges, raise concerns about the ability of low-income persons to continue to afford access to local exchange telephone

service; and (b) many low-income persons making the transition to independence from receiving supportive services through community agencies do not qualify for economic assistance from the department.

(2) Therefore, the legislature finds that: (a) It is in the public interest to take steps to mitigate the effects of these changes on low-income persons; and (b) advances in telecommunications technologies, such as community service voice mail provide new and economically efficient ways to secure many of the benefits of universal service to low-income persons who are not customers of local exchange telephone service. [2003 c 134 s 2; 2002 c 104 s 2; 1987 c 229 s 3.]

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.420 Washington telephone assistance program—**

**Availability, components.** The Washington telephone assistance program may be available to participants of programs set forth in RCW 80.36.470. Within funds specifically appropriated by the legislature for the Washington telephone assistance program, assistance may consist of the following components:

(1) A discount on service connection fees of fifty percent or more as set forth in RCW 80.36.460.

(2) A waiver of deposit requirements on local exchange service, as set forth in RCW 80.36.460.

(3) A discounted flat rate service for local exchange service, which is subject to the following conditions:

(a) The commission must establish a single telephone assistance rate for all local exchange companies operating in the state of Washington. The telephone assistance rate must include any federal end user charges and any other charges necessary to obtain local exchange service.

(b) The commission must, in establishing the telephone assistance rate, consider all charges for local exchange service, including federal end user charges, mileage charges, extended area service, and any other charges necessary to obtain local exchange service.

(c) The telephone assistance rate is only available to eligible customers subscribing to the lowest priced local exchange flat rate service, where the lowest priced local exchange flat rate service, including any federal end user charges and any other charges necessary to obtain local exchange service, is greater than the telephone assistance rate.

(d) The cost of providing the service must be paid, to the maximum extent possible, by a waiver of all or part of federal end user charges and, to the extent necessary, from the available appropriated funds.

(4) A discount on a community service voice mailbox that provides recipients with (a) an individually assigned telephone number; (b) the ability to record a personal greeting; and (c) a secure private security code to retrieve messages. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 115; 2003 c 134 s 3; 1990 c 170 s 2; 1987 c 229 s 4.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective dates—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 82.14B.040.

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.430 Washington telephone assistance program—Excise tax—Expenses of community service voice mail.** Subject to the enactment into law of the 2013 amendments to RCW 82.14B.040 in section 103, chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess., the 2013 amendments to RCW 82.14B.042 in section 104, chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess., the 2013 amendments to RCW 82.14B.030 in section 105, chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess., the 2013 amendments to RCW 82.14B.200 in section 106, chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess., and the 2013 amendments to RCW 82.08.0289 in section 107, chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess.:

(1) The Washington telephone assistance program is funded by the legislature by means of a biennial general fund appropriation to the department and by funds from any federal government or other programs for this purpose.

(2) Local exchange companies must bill the department for their expenses incurred in offering the telephone assistance program, including administrative and program expenses. The department must disburse the money to the local exchange companies. The department is exempted from having to conclude a contract with local exchange companies in order to effect this reimbursement. The department must recover its administrative costs. The department may specify by rule the range and extent of administrative and program expenses that will be reimbursed to local exchange companies.

(3) The department must enter into an agreement with the department of commerce for an amount not to exceed eight percent of the prior fiscal year's total revenue for the administrative and program expenses of providing community service voice mail services. The community service voice mail service may include toll-free lines in community action agencies through which recipients can access their community service voice mailboxes at no charge.

(4) The department shall enter into an agreement with the Washington information network 211 organization for operational support, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this purpose. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 108; 2011 1st sp.s. c 50 s 968; 2011 c 5 s 919; 2010 1st sp.s. c 37 s 951; 2009 c 564 s 960; 2004 c 254 s 2; 2003 c 134 s 4; 1990 c 170 s 3; 1987 c 229 s 5.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective dates—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 82.14B.040.

**Effective dates—2011 1st sp.s. c 50:** See note following RCW 15.76.115.

**Effective date—2011 c 5:** See note following RCW 43.03.220.

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 37:** See note following RCW 13.06.050.

**Effective date—2009 c 564:** See note following RCW 2.68.020.

**Responsibility for collection of tax—Implementation—2004 c 254:** See notes following RCW 43.20A.725.

**Effective date—2004 c 254:** See note following RCW 43.20A.725.

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.440 Washington telephone assistance program—Rules.**

(1) The commission and the department may adopt any rules necessary to implement RCW 80.36.410 through 80.36.470.

(2) Rules necessary for the implementation of community service voice mail services shall be made by the commission and the department in consultation with the department of commerce. [2023 c 470 s 2127; 2003 c 134 s 5; 1990 c 170 s 4; 1987 c 229 s 6.]

**Explanatory statement—2023 c 470:** See note following RCW 10.99.030.

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.450 Washington telephone assistance program—Limitation.** Within funds specifically appropriated by the legislature for the Washington telephone assistance program, the Washington telephone assistance program must limit reimbursement to one residential switched access line per eligible household, or one discounted community service voice mailbox per eligible person. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 116; 2003 c 134 s 6; 1993 c 249 s 2; 1987 c 229 s 7.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective dates—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 82.14B.040.

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**Effective date—1993 c 249:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.460 Washington telephone assistance program—Deposit waivers, connection fee discounts.** Local exchange companies must waive deposits on local exchange service for eligible subscribers and provide a fifty percent discount on the company's customary charge for commencing telecommunications service for eligible subscribers. The commission or other appropriate agency must make timely application for any available federal funds. The remaining portion of the connection fee to be paid by the subscriber must be expressly payable by installment fees spread over a period of months. A subscriber may, however, choose to pay the connection fee in a lump sum. Costs associated with the waiver and discount must be accounted for separately and recovered from the telephone assistance appropriation. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 117; 2003 c 134 s 7; 1990 c 170 s 5; 1987 c 229 s 8.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective dates—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 82.14B.040.

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.470 Washington telephone assistance program—Eligibility.** (1) Adult recipients of department-administered programs for the financially needy which provide continuing financial or medical assistance, food stamps, or supportive services to persons in their own homes are eligible for participation in the telephone

assistance program. The department must notify the participants of their eligibility.

(2) Participants in community service voice mail programs are eligible for participation in services available under RCW 80.36.420 (1), (2), and (3) after completing use of community service voice mail services. Eligibility must be for a period including the remainder of the current service year and the following service year. Community agencies must notify the department of participants eligible under this subsection.

(3) Enrollment in the Washington telephone assistance program may not result in expenditures that exceed the total amount of funds made available by the legislature for the Washington telephone assistance program. When the department finds that there is a danger of an overexpenditure of appropriated funds, the department must close the Washington telephone assistance program enrollment until the department finds the danger no longer exists. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 118; 2003 c 134 s 8; 2002 c 104 s 3; 1990 c 170 s 6; 1987 c 229 s 9.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective dates—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 82.14B.040.

**Effective date—2003 c 134:** See note following RCW 80.36.005.

**RCW 80.36.500 Information delivery services through exclusive number prefix or service access code.** (1) As used in this section:

(a) "Information delivery services" means telephone recorded messages, interactive programs, or other information services that are provided for a charge to a caller through an exclusive telephone number prefix or service access code.

(b) "Information providers" means the persons or corporations that provide the information, prerecorded message, or interactive program for the information delivery service. The information provider generally receives a portion of the revenue from the calls.

(c) "Interactive program" means a program that allows an information delivery service caller, once connected to the information provider's announcement machine, to use the caller's telephone device to access more specific information.

(2) The utilities and transportation commission shall by rule require any local exchange company that offers information delivery services to a local telephone exchange to provide each residential telephone subscriber the opportunity to block access to all information delivery services offered through the local exchange company. The rule shall take effect by October 1, 1988.

(3) All costs of complying with this section shall be borne by the information providers.

(4) The local exchange company shall inform subscribers of the availability of the blocking service through a bill insert and by publication in a local telephone directory. [1991 c 191 s 8; 1988 c 123 s 2.]

**Legislative finding, intent—1988 c 123:** "(1) The legislature finds that throughout the state there is widespread use of information delivery services, which are also known as information-access telephone services and commonly provided on a designated telephone number prefix. These services operate on a charge-per-call basis,

providing revenue for both the information provider and the local exchange company. The marketing practices for these telephone services have at times been misleading to consumers and at other times specifically directed toward minors. The result has been placement of calls by individuals, particularly by children, who are uninformed about the charges that might apply. In addition, children may have secured access to obscene, indecent, and salacious material through these services. The legislature finds that these services can be blocked by certain local exchange companies at switching locations, and that devices exist which allow for blocking within a residence. Therefore, the legislature finds that residential telephone users in the state are entitled to the option of having their phones blocked from access to information delivery services.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature that the utilities and transportation commission and local exchange companies, to the extent feasible, distinguish between information delivery services that are misleading to consumers, directed at minors, or otherwise objectionable and adopt policies and rules that accomplish the purposes of RCW 80.36.500 with the least adverse effect on information delivery services that are not misleading to consumers, directed at minors, or otherwise objectionable." [1988 c 123 s 1.]

**Investigation and report by commission:** "By October 1, 1988, the commission shall investigate and report to the committees on energy and utilities in the house of representatives and the senate on methods to protect minors from obscene, indecent, and salacious materials available through the use of information delivery services. The investigation shall include a study of personal identification numbers, credit cards, scramblers, and beep-tone devices as methods of limiting access." [1988 c 123 s 3.]

**Severability—1988 c 123:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1988 c 123 s 4.]

*Information delivery services: Chapter 19.162 RCW.*

**RCW 80.36.510 Legislative finding.** The legislature finds that a growing number of companies provide, in a nonresidential setting, telecommunications services necessary to long distance service without disclosing the services provided or the rate, charge or fee. The legislature finds that provision of these services without disclosure to consumers is a deceptive trade practice. [1988 c 91 s 1.]

**RCW 80.36.520 Disclosure of alternate operator services.** The utilities and transportation commission shall by rule require, at a minimum, that any telecommunications company, operating as or contracting with an alternate operator services company, assure appropriate disclosure to consumers of the provision and the rate, charge or fee of services provided by an alternate operator services company.

For the purposes of this chapter, "alternate operator services company" means a person providing a connection to intrastate or



interstate long-distance services from places including, but not limited to, hotels, motels, hospitals, and customer-owned pay telephones. [1988 c 91 s 2.]

**RCW 80.36.522 Alternate operator service companies—Registration—Penalties.** All alternate operator service companies providing services within the state shall register with the commission as a telecommunications company before providing alternate operator services. The commission may deny an application for registration of an alternate operator services company if, after a hearing, it finds that the services and charges to be offered by the company are not for the public convenience and advantage. The commission may suspend the registration of an alternate operator services company if, after a hearing, it finds that the company does not meet the service or disclosure requirements of the commission. Any alternate operator services company that provides service without being properly registered with the commission shall be subject to a penalty of not less than five hundred dollars and not more than one thousand dollars for each and every offense. In case of a continuing offense, every day's continuance shall be a separate offense. The penalty shall be recovered in an action as provided in RCW 80.04.400. [1990 c 247 s 2.]

**RCW 80.36.524 Alternate operator service companies—Rules.** The commission may adopt rules that provide for minimum service levels for telecommunications companies providing alternate operator services. The rules may provide a means for suspending the registration of a company providing alternate operator services if the company fails to meet minimum service levels or if the company fails to provide appropriate disclosure to consumers of the protection afforded under this chapter. [1990 c 247 s 3.]

**RCW 80.36.530 Violation of consumer protection act—Damages.** In addition to the penalties provided in this title, a violation of RCW 80.36.510, 80.36.520, or 80.36.524 constitutes an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce in violation of chapter 19.86 RCW, the consumer protection act. Acts in violation of RCW 80.36.510, 80.36.520, or 80.36.524 are not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business, and constitute matters vitally affecting the public interest for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. It shall be presumed that damages to the consumer are equal to the cost of the service provided plus two hundred dollars. Additional damages must be proved. [1990 c 247 s 4; 1988 c 91 s 3.]

**RCW 80.36.540 Telefacsimile messages—Unsolicited transmission—Penalties.** (1) As used in this section, "telefacsimile message" means the transmittal of electronic signals over telephone lines for conversion into written text.

(2) No person, corporation, partnership, or association shall initiate the unsolicited transmission of telefacsimile messages promoting goods or services for purchase by the recipient.

(3) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, this section shall not apply to telefacsimile messages sent to a recipient with whom the initiator has had a prior contractual or business relationship.

(b) A person shall not initiate an unsolicited telefacsimile message under the provisions of (a) of this subsection if the person knew or reasonably should have known that the recipient is a governmental entity.

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (3) of this section, it is unlawful to initiate any telefacsimile message to a recipient who has previously sent a written or telefacsimile message to the initiator clearly indicating that the recipient does not want to receive telefacsimile messages from the initiator.

(5) The unsolicited transmission of telefacsimile messages promoting goods or services for purchase by the recipient is a matter affecting the public interest for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. The transmission of unsolicited telefacsimile messages is not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business. A violation of this section is an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW. Damages to the recipient of telefacsimile messages in violation of this section are five hundred dollars or actual damages, whichever is greater.

(6) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Washington utilities and transportation commission from adopting additional rules regulating transmissions of telefacsimile messages. [1990 c 221 s 1.]

**RCW 80.36.555 Enhanced 911 service—Residential service required.** By January 1, 1997, or one year after enhanced 911 service becomes available or a private switch automatic location identification service approved by the Washington utilities and transportation commission is available from the serving local exchange telecommunications company, whichever is later, any private shared telecommunications services provider that provides service to residential customers shall assure that the telecommunications system is connected to the public switched network such that calls to 911 result in automatic location identification for each residential unit in a format that is compatible with the existing or planned county enhanced 911 system. [1995 c 243 s 3.]

**Findings—1995 c 243:** "The legislature finds that citizens of the state increasingly rely on the dependability of enhanced 911, a system that allows the person answering an emergency call to immediately determine the location of the emergency without the need of the caller to speak. The legislature further finds that in some cases, calls made from telephones connected to private telephone systems may not be precisely located by the answerer, eliminating some of the benefit of enhanced 911, and that this condition could additionally imperil citizens calling from these locations in an emergency. The legislature also finds that until national standards have been developed to address this condition, information-forwarding requirements should be mandated for only those settings with the most risk, including schools, residences, and some business settings." [1995 c 243 s 1.]

**Severability—1995 c 243:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1995 c 243 s 12.]

**RCW 80.36.560 Enhanced 911 service—Business service required.** By January 1, 1997, or one year after enhanced 911 service becomes available or a private switch automatic location identification service approved by the Washington utilities and transportation commission is available from the serving local exchange telecommunications company, whichever is later, any commercial shared services provider of private shared telecommunications services for hire or resale to the general public to multiple unaffiliated business users from a single system shall assure that such a system is connected to the public switched network such that calls to 911 result in automatic location identification for each telephone in a format that is compatible with the existing or planned county enhanced 911 system. This section shall apply only to providers of service to businesses containing a physical area exceeding twenty-five thousand square feet, or businesses on more than one floor of a building, or businesses in multiple buildings. [1995 c 243 s 5.]

**Findings—Severability—1995 c 243:** See notes following RCW 80.36.555.

**RCW 80.36.570 Law enforcement—Requests for call location information—Requirements.** (1) A wireless telecommunications provider must provide information in its possession concerning the current or most recent location of a telecommunications device and call information of a user of the device when requested by a law enforcement agency. A law enforcement agency must meet the following requirements:

(a) The law enforcement officer making the request on behalf of the law enforcement agency must be on duty during the course of his or her official duties at the time of the request;

(b) The law enforcement agency must verify there is no relationship or conflict of interest between the law enforcement officer responding, investigating or making the request, and either the person requesting the call location information or the person for whom the call location information is being requested;

(c) A law enforcement agency may only request this information when, in the law enforcement officer's exercise of reasonable judgment, he or she believes that the individual is in an emergency situation that involves the risk of death or serious physical harm and requires disclosure without a delay of information relating to the emergency;

(d) Concurrent to making a request, the responding law enforcement agency must check the federal bureau of investigation's national crime information center and any other available databases to identify if either the person requesting the call location information or the person for whom the call location information is being requested has any history of domestic violence or any court order restricting contact by a respondent;

(e) Concurrent to making a request, the responding law enforcement agency must also check with the Washington state patrol to identify if either the person requesting the call location information or the person for whom the call location information is being requested is participating in the address confidentiality program established in chapter 40.24 RCW. The secretary of state must make name information available to the Washington state patrol from the address confidentiality program as required under RCW 40.24.070. The Washington state patrol must not further disseminate list information except on an individual basis to respond to a request under this section;

(f) If the responding law enforcement agency identifies or has reason to believe someone has a history of domestic violence or stalking, has a court order restricting contact, or if the Washington state patrol identifies someone as participating in the address confidentiality program, then the law enforcement agency must not provide call location information to the individual who requested the information, unless pursuant to the order of a court of competent jurisdiction. A law enforcement agency may not disclose information obtained under this section to any other party except first responders responding to the emergency situation; and

(g) A law enforcement agency may not request information under this section for any purpose other than responding to a call for emergency services or in an emergency situation that involves the risk of death or serious physical harm.

(2) A wireless telecommunications provider may establish protocols by which the carrier discloses call location information to law enforcement.

(3) No cause of action may be brought in any court against any wireless telecommunications provider, its officers, employees, agents, or other specified persons for providing call location information while acting in good faith and in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(4) All wireless telecommunications providers registered to do business in the state of Washington and all resellers of wireless telecommunications services shall submit their emergency contact information to the Washington state patrol in order to facilitate requests from a law enforcement agency for call location information in accordance with this section. Any change in contact information must be submitted immediately.

(5) The Washington state patrol must maintain a database containing emergency contact information for all wireless telecommunications providers registered to do business in the state of Washington and must make the information immediately available upon request to facilitate a request from law enforcement for call location information under this section.

(6) The Washington state patrol may adopt by rule criteria for fulfilling the requirements of this section. [2015 c 190 s 1.]

**Short title—2015 c 190:** "This act may be known and cited as the Kelsey Smith act." [2015 c 190 s 3.]

**RCW 80.36.610 Universal service program—Authority of commission—Rules—Fees. (Effective until July 1, 2025.)** The commission is authorized to take actions, conduct proceedings, and enter orders as

permitted or contemplated for a state commission under the telecommunications act of 1996. The commission may establish by rule fees to be paid by persons seeking commission action under the telecommunications act of 1996, and by parties to proceedings under that act, to offset in whole or part the commission's expenses that are not otherwise recovered through fees in implementing the act. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 209; 1998 c 337 s 2.]

**Expiration date—2019 c 365; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 209:** "Section 209 of this act expires July 1, 2025." [2019 c 365 s 20; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 303.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.610 Universal service program—Authority of commission—Rules—Fees—Legislative intent. (Effective July 1, 2025.)** (1) The commission is authorized to take actions, conduct proceedings, and enter orders as permitted or contemplated for a state commission under the federal telecommunications act of 1996, P.L. 104-104 (110 Stat. 56), but the commission's authority to either establish a new state program or to adopt new rules to preserve and advance universal service under section 254(f) of the federal act is limited to the actions expressly authorized by RCW 80.36.600. The commission may establish by rule fees to be paid by persons seeking commission action under the federal act, and by parties to proceedings under that act, to offset in whole or part the commission's expenses that are not otherwise recovered through fees in implementing the act, but new fees or assessments charged telecommunications carriers to either establish a state program or to adopt rules to preserve and advance universal service under section 254(f) of the federal act do not take effect until the legislature has approved a state universal service program.

(2) The legislature intends that under the future universal service program established in this state:

(a) Every telecommunications carrier that provides intrastate telecommunications services shall contribute, on an equitable and nondiscriminatory basis, to the preservation and advancement of universal service in the state;

(b) The contributions shall be competitively and technologically neutral; and

(c) The universal service program to be established in accordance with RCW 80.36.600 shall not be inconsistent with the requirements of 47 U.S.C. Sec. 254. [1998 c 337 s 2.]

**RCW 80.36.630 State universal communications services program—Definitions. (Expires July 1, 2025.)** (1) The definitions in this section apply throughout this section and RCW 80.36.650 through 80.36.690 and 80.36.610 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Basic residential service" means those services set out in 47 C.F.R. Sec. 54.101(a) (2011), as it existed on May 13, 2019, and mandatory extended area service approved by the commission.

(b) "Basic telecommunications services" means the following services:

- (i) Single-party service;
- (ii) Voice grade access to the public switched network;
- (iii) Support for local usage;
- (iv) Dual tone multifrequency signaling (touch-tone);
- (v) Access to emergency services (911);
- (vi) Access to operator services;
- (vii) Access to interexchange services;
- (viii) Access to directory assistance; and
- (ix) Toll limitation services.

(c) "Broadband service" means any service providing advanced telecommunications capability, including internet access and access to high quality voice, data, graphics, or video.

(d) "Communications provider" means a provider of communications services that assigns a working telephone number to a final consumer for intrastate wireline or wireless communications services or interconnected voice over internet protocol service, and includes local exchange carriers.

(e) "Communications services" includes telecommunications services and information services and any combination thereof.

(f) "Incumbent local exchange carrier" has the same meaning as set forth in 47 U.S.C. Sec. 251(h).

(g) "Incumbent public network" means the network established by incumbent local exchange carriers for the delivery of communications services to customers that is used by communications providers for origination or termination of communications services by or to customers.

(h) "Interconnected voice over internet protocol service" means an interconnected voice over internet protocol service that: (i) Enables real-time, two-way voice communications; (ii) requires a broadband connection from the user's location; (iii) requires internet protocol-compatible customer premises equipment; and (iv) permits users generally to receive calls that originate on the public network and to terminate calls to the public network.

(i) "Program" means the state universal communications services program created in RCW 80.36.650.

(j) "Telecommunications" has the same meaning as defined in 47 U.S.C. Sec. 153(43).

(k) "Telecommunications act of 1996" means the telecommunications act of 1996 (P.L. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56).

(2) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 11; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 202.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** "Sections 11 through 18 and 20 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and take effect immediately [May 13, 2019]." [2019 c 365 s 23.]

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.650 State universal communications services program—  
Established. (Expires July 1, 2025.)**

(1) A state universal communications services program is established. The program is established to protect public safety and welfare under the authority of the state to regulate telecommunications under Article XII, section 19 of the state Constitution. The purpose of the program is to support continued provision of basic telecommunications services under rates, terms, and conditions established by the commission and the provision, enhancement, and maintenance of broadband services, recognizing that, historically, the incumbent public network functions to provide all communications services including, but not limited to, voice and broadband services.

(2) Under the program, eligible communications providers may receive distributions from the universal communications services account created in RCW 80.36.690 in exchange for the affirmative agreement to provide continued telecommunications services under the rates, terms, and conditions established by the commission under this chapter, and broadband services, for the period covered by the distribution. The commission must implement and administer the program under terms and conditions established in RCW 80.36.630 through 80.36.690. Expenditures for the program may not exceed five million dollars per fiscal year; provided, however, that if less than five million dollars is expended in any fiscal year, the unexpended portion must be carried over to subsequent fiscal years and, unless fully expended, must be available for program expenditures in such subsequent fiscal years in addition to the five million dollars allotted for each of those subsequent fiscal years.

(3) A communications provider is eligible to receive distributions from the account if:

(a) (i) The communications provider is: (A) An incumbent local exchange carrier serving fewer than forty thousand access lines in the state; or (B) a radio communications service company providing wireless two-way voice communications service and broadband services to less than the equivalent of forty thousand access lines in the state. For purposes of determining the access line threshold in this subsection, the access lines or equivalents of all wireline affiliates must be counted as a single threshold, if the lines or equivalents are located in Washington;

(ii) The communications provider has adopted a plan to provide, enhance, or maintain broadband services in its service area; and

(iii) The communications provider meets any other requirements established by the commission pertaining to the provision of communications services, including basic telecommunications services; or

(b) The communications provider demonstrates to the commission that the communications provider is able to provide the same or comparable services at the same or similar service quality standards at a lower price; and: (i) Will provide communications services to all customers in the exchange or exchanges in which it will provide service; and (ii) submits to the commission's regulation of its service as if it were the incumbent local exchange company serving the exchange or exchanges for which it seeks distribution from the account.

(4) (a) Distributions to eligible communications providers are based on criteria established by the commission.

(b) If the program does not have sufficient funds to fully fund the distribution formula set out in (a) of this subsection, distributions must be reduced on a pro rata basis using the amounts calculated for that year's program support as the basis of the pro rata calculations.

(c) To receive a distribution under the program, an eligible communications provider must affirmatively consent to continue providing communications services to its customers under rates, terms, and conditions established by the commission pursuant to this chapter for the period covered by the distribution.

(5) The program is funded from amounts deposited by the legislature in the universal communications services account established in RCW 80.36.690. The commission must operate the program within amounts appropriated for this purpose and deposited in the account.

(6) The commission must periodically review the accounts and records of any communications provider that receives distributions under the program to ensure compliance with the program and monitor the providers' use of the funds.

(7) The commission must establish an advisory board, consisting of a reasonable balance of representatives from different types of stakeholders, including but not limited to communications providers and consumers, to advise the commission on any rules and policies governing the operation of the program.

(8) The program terminates on June 30, 2024, and no distributions may be made after that date.

(9) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 12; 2016 c 145 s 1; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 203.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** See note following RCW 80.36.630.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The benefit that all consumers and communications providers derive from connection to the legacy public telephone network is enhanced by a universal service program that enables as many consumers to be connected to the public network as possible; and

(b) Consumers in all areas of the state should continue to have access to communications services at reasonable rates.

(2) The state has long relied on incumbent local exchange carriers to provide a ubiquitous incumbent public network as carriers of last resort. Significant changes are occurring in the communications marketplace, including: (a) The migration from customer reliance on access lines for voice service to the use of broadband for a number of communications applications; and (b) changes in federal regulations governing: How communications providers compensate other providers for the use of the network; and eligibility for federal universal service funds. These changes are adversely affecting the ability of some communications providers to continue to offer communications services in rural areas of the state of Washington at rates that are comparable to those prevailing in urban areas. These changes, absent explicit federal and state universal service support for such communications providers, may lead, in the short term, to



unreasonable telephone service rate increases or cessation of service for some Washington consumers. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the state to ensure that incumbent local exchange carriers are able to continue to provide services as the carrier of last resort.

(3) As a result of the foregoing and to enable all consumers in Washington to access and benefit from a ubiquitous public network, the legislature intends to create a targeted and temporary universal service program that supports the legacy public telephone network of Washington's smaller incumbent communications providers and ensures access to the network during this transition to broadband services, is operated in a transparent manner pursuant to rules adopted by the utilities and transportation commission, and advances universal service in a manner not inconsistent with the requirements of 47 U.S.C. Sec. 254, the federal telecommunications act of 1996." [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 201.]

**Effective date—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** "Sections 201 through 206, 208, 209, and 211 of this act take effect July 1, 2014." [2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 302.]

**Utilities and transportation commission report—Rule making—2019 c 365—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** "(1) By December 1, 2024, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the Washington utilities and transportation commission may report to the appropriate committees of the legislature, on the following: (a) Whether funding levels for each small telecommunications company have been adequate to maintain reliable universal service; (b) the future impacts on small telecommunications companies from the elimination of funding under this act [chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess.]; (c) the impacts on customer rates from the current level of funding and the future impacts when the funding terminates under this act [chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess.]; and (d) the impacts on line and service delivery investments when the funding is terminated under this act [chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess.]. The report may also include an analysis of the need for future program funding and recommendations on potential funding mechanisms to improve the availability of communications services, including broadband service, in unserved areas. Commission expenses related to conducting all analysis in preparation of this report must be expended from the universal communications services account.

(2) The Washington utilities and transportation commission must initiate a rule making to reform the state universal communications services program no later than ninety days following May 13, 2019. The rule making must address adding broadband as a supported service and, consistent with the size of the fund, establishing:

- (a) Broadband provider eligibility;
- (b) Service performance and buildout requirements for funding recipients;
- (c) Support amounts for maintaining systems that meet federal or state broadband speed guidelines; and
- (d) Methods to effectively and efficiently distribute program support to eligible providers." [2019 c 365 s 18; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 212.]

**RCW 80.36.660 State universal communications services program—Rules. (Expires July 1, 2025.)** (1) To implement the program, the commission must adopt rules for the following purposes:

(a) Operation of the program, including criteria for: Eligibility for distributions; use of the funds; identification of any reports or data that must be filed with the commission, including, but not limited to, how a communication provider used the distributed funds; and the communications provider's infrastructure;

(b) Operation of the universal communications services account established in RCW 80.36.690;

(c) Establishment of the criteria used to calculate distributions; and

(d) Readoption, amendment, or repeal of any existing rules adopted pursuant to RCW 80.36.610 as necessary to be consistent with RCW 80.36.630 through 80.36.690 and 80.36.610.

(2) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 13; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 204.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** See note following RCW 80.36.630.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.670 State universal communications services program—Penalties. (Expires July 1, 2025.)** (1) In addition to any other penalties prescribed by law, the commission may impose penalties for failure to make or delays in making or filing any reports required by the commission for administration of the program. In addition, the commission may recover amounts determined to have been improperly distributed under RCW 80.36.650. For the purposes of this section, the provisions of RCW 80.04.380 through 80.04.405, inclusive, apply to all companies that receive support from the universal communications services account created in RCW 80.36.690.

(2) Any action taken under this section must be taken only after providing the affected communications provider with notice and an opportunity for a hearing, unless otherwise provided by law.

(3) Any amounts recovered under this section must be deposited in the universal communications services account created in RCW 80.36.690.

(4) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 14; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 205.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** See note following RCW 80.36.630.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.680 State universal communications services program—Administration. (Expires July 1, 2025.)** (1) The commission may delegate to the commission secretary or other staff the authority to resolve disputes and make other administrative decisions necessary to the administration and supervision of the program consistent with the relevant statutes and commission rules.

(2) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 15; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 206.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** See note following RCW 80.36.630.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.690 State universal communications services program—Account created. (Expires July 1, 2025.)** (1) The universal communications services account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. Revenues to the account consist of moneys deposited in the account by the legislature and any penalties or other recoveries received pursuant to RCW 80.36.670. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the purposes of the universal communications services program established in RCW 80.36.650 and commission expenses related to implementation and administration of the provisions of RCW 80.36.630 through 80.36.690 and section 212, chapter 8, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess. Only the secretary of the commission or the secretary's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

(2) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 16; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 208.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** See note following RCW 80.36.630.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.700 State universal communications services program—Program expiration. (Expires July 1, 2025.)** (1) The universal communications services program established in RCW 80.36.630 through 80.36.690 terminates on June 30, 2024.

(2) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2019 c 365 s 17; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 8 s 211.]

**Effective date—2019 c 365 ss 11-18 and 20:** See note following RCW 80.36.630.

**Findings—2019 c 365:** See note following RCW 43.330.532.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—Utilities and transportation commission report—2013 2nd sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 80.36.650.

**RCW 80.36.710 Digital equity account.** (1) The digital equity account is created in the state treasury. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation.

(2) Any amounts appropriated by the legislature to the account, private contributions, or any other source directed to the account, must be deposited into the account. Funds from sources outside the state, from private contributions, federal or other sources may be directed to the specific purposes of the digital equity opportunity program or digital equity planning grant program.

(3) The legislature may appropriate moneys in the account only for the purposes of:

(a) RCW 43.330.412, the digital equity opportunity program; and

(b) RCW 43.330.5393, the digital equity planning grant program.  
[2022 c 265 s 401.]

**Effective date—2022 c 265 ss 101, 102, 301-305, and 401:** See note following RCW 43.330.530.

**Short title—Findings—Intent—2022 c 265:** See notes following RCW 43.330.539.

**RCW 80.36.850 Extended area service defined.** As used in RCW 80.36.855, "extended area service" means the ability to call from one exchange to another exchange without incurring a toll charge. [1989 c 282 s 2.]

**Policy—Program limitations—Report to legislative committees—Program expiration—1989 c 282:** See notes following RCW 80.36.855.

**RCW 80.36.855 Extended area service program.** Any business, resident, or community may petition for and shall receive extended area service within the service territory of the local exchange company that provides service to the petitioner under the following conditions:

(1) Any customer, business or residential, interested in obtaining extended area service in their community must collect and submit to the commission the signatures of a representative majority of affected customers in the community. A "representative majority" for purposes of this section consists of fifteen percent of the access lines in that community;

(2) After receipt of the signatures, the commission shall authorize a study to be conducted by the affected local exchange company in order to determine whether a community of interest exists for the implementation of extended area service. For purposes of this section a community of interest shall be found if the average number of calls per customer per month from the area petitioning for extended

area service to the area to which extended area service will be implemented is at least five;

(3) If a community of interest exists, the commission shall then calculate any increased rate that would be applied to the area which would have extended area service granted to it. This rate shall be based on the charges to a rate group having the same or similar calling capability as set forth in the tariffs of the local exchange telecommunications company involved;

(4) The affected telecommunications company shall be given the opportunity to propose an alternative plan that might be priced differently and that plan shall be included in the poll of subscribers as an alternative under subsection (5) of this section;

(5) After determining the amount of any additional rate, the commission shall notify the subscribers who will be affected by the increased rate and conduct a poll of those subscribers. If a simple majority votes its approval the commission shall order extended area service; and

(6) Any extended area service program adopted pursuant to this section shall be considered experimental and not binding on the commission in subsequent extended area service proceedings. If an extended area service program adopted pursuant to this section results in a revenue deficiency for a local exchange company, the commission shall allocate the resulting revenue requirement in a manner which produces fair, just and reasonable rates for all classes of customers. [1989 c 282 s 3.]

**Policy—1989 c 282:** "Universal telephone service for the people of the state of Washington is a policy goal of the legislature and has been enacted previously into Washington law. Access to universal and affordable telephone service enhances the economic and social well-being of Washington citizens." [1989 c 282 s 1.]

**Program limitations—Report to legislative committees—1989 c 282:** "The pilot program specified in sections 2 and 3 of this act applies only to extended area service petitions which meet the conditions under section 3 of this act, and have been filed with the commission by January 1, 1989. Any petitions for extended area service filed after January 1, 1989, shall be addressed under terms and conditions determined by the commission. By December 1, 1990, the commission shall submit to the energy and utilities committees of the house of representatives and the senate a report on extended area service. The report shall include:

(1) The status of any experimental, pilot program which provides extended area service developed under this section, and whether such an experimental, pilot program approach should continue to be made available;

(2) The status of all extended area service petitions pending at the commission;

(3) Commission action on the recommendations of the local extended calling advisory committee; and

(4) Commission recommendations for any other legislation addressing the issue of extended area service." [1989 c 282 s 4.]  
Section 2 of this act is the enactment of RCW 80.36.850. Section 3 of this act is the enactment of RCW 80.36.855.

**Program expiration—1989 c 282:** "The extended area service program under sections 2 through 5 of this act shall expire on December 1, 1990, except for any extended area service obtained by any business residence or community and put in place under section 3 of this act." [1989 c 282 s 5.]

**Chapter 80.40 RCW**  
**UNDERGROUND NATURAL GAS STORAGE ACT**

**Sections**

- 80.40.010 Definitions.
- 80.40.020 Declaration concerning the public interest.
- 80.40.030 Eminent domain.
- 80.40.040 Eminent domain—Application to oil and gas conservation committee prerequisite to eminent domain—Procedure.
- 80.40.050 Rights of company using storage—Rights of owners of condemned land and interests therein.
- 80.40.060 Leases by commissioner of public lands.
- 80.40.070 Leases by county commissioners.
- 80.40.900 Short title.
- 80.40.910 Chapter to be liberally construed.

**RCW 80.40.010 Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless specifically defined otherwise or unless the context indicates otherwise:

"Commission" shall mean the Washington utilities and transportation commission;

"Committee" shall mean the oil and gas conservation committee established by \*RCW 78.52.020;

"Natural gas" shall mean gas either in the earth in its original state or after the same has been produced by removal therefrom of component parts not essential to its use for light and fuel;

"Natural gas company" shall mean every corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership or person authorized to do business in this state and engaged in the transportation, distribution, or underground storage of natural gas;

"Underground reservoir" shall mean any subsurface sand, strata, formation, aquifer, cavern or void whether natural or artificially created, suitable for the injection and storage of natural gas therein and the withdrawal of natural gas therefrom;

"Underground storage" shall mean the process of injecting and storing natural gas within and withdrawing natural gas from an underground reservoir: PROVIDED, The withdrawal of gas from an underground reservoir shall not be deemed a taking or producing within the terms of RCW 82.04.100. [1963 c 201 s 2.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 78.52.020 was repealed by 1994 sp.s. c 9 s 869, effective July 1, 1994.

**RCW 80.40.020 Declaration concerning the public interest.** The underground storage of natural gas will promote the economic development of the state and provide for more economic distribution of natural gas to the domestic, commercial and industrial consumers of this state, thereby serving the public interest. [1963 c 201 s 3.]

**RCW 80.40.030 Eminent domain.** Any natural gas company having received an order under RCW 80.40.040 shall have the right of eminent domain to be exercised in the manner provided in and subject to the provisions of chapter 8.20 RCW to acquire for its use for the

underground storage of natural gas any underground reservoir, as well as such other property or interests in property as may be required to adequately maintain and utilize the underground reservoir for the underground storage of natural gas, including easements and rights-of-way for access to and egress from the underground storage reservoir. The right of eminent domain granted hereby shall apply to property or property interests held in private ownership, provided condemnor has exercised good faith in negotiations for private sale or lease. No property shall be taken or damaged until the compensation to be made therefor shall have been ascertained and paid. Any property or interest therein so acquired by any natural gas company shall be used exclusively for the purposes for which it was acquired. Any decree of appropriation hereunder shall define and limit the rights condemned and shall provide for the reversion of such rights to the defendant or defendants or their successors in interest upon abandonment of the underground storage project. Good faith exploration work or development work relative to the storage reservoir is conclusive evidence that its use has not been abandoned. The court may include in such decree such other relevant conditions, covenants and restrictions as it may deem fair and equitable. [1963 c 201 s 4.]

**RCW 80.40.040 Eminent domain—Application to \*oil and gas conservation committee prerequisite to eminent domain—Procedure.** Any natural gas company desiring to exercise the right of eminent domain to condemn any property or interest in property for the underground storage of natural gas shall first make application to the \*oil and gas conservation committee for an order approving the proposed project. Notice of such application shall be given by the committee to the utilities and transportation commission, to the director of ecology, to the commissioner of public lands, and to all other persons known to have an interest in the property to be condemned. Said notice shall be given in the manner provided by RCW 8.20.020 as amended. The committee shall publish notice of said application at least once each week for three successive weeks in some newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties where the proposed underground storage project is located. If no written requests for hearing on the application are received by the committee within forty-five days from the date of service of notice of the application and publication thereof, the committee may proceed without hearing and issue its order. If a hearing is requested, a public hearing on the application will be held within the county or one of the counties where the proposed underground storage project is located. Any order approving the proposed underground storage project shall contain findings that (1) the underground storage of natural gas in the lands or property sought to be condemned is in the public interest and welfare; (2) the underground reservoir is reasonably practicable, and the applicant has complied with all applicable oil and gas conservation laws of the state of Washington; (3) the underground reservoir sought to be condemned is nonproductive of economically recoverable valuable minerals or materials, or of oil or gas in commercial quantities under either primary or secondary recovery methods, and nonproductive of fresh water in commercial quantities with feasible and reasonable pumping lift; (4) the natural gas company has acquired the right by grant, lease or other agreement to store natural gas under at least sixty-five percent of the area of the surface of the land under which



such proposed underground storage reservoir extends; (5) the natural gas company carries public liability insurance or has deposited collateral in amounts satisfactory to the committee or has furnished a financial statement showing assets in a satisfactory amount, to secure payment of any liability resulting from any occurrence arising out of or caused by the operation or use of any underground reservoir or facilities incidental thereto; (6) the underground storage project will not injure, pollute, or contaminate any usable freshwater resources; (7) the underground storage project will not injure, interfere with, or endanger any mineral resources or the development or extraction thereof. The order of the committee may be reviewed in the manner provided by chapter 34.05 RCW: PROVIDED, That if an appeal is not commenced within thirty days of the date of the order of the committee, the same shall be final and conclusive. [1988 c 127 s 35; 1963 c 201 s 5.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The duties of the oil and gas conservation committee were transferred to the department of natural resources by 1994 sp.s. c 9, effective July 1, 1994.

**RCW 80.40.050 Rights of company using storage—Rights of owners of condemned land and interests therein.** All natural gas in an underground reservoir utilized for underground storage, whether acquired by eminent domain or otherwise, shall at all times be the property of the natural gas company utilizing said underground storage, its heirs, successors, or assigns; and in no event shall such gas be subject to any right of the owner of the surface of the land under which said underground reservoir lies or of the owner of any mineral interest therein or of any person other than the said natural gas company, its heirs, successors and assigns to release, produce, take, reduce to possession, or otherwise interfere with or exercise any control thereof: PROVIDED, That the right of condemnation hereby granted shall be without prejudice to the rights of the owner of the condemned lands or of the rights and interest therein to drill or bore through the underground reservoir in such a manner as shall protect the underground reservoir against pollution and against the escape of natural gas in a manner which complies with the orders, rules and regulations of the \*oil and gas conservation committee issued for the purpose of protecting underground storage and shall be without prejudice to the rights of the owners of said lands or other rights or interests therein as to all other uses thereof. The additional cost of complying with regulations or orders to protect the underground storage shall be paid by the condemnor. [1963 c 201 s 6.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The duties of the oil and gas conservation committee were transferred to the department of natural resources by 1994 sp.s. c 9, effective July 1, 1994.

**RCW 80.40.060 Leases by commissioner of public lands.** The commissioner of public lands is authorized to lease public lands, property, or any interest therein for the purpose of underground storage of natural gas. Any such lease shall be upon such terms and conditions as the said commissioner may deem for the best interests of the state and as are customary and proper for the protection of the rights of the state and of the lessee and of the owners of the surface

of the leased lands, and may be for such primary term as said commissioner may determine and as long thereafter as the lessee continues to use such lands, property, or interest therein for underground storage of gas. [1963 c 201 s 7.]

**RCW 80.40.070 Leases by county commissioners.** Whenever it shall appear to the board of county commissioners of any county that it is for the best interests of said county, the taxing districts and the people thereof, that any county-owned or tax-acquired property owned by the county, either absolutely or as trustee, should be leased for the purpose of underground storage of natural gas therein, said board of county commissioners is hereby authorized to enter into written leases under the terms of which any county-owned lands, property, or interest therein are leased for the aforementioned purposes, with or without an option to purchase the land surface. Any such lease shall be upon such terms and conditions as said county commissioners may deem for the best interests of said county and the taxing districts, and may be for such primary term as said board may determine and as long thereafter as the lessee continues to use the said lands, property, or interest therein for underground storage of natural gas. [1963 c 201 s 8.]

**RCW 80.40.900 Short title.** This act shall be known as the "underground natural gas storage act." [1963 c 201 s 9.]

**RCW 80.40.910 Chapter to be liberally construed.** It is intended that the provisions of this chapter shall be liberally construed to accomplish the purposes authorized and provided for. [1963 c 201 s 10.]

**Chapter 80.50 RCW**  
**ENERGY FACILITIES—SITE LOCATIONS**

**Sections**

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- 80.50.020 Definitions.
- 80.50.030 Energy facility site evaluation council—Created—  
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- 80.50.040 Energy facility site evaluation council—Powers  
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- 80.50.045 Recommendations to secretary, federal energy regulatory  
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- 80.50.060 Energy facilities to which chapter applies—Applications  
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- 80.50.075 Expedited processing of applications.
- 80.50.080 Counsel for the environment.
- 80.50.085 Council staff to assist applicants, make recommendations.
- 80.50.090 Public hearings—Opportunity for public comment.
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- 80.50.110 Chapter governs and supersedes other law or regulations—  
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- 80.50.160 Availability of information.
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- 80.50.180 Proposals and actions by other state agencies and local  
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- 80.50.300 Unfinished nuclear power projects—Transfer of all or a  
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- 80.50.310 Council actions—Exemption from chapter 43.21C RCW.
- 80.50.320 Governor to evaluate council efficiency, make  
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- 80.50.330 Preapplication—Siting electrical transmission facilities  
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- 80.50.340 Preapplication—Fees—Plans.
- 80.50.360 Duties of chair and director.
- 80.50.370 Clean energy product manufacturing facilities.
- 80.50.380 Preapplication review of a proposed project—Fees.

80.50.390 Energy facility site evaluation council account.  
80.50.400 Transfer of authority from the utilities and  
transportation commission to the council.

**Reviser's note:** Powers and duties of the department of social and health services and the secretary of social and health services transferred to the department of health and the secretary of health. See RCW 43.70.060.

*Energy supply emergencies: Chapter 43.21G RCW.*

*Regulation of dangerous wastes associated with energy facilities: RCW 70A.300.170.*

*State energy office: Chapter 43.21F RCW.*

*Water pollution control, energy facilities, permits, etc., duties of energy facility site evaluation council: RCW 90.48.262.*

**RCW 80.50.010 Legislative finding—Policy—Intent.** The legislature finds that the present and predicted growth in energy demands in the state of Washington requires a procedure for the selection and use of sites for energy facilities and the identification of a state position with respect to each proposed site. The legislature recognizes that the selection of sites will have a significant impact upon the welfare of the population, the location and growth of industry and the use of the natural resources of the state.

It is the policy of the state of Washington to reduce dependence on fossil fuels by recognizing the need for clean energy in order to strengthen the state's economy, meet the state's greenhouse gas reduction obligations, and mitigate the significant near-term and long-term impacts from climate change while conducting a public process that is transparent and inclusive to all with particular attention to overburdened communities.

The legislature finds that the in-state manufacture of industrial products that enable a clean energy economy is critical to advancing the state's objectives in providing affordable electricity, promoting renewable energy, strengthening the state's economy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the legislature intends to provide the council with additional authority regarding the siting of clean energy product manufacturing facilities.

It is the policy of the state of Washington to recognize the pressing need for increased energy facilities, and to ensure through available and reasonable methods that the location and operation of all energy facilities and certain clean energy product manufacturing facilities will produce minimal adverse effects on the environment, ecology of the land and its wildlife, and the ecology of state waters and their aquatic life.

It is the intent to seek courses of action that will balance the increasing demands for energy facility location and operation in conjunction with the broad interests of the public. In addition, it is the intent of the legislature to streamline application review for energy facilities to meet the state's energy goals and to authorize applications for review of certain clean energy product manufacturing facilities to be considered under the provisions of this chapter.

Such action will be based on these premises:

(1) To assure Washington state citizens that, where applicable, operational safeguards are at least as stringent as the criteria established by the federal government and are technically sufficient for their welfare and protection.

(2) To preserve and protect the quality of the environment; to enhance the public's opportunity to enjoy the esthetic and recreational benefits of the air, water and land resources; to promote air cleanliness; to pursue beneficial changes in the environment; and to promote environmental justice for overburdened communities.

(3) To encourage the development and integration of clean energy sources.

(4) To provide abundant clean energy at reasonable cost.

(5) To avoid costs of complete site restoration and demolition of improvements and infrastructure at unfinished nuclear energy sites, and to use unfinished nuclear energy facilities for public uses, including economic development, under the regulatory and management control of local governments and port districts.

(6) To avoid costly duplication in the siting process and ensure that decisions are made timely and without unnecessary delay while also encouraging meaningful public comment and participation in energy facility decisions. [2022 c 183 s 1; 2001 c 214 s 1; 1996 c 4 s 1; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 29; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 1.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** "This act takes effect June 30, 2022." [2022 c 183 s 24.]

**Severability—2001 c 214:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [2001 c 214 s 33.]

**Effective date—2001 c 214:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 8, 2001]." [2001 c 214 s 34.]

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

*Nuclear power facilities, joint operation: Chapter 54.44 RCW.*

*State energy office: Chapter 43.21F RCW.*

**RCW 80.50.020 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Alternative energy resource" includes energy facilities of the following types: (a) Wind; (b) solar energy; (c) geothermal energy; (d) renewable natural gas; (e) wave or tidal action; (f) biomass energy based on solid organic fuels from wood, forest, or field residues, or dedicated energy crops that do not include wood pieces that have been treated with chemical preservatives such as

creosote, pentachlorophenol, or copper-chrome-arsenic; or (g) renewable or green electrolytic hydrogen.

(2) "Applicant" means any person who makes application for a site certification pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

(3) "Application" means any request for approval of a particular site or sites filed in accordance with the procedures established pursuant to this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires.

(4) "Associated facilities" means storage, transmission, handling, or other related and supporting facilities connecting an energy plant with the existing energy supply, processing, or distribution system, including, but not limited to, communications, controls, mobilizing or maintenance equipment, instrumentation, and other types of ancillary transmission equipment, off-line storage or venting required for efficient operation or safety of the transmission system and overhead, and surface or subsurface lines of physical access for the inspection, maintenance, and safe operations of the transmission facility and new transmission lines constructed to operate at nominal voltages of at least 115,000 volts to connect a thermal power plant or alternative energy facilities to the northwest power grid. However, common carrier railroads or motor vehicles shall not be included.

(5) "Biofuel" means a liquid or gaseous fuel derived from organic matter including, but not limited to, biodiesel, renewable diesel, ethanol, renewable natural gas, and renewable propane.

(6) "Certification" means a binding agreement between an applicant and the state which shall embody compliance to the siting guidelines, in effect as of the date of certification, which have been adopted pursuant to RCW 80.50.040 as now or hereafter amended as conditions to be met prior to or concurrent with the construction or operation of any energy facility.

(7) "Clean energy product manufacturing facility" means a facility that exclusively or primarily manufactures the following products or components primarily used by such products:

(a) Vehicles, vessels, and other modes of transportation that emit no exhaust gas from the onboard source of power, other than water vapor;

(b) Charging and fueling infrastructure for electric, hydrogen, or other types of vehicles that emit no exhaust gas from the onboard source of power, other than water vapor;

(c) Renewable or green electrolytic hydrogen, including preparing renewable or green electrolytic hydrogen for distribution as an energy carrier or manufacturing feedstock, or converting it to a green hydrogen carrier;

(d) Equipment and products used to produce energy from alternative energy resources; and

(e) Equipment and products used at storage facilities.

(8) "Construction" means on-site improvements, excluding exploratory work, which cost in excess of two hundred fifty thousand dollars.

(9) "Council" means the energy facility site evaluation council created by RCW 80.50.030.

(10) "Counsel for the environment" means an assistant attorney general or a special assistant attorney general who shall represent the public in accordance with RCW 80.50.080.

(11) "Director" means the director of the energy facility site evaluation council appointed by the chair of the council in accordance with RCW 80.50.360.

(12) "Electrical transmission facilities" means electrical power lines and related equipment.

(13) "Energy facility" means an energy plant or transmission facilities: PROVIDED, That the following are excluded from the provisions of this chapter:

(a) Facilities for the extraction, conversion, transmission or storage of water, other than water specifically consumed or discharged by energy production or conversion for energy purposes; and

(b) Facilities operated by and for the armed services for military purposes or by other federal authority for the national defense.

(14) "Energy plant" means the following facilities together with their associated facilities:

(a) Any nuclear power facility where the primary purpose is to produce and sell electricity;

(b) Any nonnuclear stationary thermal power plant with generating capacity of three hundred fifty thousand kilowatts or more, measured using maximum continuous electric generating capacity, less minimum auxiliary load, at average ambient temperature and pressure, and floating thermal power plants of one hundred thousand kilowatts or more suspended on the surface of water by means of a barge, vessel, or other floating platform;

(c) Facilities which will have the capacity to receive liquefied natural gas in the equivalent of more than one hundred million standard cubic feet of natural gas per day, which has been transported over marine waters;

(d) Facilities which will have the capacity to receive more than an average of fifty thousand barrels per day of crude or refined petroleum or liquefied petroleum gas which has been or will be transported over marine waters, except that the provisions of this chapter shall not apply to storage facilities unless occasioned by such new facility construction;

(e) Any underground reservoir for receipt and storage of natural gas as defined in RCW 80.40.010 capable of delivering an average of more than one hundred million standard cubic feet of natural gas per day; and

(f) Facilities capable of processing more than twenty-five thousand barrels per day of petroleum or biofuel into refined products except where such biofuel production is undertaken at existing industrial facilities.

(15)(a) "Green electrolytic hydrogen" means hydrogen produced through electrolysis.

(b) "Green electrolytic hydrogen" does not include hydrogen manufactured using steam reforming or any other conversion technology that produces hydrogen from a fossil fuel feedstock.

(16) "Green hydrogen carrier" means a chemical compound, created using electricity or renewable resources as energy input and without use of fossil fuel as a feedstock, from renewable hydrogen or green electrolytic hydrogen for the purposes of transportation, storage, and dispensing of hydrogen.

(17) "Independent consultants" means those persons who have no financial interest in the applicant's proposals and who are retained by the council to evaluate the applicant's proposals, supporting studies, or to conduct additional studies.

(18) "Land use plan" means a comprehensive plan or land use element thereof adopted by a unit of local government pursuant to

chapter 35.63, 35A.63, 36.70, or 36.70A RCW, or as otherwise designated by chapter 325, Laws of 2007.

(19) "Person" means an individual, partnership, joint venture, private or public corporation, association, firm, public service company, political subdivision, municipal corporation, government agency, public utility district, or any other entity, public or private, however organized.

(20) "Preapplicant" means a person considering applying for a site certificate agreement for any facility.

(21) "Preapplication process" means the process which is initiated by written correspondence from the preapplicant to the council, and includes the process adopted by the council for consulting with the preapplicant and with federally recognized tribes, cities, towns, and counties prior to accepting applications for any facility.

(22) "Renewable hydrogen" means hydrogen produced using renewable resources both as the source for the hydrogen and the source for the energy input into the production process.

(23) "Renewable natural gas" means a gas consisting largely of methane and other hydrocarbons derived from the decomposition of organic material in landfills, wastewater treatment facilities, and anaerobic digesters.

(24) "Renewable resource" means: (a) Water; (b) wind; (c) solar energy; (d) geothermal energy; (e) renewable natural gas; (f) renewable hydrogen; (g) wave, ocean, or tidal power; (h) biodiesel fuel that is not derived from crops raised on land cleared from old growth or first growth forests; or (i) biomass energy.

(25) "Secretary" means the secretary of the United States department of energy.

(26) "Site" means any proposed or approved location of an energy facility, alternative energy resource, clean energy product manufacturing facility, or electrical transmission facility.

(27) "Storage facility" means a plant that: (a) Accepts electricity as an energy source and uses a chemical, thermal, mechanical, or other process to store energy for subsequent delivery or consumption in the form of electricity; or (b) stores renewable hydrogen, green electrolytic hydrogen, or a green hydrogen carrier for subsequent delivery or consumption.

(28) "Thermal power plant" means, for the purpose of certification, any electrical generating facility using any fuel for distribution of electricity by electric utilities.

(29) "Transmission facility" means any of the following together with their associated facilities:

(a) Crude or refined petroleum or liquid petroleum product transmission pipeline of the following dimensions: A pipeline larger than six inches minimum inside diameter between valves for the transmission of these products with a total length of at least fifteen miles;

(b) Natural gas, synthetic fuel gas, or liquefied petroleum gas transmission pipeline of the following dimensions: A pipeline larger than fourteen inches minimum inside diameter between valves, for the transmission of these products, with a total length of at least fifteen miles for the purpose of delivering gas to a distribution facility, except an interstate natural gas pipeline regulated by the United States federal energy regulatory commission.

(30) "Zoning ordinance" means an ordinance of a unit of local government regulating the use of land and adopted pursuant to chapter



35.63, 35A.63, 36.70, or 36.70A RCW or Article XI of the state Constitution, or as otherwise designated by chapter 325, Laws of 2007. [2022 c 183 s 2; 2021 c 317 s 17. Prior: 2010 c 152 s 1; 2007 c 325 s 1; prior: 2006 c 205 s 1; 2006 c 196 s 1; 2001 c 214 s 3; 1995 c 69 s 1; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 2; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 30; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 2.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Severability—2021 c 317:** See note following RCW 70A.535.005.

**Rule-making costs proportionately divided—2010 c 152:** See note following RCW 80.50.071.

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.030 Energy facility site evaluation council—Created—Membership—Quorum.** (1) The energy facility site evaluation council is created and established.

(2) The chair of the council shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate, shall have a vote on matters before the council, shall serve for a term coextensive with the term of the governor, and is removable for cause. The chair may designate a member of the council to serve as acting chair in the event of the chair's absence. The salary of the chair shall be determined under RCW 43.03.040. The chair is a "state employee" for the purposes of chapter 42.52 RCW. As applicable, when attending meetings of the council, members may receive reimbursement for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060, and are eligible for compensation under RCW 43.03.250.

(3) (a) The council shall consist of the chair of the council and:

(i) The director of the department of ecology or the director's designee;

(ii) The director of the department of fish and wildlife or the director's designee;

(iii) The director of the department of commerce or the director's designee;

(iv) The chair of the utilities and transportation commission or the chair's designee; and

(v) The commissioner of public lands or the commissioner's designee.

(b) The directors, administrators, or their designees, of the following departments, agencies, and commissions, or their statutory successors, may participate as councilmembers at their own discretion provided they elect to participate no later than sixty days after an application is filed:

- (i) Department of agriculture;
- (ii) Department of health;
- (iii) Military department; and
- (iv) Department of transportation.

(4) The appropriate county legislative authority of every county wherein an application for a proposed site is filed shall appoint a member or designee as a voting member to the council. The member or designee so appointed shall sit with the council only at such times as the council considers the proposed site for the county which he or she represents, and such member or designee shall serve until there has been a final acceptance or rejection of the proposed site.

(5) The city legislative authority of every city within whose corporate limits an energy facility is proposed to be located shall appoint a member or designee as a voting member to the council. The member or designee so appointed shall sit with the council only at such times as the council considers the proposed site for the city which he or she represents, and such member or designee shall serve until there has been a final acceptance or rejection of the proposed site.

(6) For any port district wherein an application for a proposed port facility is filed subject to this chapter, the port district shall appoint a member or designee as a nonvoting member to the council. The member or designee so appointed shall sit with the council only at such times as the council considers the proposed site for the port district which he or she represents, and such member or designee shall serve until there has been a final acceptance or rejection of the proposed site. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply if the port district is the applicant, either singly or in partnership or association with any other person.

(7) A quorum of the council consists of a majority of members appointed for business to be conducted. [2022 c 183 s 3. Prior: 2010 c 271 s 601; 2010 c 152 s 2; 2001 c 214 s 4; 1996 c 186 s 108; prior: 1994 c 264 s 75; 1994 c 154 s 315; 1990 c 12 s 3; 1988 c 36 s 60; 1986 c 266 s 51; prior: 1985 c 466 s 71; 1985 c 67 s 1; 1985 c 7 s 151; prior: 1984 c 125 s 18; 1984 c 7 s 372; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 3; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 31; 1974 ex.s. c 171 s 46; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 3.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Purpose—Effective date—2010 c 271:** See notes following RCW 43.330.005.

**Rule-making costs proportionately divided—2010 c 152:** See note following RCW 80.50.071.

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 186:** See notes following RCW 43.330.904.

**Effective date—1994 c 154:** See RCW 42.52.904.

**Effective date—1990 c 12:** "This act shall take effect July 1, 1990." [1990 c 12 s 12.]

**Severability—1986 c 266:** See note following RCW 38.52.005.

**Effective date—Severability—1985 c 466:** See notes following RCW 43.31.125.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.040 Energy facility site evaluation council—Powers enumerated.** The council shall have the following powers:

(1) To adopt, promulgate, amend, or rescind suitable rules and regulations, pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW, to carry out the provisions of this chapter, and the policies and practices of the council in connection therewith;

(2) To develop and apply environmental and ecological guidelines in relation to the type, design, location, construction, initial operational conditions of certification, and ongoing regulatory oversight under the regulatory authority established in this chapter of energy facilities subject to this chapter;

(3) To establish rules of practice for the conduct of public hearings pursuant to the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, as found in chapter 34.05 RCW;

(4) To prescribe the form, content, and necessary supporting documentation for site certification;

(5) To receive applications for energy facility locations and to investigate the sufficiency thereof;

(6) To enter into contracts to carry out the provisions of this chapter;

(7) To conduct hearings on the proposed location and operational conditions of the energy facilities under the regulatory authority established in this chapter;

(8) To prepare written reports to the governor which shall include: (a) A statement indicating whether the application is in compliance with the council's guidelines, (b) criteria specific to the site and transmission line routing, (c) a council recommendation as to the disposition of the application, and (d) a draft certification agreement when the council recommends approval of the application;

(9) To prescribe the means for monitoring of the effects arising from the construction and the operation of energy facilities to assure continued compliance with terms of certification and/or permits issued by the council pursuant to chapter 90.48 RCW or subsection (12) of this section: PROVIDED, That any on-site inspection required by the council shall be performed by other state agencies pursuant to interagency agreement: PROVIDED FURTHER, That the council may retain authority for determining compliance relative to monitoring;

(10) To integrate its site evaluation activity with activities of federal agencies having jurisdiction in such matters to avoid unnecessary duplication;

(11) To present state concerns and interests to other states, regional organizations, and the federal government on the location, construction, and operation of any energy facility which may affect

the environment, health, or safety of the citizens of the state of Washington;

(12) To issue permits in compliance with applicable provisions of the federally approved state implementation plan adopted in accordance with the Federal Clean Air Act, as now existing or hereafter amended, for the new construction, reconstruction, or enlargement or operation of energy facilities: PROVIDED, That such permits shall become effective only if the governor approves an application for certification and executes a certification agreement pursuant to this chapter: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That all such permits be conditioned upon compliance with all provisions of the federally approved state implementation plan which apply to energy facilities covered within the provisions of this chapter; and

(13) To serve as an interagency coordinating body for energy-related issues. [2022 c 183 s 5; 2001 c 214 s 6; 1990 c 12 s 4; 1985 c 67 s 2; 1979 ex.s. c 254 s 1; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 4; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 32; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 4.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Effective date—1990 c 12:** See note following RCW 80.50.030.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.045 Recommendations to secretary, federal energy regulatory commission—Siting electrical transmission corridors—Council designated as state authority for siting transmission facilities—Review under national environmental policy act.** (1) The council shall consult with other state agencies, utilities, local municipal governments, public interest groups, tribes, and other interested persons to convey their views to the secretary and the federal energy regulatory commission regarding appropriate limits on federal regulatory authority in the siting of electrical transmission corridors in the state of Washington.

(2) The council is designated as the state authority for purposes of siting transmission facilities under Title 16 U.S.C. Sec. 824p and for purposes of other such rules or regulations adopted by the secretary. The council's authority regarding transmission facilities under this subsection is limited to those transmission facilities that are the subject of Title 16 U.S.C. Sec. 824p and this chapter.

(3) For the construction and modification of transmission facilities that are the subject of Title 16 U.S.C. Sec. 824p, the council may: (a) Approve the siting of the facilities; and (b) consider the interstate benefits expected to be achieved by the proposed construction or modification of the facilities in the state.

(4) When developing recommendations as to the disposition of an application for the construction or modification of transmission facilities under this chapter, the fuel source of the electricity carried by the transmission facilities shall not be considered.

(5) For electrical transmission projects proposed or sited by a federal agency, the director must coordinate state agency participation in environmental review under the national environmental policy act. [2023 c 229 s 5; 2006 c 196 s 3.]

**Finding—Intent—2023 c 229:** See note following RCW 19.280.030.

**RCW 80.50.060 Energy facilities to which chapter applies—Applications for certification—Forms—Council's duties—Potential effects to tribal cultural resources.** (1) (a) The provisions of this chapter apply to the construction of energy facilities which includes the new construction of energy facilities and the reconstruction or enlargement of existing energy facilities where the net increase in physical capacity or dimensions resulting from such reconstruction or enlargement meets or exceeds those capacities or dimensions set forth in RCW 80.50.020 (14) and (29). No construction or reconstruction of such energy facilities may be undertaken, except as otherwise provided in this chapter, without first obtaining certification in the manner provided in this chapter.

(b) If applicants proposing the following types of facilities choose to receive certification under this chapter, the provisions of this chapter apply to the construction, reconstruction, or enlargement of these new or existing facilities:

(i) Facilities that produce refined biofuel, but which are not capable of producing 25,000 barrels or more per day;

(ii) Alternative energy resource facilities;

(iii) Electrical transmission facilities: (A) Of a nominal voltage of at least 115,000 volts; and (B) located in more than one jurisdiction that has promulgated land use plans or zoning ordinances;

(iv) Clean energy product manufacturing facilities; and

(v) Storage facilities.

(c) All of the council's powers with regard to energy facilities apply to all of the facilities in (b) of this subsection and these facilities are subject to all provisions of this chapter that apply to an energy facility.

(2) (a) The provisions of this chapter must apply to:

(i) The construction, reconstruction, or enlargement of new or existing electrical transmission facilities: (A) Of a nominal voltage of at least 500,000 volts alternating current or at least 300,000 volts direct current; (B) located in more than one county; and (C) located in the Washington service area of more than one retail electric utility; and

(ii) The construction, reconstruction, or modification of electrical transmission facilities when the facilities are located in a national interest electric transmission corridor as specified in RCW 80.50.045.

(b) For the purposes of this subsection, "modification" means a significant change to an electrical transmission facility and does not include the following: (i) Minor improvements such as the replacement of existing transmission line facilities or supporting structures with equivalent facilities or structures; (ii) the relocation of existing electrical transmission line facilities; (iii) the conversion of existing overhead lines to underground; or (iv) the placing of new or additional conductors, supporting structures, insulators, or their accessories on or replacement of supporting structures already built.

(3) The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to normal maintenance and repairs which do not increase the capacity or dimensions beyond those set forth in RCW 80.50.020 (14) and (29).

(4) Applications for certification of energy facilities made prior to July 15, 1977, shall continue to be governed by the applicable provisions of law in effect on the day immediately preceding July 15, 1977, with the exceptions of RCW 80.50.071 which shall apply to such prior applications and to site certifications prospectively from July 15, 1977.

(5) Applications for certification shall be upon forms prescribed by the council and shall be supported by such information and technical studies as the council may require.

(6) Upon receipt of an application for certification under this chapter, the chair of the council shall notify:

(a) The appropriate county legislative authority or authorities where the proposed facility is located;

(b) The appropriate city legislative authority or authorities where the proposed facility is located;

(c) The department of archaeology and historic preservation; and

(d) The appropriate federally recognized tribal governments that may be affected by the proposed facility.

(7) The council must work with local governments where a project is proposed to be sited in order to provide for meaningful participation and input during siting review and compliance monitoring.

(8) The council must consult with all federally recognized tribes that possess resources, rights, or interests reserved or protected by federal treaty, statute, or executive order in the area where an energy facility is proposed to be located to provide early and meaningful participation and input during siting review and compliance monitoring. The chair and designated staff must offer to conduct government-to-government consultation to address issues of concern raised by such a tribe. The goal of the consultation process is to identify tribal resources or rights potentially affected by the proposed energy facility and to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects on tribal resources or rights. The chair must provide regular updates on the consultation to the council throughout the application review process. The report from the council to the governor required in RCW 80.50.100 must include a summary of the government-to-government consultation process that complies with RCW 42.56.300, including the issues and proposed resolutions.

(9) The department of archaeology and historic preservation shall coordinate with the affected federally recognized tribes and the applicant in order to assess potential effects to tribal cultural resources, archaeological sites, and sacred sites. [2023 c 229 s 4; 2022 c 183 s 6; 2021 c 317 s 18; 2007 c 325 s 2; 2006 c 196 s 4; 2001 c 214 s 2; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 5; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 34; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 6.]

**Finding—Intent—2023 c 229:** See note following RCW 19.280.030.

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Severability—2021 c 317:** See note following RCW 70A.535.005.

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.065 Use of fully coordinated permitting process.**

Applicants utilizing the fully coordinated permitting process under chapter 43.158 RCW are not eligible for permitting under this chapter unless a substantial change is made to the proposed project. Prior to considering an application under this chapter from a project applicant that has previously used the fully coordinated permitting process under chapter 43.158 RCW for that project, the council must determine that the project applicant has made a substantial change to the project, relative to the project as it was proposed under the fully coordinated permitting process. [2023 c 230 s 211.]

**Findings—Intent—2023 c 230:** See note following RCW 43.394.010.

**RCW 80.50.071 Council to receive applications—Payment of costs incurred by the council—Notification requirements.** (1) The council shall receive all applications for energy facility site certification. Each applicant shall pay actual costs incurred by the council in processing an application.

(a) Each applicant shall, at the time of application submission, pay to the council for deposit into the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390 an amount up to fifty thousand dollars, or such greater amount as specified by the council after consultation with the applicant. The council shall charge costs against the deposit if the applicant withdraws its application and has not reimbursed the council for all actual expenditures incurred in considering the application.

(b) The council may commission its own independent consultant study to measure the consequences of the proposed energy facility on the environment or any matter that it deems essential to an adequate appraisal of the site. The council shall provide an estimate of the cost of the study to the applicant and consider applicant comments.

(c) In addition to the deposit required under (a) of this subsection, applicants must reimburse the council for actual expenditures that arise in considering the application, including the cost of any independent consultant study. The council shall submit to each applicant an invoice of actual expenditures made during the preceding calendar quarter in sufficient detail to explain the expenditures. The applicant shall pay the council the amount of the invoice by the due date.

(2) Each certificate holder shall pay the actual costs incurred by the council for inspection and determination of compliance by the certificate holder with the terms of the certification relative to monitoring the effects of construction, operation, and site restoration of the facility.

(a) Each certificate holder shall, within thirty days of execution of the site certification agreement, pay to the council for

deposit into the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390 an amount up to fifty thousand dollars, or such greater amount as specified by the council after consultation with the certificate holder. The council shall charge costs against the deposit if the certificate holder ceases operations and has not reimbursed the council for all actual expenditures incurred in conducting inspections and determining compliance with the terms of the certification.

(b) In addition to the deposit required under (a) of this subsection, certificate holders must reimburse the council for actual expenditures that arise in administering this chapter and determining compliance. The council shall submit to each certificate holder an invoice of the expenditures actually made during the preceding calendar quarter in sufficient detail to explain the expenditures. The certificate holder shall pay the amount of the invoice by the due date.

(3) If an applicant or certificate holder fails to provide the initial deposit, or if subsequently required payments are not received within thirty days following receipt of the invoice from the council, the council may (a) in the case of the applicant, suspend processing of the application until payment is received; or (b) in the case of a certificate holder, suspend the certification.

(4) All payments required of the applicant or certificate holder under this section are to be made to the council for deposit into the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390. All such funds shall be subject to state auditing procedures. Any unexpended portions of the deposit shall be returned to the applicant within sixty days following the conclusion of the application process or to the certificate holder within sixty days after a determination by the council that the certificate is no longer required and there is no continuing need for compliance with its terms. For purposes of this section, "conclusion of the application process" means after the governor's decision granting or denying a certificate and the expiration of any opportunities for judicial review.

(5) (a) Upon receipt of an application for an energy facility site certification proposing an energy plant or alternative energy resource that is connected to electrical transmission facilities of a nominal voltage of at least one hundred fifteen thousand volts, the council shall notify in writing the United States department of defense. The notification shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(i) A description of the proposed energy plant or alternative energy resource;

(ii) The location of the site;

(iii) The placement of the energy plant or alternative energy resource on the site;

(iv) The date and time by which comments must be received by the council; and

(v) Contact information of the council and the applicant.

(b) The purpose of the written notification is to provide an opportunity for the United States department of defense to comment upon the application, and to identify potential issues relating to the placement and operations of the energy plant or alternative energy resource, before a site certification application is approved. The time period set forth by the council for receipt of such comments shall not extend the time period for the council's processing of the application.



(c) In order to assist local governments required to notify the United States department of defense under RCW 35.63.270, 35A.63.290, and 36.01.320, the council shall post on its website the appropriate information for contacting the United States department of defense. [2022 c 183 s 8; 2016 sp.s. c 10 s 1; 2011 c 261 s 1; 2010 c 152 s 3; 2006 c 196 s 5; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 16.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Construction—2016 sp.s. c 10:** "Nothing in this act extends or modifies the jurisdiction of the energy facility site evaluation council or the utilities and transportation commission with respect to any energy facility that is not subject to the jurisdiction of the energy facility site evaluation council or the utility [utilities] and transportation commission as of June 28, 2016." [2016 sp.s. c 10 s 2.]

**Rule-making costs proportionately divided—2010 c 152:** "Rule-making costs incurred by the energy facility site evaluation council in implementing and administering this act shall be proportionately divided among the certificate holders and applicants directly affected by this act." [2010 c 152 s 4.]

**RCW 80.50.075 Expedited processing of applications.** (1) Any person filing an application for certification of any facility pursuant to this chapter may apply to the council for an expedited processing of such an application. The application for expedited processing shall be submitted to the council in such form and manner and accompanied by such information as may be prescribed by council rule. The council may grant an applicant expedited processing of an application for certification upon finding that the environmental impact of the proposed facility is not significant or will be mitigated to a nonsignificant level under RCW 43.21C.031 and the project is found under RCW 80.50.090(2) to be consistent and in compliance with city, county, or regional land use plans or zoning ordinances.

(2) Upon granting an applicant expedited processing of an application for certification, the council shall not be required to:

(a) Commission an independent study to further measure the consequences of the proposed facility on the environment, notwithstanding the other provisions of RCW 80.50.071; nor

(b) Hold an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act, on the application.

(3) The council shall adopt rules governing the expedited processing of an application for certification pursuant to this section. [2022 c 183 s 18; 2006 c 205 s 2; 1989 c 175 s 172; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 17.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**RCW 80.50.080 Counsel for the environment.** After the council has received a site application, the attorney general shall appoint an assistant attorney general as a counsel for the environment. The

counsel for the environment shall represent the public and its interest in protecting the quality of the environment. Costs incurred by the counsel for the environment in the performance of these duties shall be charged to the office of the attorney general, and shall not be a charge against the appropriation to the energy facility site evaluation council. He or she shall be accorded all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of an attorney representing a party in a formal action. This section shall not be construed to prevent any person from being heard or represented by counsel in accordance with the other provisions of this chapter. [2013 c 23 s 282; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 6; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 8.]

**RCW 80.50.085 Council staff to assist applicants, make recommendations.** (1) After the council has received a site application, council staff shall assist applicants in identifying issues presented by the application.

(2) Council staff shall review all information submitted and recommend resolutions to issues in dispute that would allow site approval.

(3) Council staff may make recommendations to the council on conditions that would allow site approval. [2001 c 214 s 5.]

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**RCW 80.50.090 Public hearings—Opportunity for public comment.**

(1) The council shall conduct an informational public hearing in the county of the proposed site as soon as practicable but not later than sixty days after receipt of an application for site certification. However, the place of such public hearing shall be as close as practical to the proposed site.

(2) Subsequent to the informational public hearing, the council shall conduct a public hearing to determine whether or not the proposed site is consistent and in compliance with city, county, or regional land use plans or zoning ordinances on the date of the application.

(3) (a) After the submission of an environmental checklist and prior to issuing a threshold determination that a facility is likely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact under chapter 43.21C RCW, the director must notify the project applicant and explain in writing the basis for its anticipated determination of significance. Prior to issuing the threshold determination of significance, the director must give the project applicant the option of withdrawing and revising its application and the associated environmental checklist to clarify or make changes to features of the proposal that are designed to mitigate the impacts that were the basis of the director's anticipated determination of significance. The director shall make the threshold determination based upon the changed or clarified proposal following the applicant's submittal. The director must provide an opportunity for public comment on a project for which a project applicant has withdrawn and revised the application and environmental checklist and subsequently received a

threshold determination of nonsignificance or mitigated determination of nonsignificance.

(b) The notification required under (a) of this subsection is not an official determination by the director and is not subject to appeal under chapter 43.21C RCW.

(4) Prior to the issuance of a council recommendation to the governor under RCW 80.50.100 a public hearing, conducted as an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act, shall be held.

(a) At such public hearing any person shall be entitled to be heard in support of or in opposition to the application for certification by raising one or more specific issues, provided that the person has raised the issue or issues in writing with specificity during the application review process or during the public comment period that will be held prior to the start of the adjudicative hearing.

(b) If the environmental impact of the proposed facility in an application for certification is not significant or will be mitigated to a nonsignificant level under RCW 43.21C.031, the council may limit the topic of the public hearing conducted as an adjudicative proceeding under this section to whether any land use plans or zoning ordinances with which the proposed site is determined to be inconsistent under subsection (2) of this section should be preempted.

(5) After expedited processing is granted under RCW 80.50.075, the council must hold a public meeting to take comments on the proposed application prior to issuing a council recommendation to the governor.

(6) Additional public hearings shall be held as deemed appropriate by the council in the exercise of its functions under this chapter. [2022 c 183 s 9. Prior: 2006 c 205 s 3; 2006 c 196 s 6; 2001 c 214 s 7; 1989 c 175 s 173; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 9.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**RCW 80.50.100 Recommendations to governor—Expedited processing—Approval or rejection of certification—Reconsideration.** (1)(a) The council shall report to the governor its recommendations as to the approval or rejection of an application for certification within twelve months of receipt by the council of an application deemed complete by the director, or such later time as is mutually agreed by the council and the applicant.

(b) The council shall review and consider comments received during the application process in making its recommendation.

(c) In the case of an application filed prior to December 31, 2025, for certification of an energy facility proposed for construction, modification, or expansion for the purpose of providing generating facilities that meet the requirements of RCW 80.80.040 and are located in a county with a coal-fired electric generation facility

subject to RCW 80.80.040(3)(c), the council shall expedite the processing of the application pursuant to RCW 80.50.075 and shall report its recommendations to the governor within one hundred eighty days of receipt by the council of such an application, or a later time as is mutually agreed by the council and the applicant.

(2) If the council recommends approval of an application for certification, it shall also submit a draft certification agreement with the report. The council shall include conditions in the draft certification agreement to implement the provisions of this chapter including, but not limited to, conditions to protect state, local governmental, or community interests, or overburdened communities as defined in RCW 70A.02.010 affected by the construction or operation of the facility, and conditions designed to recognize the purpose of laws or ordinances, or rules or regulations promulgated thereunder, that are preempted or superseded pursuant to RCW 80.50.110 as now or hereafter amended.

(3)(a) Within 60 days of receipt of the council's report the governor shall take one of the following actions:

(i) Approve the application and execute the draft certification agreement; or

(ii) Reject the application; or

(iii) Direct the council to reconsider certain aspects of the draft certification agreement.

(b) The council shall reconsider such aspects of the draft certification agreement by reviewing the existing record of the application or, as necessary, by reopening the adjudicative proceeding for the purposes of receiving additional evidence. Such reconsideration shall be conducted expeditiously. The council shall resubmit the draft certification to the governor incorporating any amendments deemed necessary upon reconsideration. Within 60 days of receipt of such draft certification agreement, the governor shall either approve the application and execute the certification agreement or reject the application. The certification agreement shall be binding upon execution by the governor and the applicant.

(4) The rejection of an application for certification by the governor shall be final as to that application but shall not preclude submission of a subsequent application for the same site on the basis of changed conditions or new information. [2022 c 183 s 10; 2011 c 180 s 109; 1989 c 175 s 174; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 8; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 36; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 10.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.105 Transmission facilities for petroleum products—Recommendations to governor.** In making its recommendations to the governor under this chapter regarding an application that includes transmission facilities for petroleum products, the council shall give

appropriate weight to city or county facility siting standards adopted for the protection of sole source aquifers. [1991 c 200 s 1112.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 80.50.110 Chapter governs and supersedes other law or regulations—Preemption of regulation and certification by state.** (1) If any provision of this chapter is in conflict with any other provision, limitation, or restriction which is now in effect under any other law of this state, or any rule or regulation promulgated thereunder, this chapter shall govern and control and such other law or rule or regulation promulgated thereunder shall be deemed superseded for the purposes of this chapter.

(2) The state hereby preempts the regulation and certification of the location, construction, and operational conditions of certification of the energy facilities included under RCW 80.50.060 as now or hereafter amended. [1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 37; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 11.]

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.120 Effect of certification.** (1) Subject to the conditions set forth therein any certification shall bind the state and each of its departments, agencies, divisions, bureaus, commissions, boards, and political subdivisions, whether a member of the council or not, as to the approval of the site and the construction and operation of the proposed energy facility.

(2) The certification shall authorize the person named therein to construct and operate the proposed energy facility subject only to the conditions set forth in such certification.

(3) The issuance of a certification shall be in lieu of any permit, certificate or similar document required by any department, agency, division, bureau, commission, board, or political subdivision of this state, whether a member of the council or not. [1977 ex.s. c 371 s 10; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 38; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 12.]

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.130 Revocation or suspension of certification—Grounds.** Any certification may be revoked or suspended:

(1) For any material false statement in the application or in the supplemental or additional statements of fact or studies required of the applicant when a true answer would have warranted the council's refusal to recommend certification in the first instance; or

(2) For failure to comply with the terms or conditions of the original certification; or

(3) For violation of the provisions of this chapter, regulations issued thereunder or order of the council. [1970 ex.s. c 45 s 13.]

**RCW 80.50.140 Review.** (1) A final decision pursuant to RCW 80.50.100 on an application for certification shall be subject to judicial review pursuant to provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW and this section. Petitions for review of such a decision shall be filed in the Thurston county superior court. All petitions for review of a decision under RCW 80.50.100 shall be consolidated into a single proceeding before the Thurston county superior court. The Thurston county superior court shall certify the petition for review to the supreme court upon the following conditions:

- (a) Review can be made on the administrative record;
- (b) Fundamental and urgent interests affecting the public interest and development of energy facilities are involved which require a prompt determination;
- (c) Review by the supreme court would likely be sought regardless of the determination of the Thurston county superior court; and
- (d) The record is complete for review.

The Thurston county superior court shall assign a petition for review of a decision under RCW 80.50.100 for hearing at the earliest possible date and shall expedite such petition in every way possible. If the court finds that review cannot be limited to the administrative record as set forth in subparagraph (a) of this subsection because there are alleged irregularities in the procedure before the council not found in the record, but finds that the standards set forth in subparagraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this subsection are met, the court shall proceed to take testimony and determine such factual issues raised by the alleged irregularities and certify the petition and its determination of such factual issues to the supreme court. Upon certification, the supreme court shall assign the petition for hearing at the earliest possible date, and it shall expedite its review and decision in every way possible.

(2) Objections raised by any party in interest concerning procedural error by the council shall be filed with the council within sixty days of the commission of such error, or within thirty days of the first public hearing or meeting of the council at which the general subject matter to which the error is related is discussed, whichever comes later, or such objection shall be deemed waived for purposes of judicial review as provided in this section.

(3) The rules and regulations adopted by the council shall be subject to judicial review pursuant to the provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW. [1988 c 202 s 62; 1981 c 64 s 3; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 11; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 14.]

**Severability—1988 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.24.050.

**RCW 80.50.150 Enforcement of compliance—Penalties.** (1) The courts are authorized to grant such restraining orders, and such temporary and permanent injunctive relief as is necessary to secure compliance with this chapter, rules adopted under this chapter, a site certification agreement issued pursuant to this chapter, a national pollutant discharge elimination system (hereafter in this section, NPDES) permit or waste discharge permit issued by the council under chapter 90.48 RCW, any air permit issued under RCW 80.50.040(12), or any other permit issued by the council.

(2) The court may assess civil penalties in an amount not less than one thousand dollars per day nor more than twenty-five thousand

dollars per day for each day of construction or operation in material violation of this chapter, or in violation of any rules adopted under this chapter, or in material violation of any site certification agreement issued pursuant to this chapter, or in violation of any NPDES permit or waste discharge permit issued by the council pursuant to chapter 90.48 RCW, or in violation of any air permit issued pursuant to RCW 80.50.040(12), or in violation of any other permit issued by the council.

(3) Willful violation of any provision of this chapter is a gross misdemeanor.

(4) Willful or criminally negligent, as defined in RCW 9A.08.010(1)(d), violation of any provision of a NPDES permit or waste discharge permit issued by the council pursuant to chapter 90.48 RCW, or any air permit issued by the council pursuant to RCW 80.50.040(12) or any emission standards promulgated by the council in order to implement the federal clean air act and the state implementation plan with respect to energy facilities under the jurisdiction provisions of this chapter, or any other permit issued by the council, is a gross misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of up to twenty-five thousand dollars per day and costs of prosecution.

(5) Any person knowingly making any false statement, representation, or certification in any document in any form, notice, or report required by a NPDES or waste discharge permit, or in any form, notice, or report required for or by any air permit issued pursuant to RCW 80.50.040(12), or any other permit issued by the council, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of up to ten thousand dollars and costs of prosecution.

(6) Civil proceedings to enforce this chapter may be brought by the attorney general or the prosecuting attorney of any county affected by the violation on his or her own motion or at the request of the council. Criminal proceedings to enforce this chapter may be brought by the prosecuting attorney of any county affected by the violation on his or her own motion or at the request of the council.

(7) The remedies and penalties in this chapter, both civil and criminal, are cumulative and are in addition to any other penalties and remedies available at law, or in equity, to any person. [2015 3rd sp.s. c 39 s 2; 2013 c 23 s 283. Prior: 1979 ex.s. c 254 s 2; 1979 c 41 s 1; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 12; 1970 ex.s. c 45 s 15.]

**Findings—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 39:** "The legislature recognizes that the energy facility site evaluation council is responsible for enforcing compliance with this chapter, rules adopted pursuant to this chapter, and site certification agreements and any permits it issues to energy facilities under its jurisdiction. The statutes related to enforcement by the energy facility site evaluation council have not been amended to reflect the increased penalty amounts that both the department of ecology and local air pollution control authorities may impose for similar violations of environmental laws. In addition, it is not altogether clear whether the department of ecology has authority to issue additional penalties under RCW 90.56.330 for oil spills at facilities under the jurisdiction of the energy facility site evaluation council. Furthermore, the legislature recently eliminated the mitigation process from certain environmental appeals because it represented an unnecessary step in the penalty process. The

legislature did not amend the enforcement statutes of the energy facility site evaluation council to eliminate the mitigation process for penalties issued by the council.

The legislature intends to amend the energy facility site evaluation council's enforcement statutes to make them more consistent with similar enforcement statutes of the department of ecology and local air pollution control authorities, and to clarify the appeal process. The legislature also intends to clarify that additional penalties under RCW 90.56.330 for oil spills may be imposed by the department of ecology at energy facilities under the jurisdiction of the energy facility site evaluation council. Nothing in RCW 80.50.150 and 80.50.155 limits the department of ecology's ability to impose natural resource damage assessments pursuant to RCW 90.56.370, regardless of whether or not the energy facility is under the jurisdiction of the energy facility site evaluation council." [2015 3rd sp.s. c 39 s 1.]

**RCW 80.50.155 Additional penalties—Appeal procedures. (1)**

Every person who violates the provisions of site certification agreements or permits issued or administered by the council shall incur, in addition to any other penalty as provided by law, a penalty in an amount of up to ten thousand dollars a day for every such violation. Each and every such violation is a separate and distinct offense, and in case of a continuing violation, every day's continuance is deemed to be a separate and distinct violation. Every act of commission or omission which procures, aids, or abets in the violation is considered a violation under the provisions of this section and subject to the penalty provided in this section. The penalty provided in this section shall be imposed by a notice in writing, either by certified mail with return receipt requested or by personal service, to the person incurring the same from the council describing such violation with reasonable particularity.

(2) Any person incurring any penalty under this section must appeal the same to the council before the person may appeal the penalty to superior court. Such appeals with the council shall be filed within thirty days of the date of receipt of notice imposing any penalty. Any penalty imposed under this section shall become due and payable thirty days after the date of receipt of a notice imposing the same unless an appeal is filed with the council. Whenever an appeal of any penalty incurred hereunder is filed with the council, the penalty shall become due and payable only upon completion of all review proceedings and the issuance of a final order confirming the penalty in whole or in part. Judicial review of any final decision of the council is governed by chapter 34.05 RCW. All penalties recovered under this section shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the general fund.

(3) For purposes of this subsection, "date of receipt" means:

(a) Five business days after the date of mailing; or

(b) The date of actual receipt, when the actual receipt date can be proven by a preponderance of the evidence. The date of actual receipt, however, may not exceed forty-five days from the date of mailing. [2015 3rd sp.s. c 39 s 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 39:** See note following RCW 80.50.150.



**RCW 80.50.160 Availability of information.** The council shall make available for public inspection and copying during regular office hours at the expense of any person requesting copies, any information filed or submitted pursuant to this chapter. [1970 ex.s. c 45 s 16.]

**RCW 80.50.175 Council's powers.** (1) In addition to all other powers conferred on the council under this chapter, the council shall have the powers set forth in this section.

(2) (a) The council, upon agreement with any potential applicant, is authorized as provided in this section to conduct a preliminary study of any potential project prior to receipt of an application for site certification. This preliminary study must be completed before any environmental review or process under RCW 43.21C.031 is initiated. A fee of \$10,000 for each potential project, to be applied toward the cost of any study agreed upon pursuant to (b) of this subsection, must accompany the agreement and is a condition precedent to any action on the agreement by the council.

(b) Upon agreement with the potential applicant, the council may commission its own independent consultant to study matters relative to the potential project. In conducting the study, the council is authorized to cooperate and work jointly with the county or counties in which the potential project is located, any federal, state, local, or tribal governmental agency that might be requested to comment on the potential project, and any municipal or public corporation having an interest in the matter. The full cost of the study must be paid by the potential applicant. However, costs exceeding a total of \$10,000 are payable subject to the potential applicant giving prior approval to such an excess amount.

(3) All payments required of the potential applicant under this section must be deposited into the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390. All of these funds are subject to state auditing procedures. Any unexpended portions of the funds must be returned to the potential applicant.

(4) If a potential applicant subsequently submits a formal application for site certification to the council for a site where a preliminary study was conducted, payments made under this section for that study may be considered as payment towards the application fee provided in RCW 80.50.071. [2022 c 183 s 11; 1983 c 3 s 205; 1977 ex.s. c 371 s 13; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 s 40; 1974 ex.s. c 110 s 2.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 80.50.180 Proposals and actions by other state agencies and local political subdivisions pertaining to energy facilities exempt from "detailed statement" required by RCW 43.21C.030.** Except for actions of the council under chapter 80.50 RCW, all proposals for legislation and other actions of any branch of government of this state, including state agencies, municipal and public corporations, and counties, to the extent the legislation or other action involved approves, authorizes, permits, or establishes procedures solely for

approving, authorizing or permitting, the location, financing or construction of any energy facility subject to certification under chapter 80.50 RCW, shall be exempt from the "detailed statement" required by RCW 43.21C.030. Nothing in this section shall be construed as exempting any action of the council from any provision of chapter 43.21C RCW. [1977 ex.s. c 371 s 14.]

**RCW 80.50.300 Unfinished nuclear power projects—Transfer of all or a portion of a site to a political subdivision or subdivisions of the state—Water rights.** (1) This section applies only to unfinished nuclear power projects. If a certificate holder stops construction of a nuclear energy facility before completion, terminates the project or otherwise resolves not to complete construction, never introduces or stores fuel for the energy facility on the site, and never operates the energy facility as designed to produce energy, the certificate holder may contract, establish interlocal agreements, or use other formal means to effect the transfer of site restoration responsibilities, which may include economic development activities, to any political subdivision or subdivisions of the state composed of elected officials. The contracts, interlocal agreements, or other formal means of cooperation may include, but are not limited to provisions effecting the transfer or conveyance of interests in the site and energy facilities from the certificate holder to other political subdivisions of the state, including costs of maintenance and security, capital improvements, and demolition and salvage of the unused energy facilities and infrastructure.

(2) If a certificate holder transfers all or a portion of the site to a political subdivision or subdivisions of the state composed of elected officials and located in the same county as the site, the council shall amend the site certification agreement to release those portions of the site that it finds are no longer intended for the development of an energy facility.

Immediately upon release of all or a portion of the site pursuant to this section, all responsibilities for maintaining the public welfare for portions of the site transferred, including but not limited to health and safety, are transferred to the political subdivision or subdivisions of the state. For sites located on federal land, all responsibilities for maintaining the public welfare for all of the site, including but not limited to health and safety, must be transferred to the political subdivision or subdivisions of the state irrespective of whether all or a portion of the site is released.

(3) The legislature finds that for all or a portion of sites that have been transferred to a political subdivision or subdivisions of the state prior to September 1, 1999, ensuring water for site restoration including economic development, completed pursuant to this section can best be accomplished by a transfer of existing surface water rights, and that such a transfer is best accomplished administratively through procedures set forth in existing statutes and rules. However, if a transfer of water rights is not possible, the department of ecology shall, within six months of the transfer of the site or portion thereof pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, create a trust water right under chapter 90.42 RCW containing between ten and twenty cubic feet per second for the benefit of the appropriate political subdivision or subdivisions of the state. The trust water right shall be used in fulfilling site restoration

responsibilities, including economic development. The trust water right shall be from existing valid water rights within the basin where the site is located.

(4) For purposes of this section, "political subdivision or subdivisions of the state" means a city, town, county, public utility district, port district, or joint operating agency. [2000 c 243 s 1; 1996 c 4 s 2.]

**RCW 80.50.310 Council actions—Exemption from chapter 43.21C**

**RCW.** Council actions pursuant to the transfer of the site or portions of the site under RCW 80.50.300 are exempt from the provisions of chapter 43.21C RCW. [1996 c 4 s 3.]

**RCW 80.50.320 Governor to evaluate council efficiency, make recommendations.** The governor shall undertake an evaluation of the operations of the council to assess means to enhance its efficiency. The assessment must include whether the efficiency of the siting process would be improved by conducting the process under the state environmental policy act in a particular sequence relative to the adjudicative proceeding. The results of this assessment may include recommendations for administrative changes, statutory changes, or expanded staffing levels. [2001 c 214 s 8.]

**Severability—Effective date—2001 c 214:** See notes following RCW 80.50.010.

**Findings—2001 c 214:** See note following RCW 39.35.010.

**RCW 80.50.330 Preapplication—Siting electrical transmission facilities—Corridors.** (1) For applications to site electrical transmission facilities, the council shall conduct a preapplication process pursuant to rules adopted by the council to govern such process, receive applications as prescribed in RCW 80.50.071, and conduct public meetings pursuant to RCW 80.50.090.

(2) The council shall consider and may recommend certification of electrical transmission facilities in corridors designated for this purpose by affected cities, towns, or counties:

(a) Where the jurisdictions have identified electrical transmission facility corridors as part of their land use plans and zoning maps based on policies adopted in their plans;

(b) Where the proposed electrical transmission facility is consistent with any adopted development regulations that govern the siting of electrical transmission facilities in such corridors; and

(c) Where contiguous jurisdictions and jurisdictions in which related regional electrical transmission facilities are located have either prior to or during the preapplication process undertaken good faith efforts to coordinate the locations of their corridors consistent with RCW 36.70A.100.

(3) (a) In the absence of a corridor designation in the manner prescribed in subsection (2) of this section, the council shall as part of the preapplication process require the preapplicant to negotiate, as provided by rule adopted by the council, for a reasonable time with affected cities, towns, and counties to attempt

to reach agreement about a corridor plan. The application for certification shall identify only the corridor agreed to by the applicant and cities, towns, and counties within the proposed corridor pursuant to the preapplication process.

(b) If no corridor plan is agreed to by the applicant and cities, towns, and counties pursuant to (a) of this subsection, the applicant shall propose a recommended corridor and electrical transmission facilities to be included within the proposed corridor.

(c) The council shall consider the applicant's proposed corridor and electrical transmission facilities as provided in \*RCW 80.50.090 (2) and (4), and shall make a recommendation consistent with RCW 80.50.090 and 80.50.100. [2007 c 325 s 3.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 80.50.090 was amended by 2022 c 183 s 9, changing subsection (4) to subsection (6).

**RCW 80.50.340 Preapplication—Fees—Plans.** (1) A preapplicant applying under RCW 80.50.330 shall pay to the council a fee of ten thousand dollars to be applied to the cost of the preapplication process as a condition precedent to any action by the council, provided that costs in excess of this amount shall be paid only upon prior approval by the preapplicant, and provided further that any unexpended portions thereof shall be returned to the preapplicant.

(2) The council shall consult with the preapplicant and prepare a plan for the preapplication process which shall commence with an informational public hearing within 60 days after the receipt of the preapplication fee as provided in RCW 80.50.090.

(3) The preapplication plan shall include but need not be limited to:

(a) An initial consultation to explain the proposal and request input from council staff, federal and state agencies, cities, towns, counties, port districts, tribal governments, property owners, and interested individuals;

(b) Where applicable, a process to guide negotiations between the preapplicant and cities, towns, and counties within the corridor proposed pursuant to RCW 80.50.330.

(4) Fees paid under this section must be deposited in the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390. [2022 c 183 s 13; 2007 c 325 s 4.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**RCW 80.50.360 Duties of chair and director.** (1) The chair of the council or the chair's designee shall execute all official documents, contracts, and other materials on behalf of the council.

(2) The chair of the council shall appoint a director to oversee the operations of the council and carry out the duties of this chapter as delegated by the chair. The chair of the council may delegate to the director its status as appointing authority for the council.

(3) The director shall employ such administrative and professional personnel as may be necessary to perform the administrative work of the council and implement this chapter. The director has supervisory authority over all staff of the council. Not more than four employees may be exempt from chapter 41.06 RCW. [2022 c 183 s 4.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**RCW 80.50.370 Clean energy product manufacturing facilities.**

(1) A person proposing to construct, reconstruct, or enlarge a clean energy product manufacturing facility may choose to receive certification under this chapter.

(2) All of the council's powers with regard to energy facilities apply to clean energy product manufacturing facilities, and such a facility is subject to all provisions of this chapter that apply to an energy facility. [2022 c 183 s 7.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**RCW 80.50.380 Preapplication review of a proposed project—Fees.**

(1) Except for the siting of electrical transmission facilities, any potential applicant may request a preapplication review of a proposed project. Council staff must review the preapplicant's draft application materials and provide comments on either additional studies or stakeholder and tribal input, or both, that should be included in the formal application for site certification. Council staff must inform affected federally recognized tribes under RCW 80.50.060 of the preapplication review. The department of archaeology and historic preservation shall coordinate with the affected federally recognized tribes and the applicant in order to assess potential effects to tribal cultural resources, archaeological sites, and sacred sites.

(2) After initial review, the director and the applicant may agree on fees to be paid by the applicant so that council staff may conduct further review and consultation, including contracting for review by other parties. [2022 c 183 s 12.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**RCW 80.50.390 Energy facility site evaluation council account.**

The energy facility site evaluation council account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from funds received by the council for all payments, including fees, deposits, and reimbursements received under this chapter must be deposited into the account. Expenditures from the account may be used for purposes set forth in this chapter. Only the chair of the council or the chair's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures. [2022 c 183 s 15.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**RCW 80.50.400 Transfer of authority from the utilities and transportation commission to the council.** (1) Those administrative powers, duties, and functions of the utilities and transportation commission that were performed under the provisions of this chapter for the council prior to June 30, 2022, are transferred to the council as set forth in chapter 183, Laws of 2022.

(2) (a) All reports, documents, surveys, books, records, files, papers, or written material in the possession of the utilities and transportation commission pertaining to the powers, duties, and functions transferred must be delivered to the custody of the council. All cabinets, furniture, office equipment, motor vehicles, and other tangible property under the inventory of the utilities and transportation commission for the council must be transferred to the council. All funds, credits, or other assets held by the utilities and transportation commission for the benefit of the council, of which were paid to the utilities and transportation commission pursuant to this chapter must be assigned to the council and transferred to the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390.

(b) Any appropriations made to the utilities and transportation commission for the council to carrying out its powers, functions, and duties transferred must, on June 30, 2022, be transferred and credited to the council. Any funds received pursuant to payment made under this chapter must be credited to the council and deposited in the energy facility site evaluation council account created in RCW 80.50.390.

(c) If any question arises as to the transfer of any personnel, funds, books, documents, records, papers, files, equipment, or other tangible property used or held in the exercise of the powers and the performance of the duties and functions transferred, the director of financial management shall decide as to the proper allocation and certify the same to the state agencies concerned.

(3) All pending business before the utilities and transportation commission pertaining to the powers, duties, and functions transferred must be continued and acted upon by the council. All existing contracts and obligations remain in full force and must be performed by the council.

(4) The transfer of the powers, duties, functions, and personnel of the utilities and transportation commission does not affect the validity of any act performed before June 30, 2022.

(5) If apportionments of budgeted or nonbudgeted funds are required because of the transfers directed by this section, the director of financial management shall certify the apportionments to the agencies affected, the state auditor, and the state treasurer. Each of these shall make the appropriate transfer and adjustments in funds and appropriation accounts and equipment records in accordance with the certification.

(6) All employees of the utilities and transportation commission that are engaged in performing the powers, functions, and duties of the council, are transferred to the council. All employees classified under chapter 41.06 RCW, the state civil service law, assigned to the council shall continue to perform their usual duties upon the same terms as formerly, without any loss of rights, subject to any action that may be appropriate thereafter in accordance with the laws and rules governing state civil service law. [2022 c 183 s 17.]

**Effective date—2022 c 183:** See note following RCW 80.50.010.

**Chapter 80.52 RCW**  
**ENERGY FINANCING VOTER APPROVAL ACT**

**Sections**

80.52.010 Short title.  
80.52.020 Purpose.  
80.52.030 Definitions.  
80.52.040 Election approval required before issuance of bonds.  
80.52.050 Conduct of election.  
80.52.060 Form of ballot propositions.  
80.52.070 Approval of request for financing authority.  
80.52.080 Priorities.  
80.52.910 Effective dates—1981 2nd ex.s. c 6.

**RCW 80.52.010 Short title.** This chapter may be cited as the Washington state energy financing voter approval act. [1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 1 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.020 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to provide a mechanism for citizen review and approval of proposed financing for major public energy projects. The development of dependable and economic energy sources is of paramount importance to the citizens of the state, who have an interest in insuring that major public energy projects make the best use of limited financial resources. Because the construction of major public energy projects will significantly increase utility rates for all citizens, the people of the state hereby establish a process of voter approval for such projects. [1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 2 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.030 Definitions.** The definitions set forth in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Public agency" means a public utility district, joint operating agency, city, county, or any other state governmental agency, entity, or political subdivision.

(2) "Major public energy project" means a plant or installation capable, or intended to be capable, of generating electricity in an amount greater than three hundred fifty megawatts, measured using maximum continuous electric generating capacity, less minimum auxiliary load, at average ambient temperature and pressure. Where two or more such plants are located within the same geographic site, each plant shall be considered a major public energy project. An addition to an existing facility is not deemed to be a major energy project unless the addition itself is capable, or intended to be capable, of generating electricity in an amount greater than three hundred fifty megawatts. A project which is under construction on July 1, 1982, shall not be considered a major public energy project unless the official agency budget or estimate for total construction costs for the project as of July 1, 1982, is more than two hundred percent of the first official estimate of total construction costs as specified in the senate energy and utilities committee WPPSS inquiry report, volume one, January 12, 1981, and unless, as of July 1, 1982, the

projected remaining cost of construction for that project exceeds two hundred million dollars.

(3) "Cost of construction" means the total cost of planning and building a major public energy project and placing it into operation, including, but not limited to, planning cost, direct construction cost, licensing cost, cost of fuel inventory for the first year's operation, interest, and all other costs incurred prior to the first day of full operation, whether or not incurred prior to July 1, 1982.

(4) "Cost of acquisition" means the total cost of acquiring a major public energy project from another party, including, but not limited to, principal and interest costs.

(5) "Bond" means a revenue bond, a general obligation bond, or any other indebtedness issued by a public agency or its assignee.

(6) "Applicant" means a public agency, or the assignee of a public agency, requesting the secretary of state to conduct an election pursuant to this chapter.

(7) "Cost-effective" means that a project or resource is forecast:

(a) To be reliable and available within the time it is needed; and

(b) To meet or reduce the electric power demand of the intended consumers at an estimated incremental system cost no greater than that of the least-cost similarly reliable and available alternative project or resource, or any combination thereof.

(8) "System cost" means an estimate of all direct costs of a project or resource over its effective life, including, if applicable, the costs of distribution to the consumer, and, among other factors, waste disposal costs, end-of-cycle costs, and fuel costs (including projected increases), and such quantifiable environmental costs and benefits as are directly attributable to the project or resource.

[2002 c 190 s 1; 1995 c 69 s 2; 1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 3 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.040 Election approval required before issuance of bonds.** No public agency or assignee of a public agency may issue or sell bonds to finance the cost of construction or the cost of acquisition of a major public energy project, or any portion thereof, unless it has first obtained authority for the expenditure of the funds to be raised by the sale of such bonds for that project at an election conducted in the manner provided in this chapter. [1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 4 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.050 Conduct of election.** The election required under RCW 80.52.040 shall be conducted in the manner provided in this section.

(1)(a) If the applicant is a public utility district, joint operating agency, city, or county, the election shall be among the voters of the public utility district, city, or county, or among the voters of the local governmental entities comprising the membership of the joint operating agency.

(b) If the applicant is any public agency other than those described in subsection (1)(a) of this section, or is an assignee of a joint operating agency and not itself a joint operating agency, the



election shall be conducted statewide in the manner provided in Title 29A RCW for statewide elections.

(2) The election shall be held at the next statewide general election occurring more than ninety days after submission of a request by an applicant to the secretary of state unless a special election is requested by the applicant as provided in this section.

(3) If no statewide election can be held under subsection (2) of this section within one hundred twenty days of the submission to the secretary of state of a request by an applicant for financing authority under this chapter, the applicant may request that a special election be held if such election is necessary to avoid significant delay in construction or acquisition of the energy project. Within ten days of receipt of such a request for a special election, the secretary of state shall designate a date for the election pursuant to RCW 29A.04.321 and certify the date to the county auditor of each county in which an election is to be held under this section.

(4) Prior to an election under this section, the applicant shall submit to the secretary of state a cost-effectiveness study, prepared by an independent consultant approved by the state finance committee, pertaining to the major public energy project under consideration. The study shall be available for public review and comment for thirty days. At the end of the thirty-day period, the applicant shall prepare a final draft of the study which includes the public comment, if any.

(5) The secretary of state shall certify the ballot issue for the election to be held under this section to the county auditor of each county in which an election is to be held. The certification shall include the statement of the proposition as provided in RCW 80.52.060. The costs of the election shall be relieved by the applicant in the manner provided by RCW 29A.04.410. In addition, the applicant shall reimburse the secretary of state for the applicant's share of the costs related to the preparation and distribution of the voters' pamphlet required by subsection (6) of this section and such other costs as are attributable to any election held pursuant to this section.

(6) Prior to an election under this section, the secretary of state shall provide an opportunity for supporters and opponents of the requested financing authority to present their respective views in a voters' pamphlet which shall be distributed to the voters of the local governmental entities participating in the election. Upon submission of an applicant's request for an election pursuant to this section, the applicant shall provide the secretary of state with the following information regarding each major public energy project for which the applicant seeks financing authority at such election, which information shall be included in the voters' pamphlet:

(a) The name, location, and type of major public energy project, expressed in common terms;

(b) The dollar amount and type of bonds being requested;

(c) If the bond issuance is intended to finance the acquisition of all or a portion of the project, the anticipated total cost of the acquisition of the project;

(d) If the bond issuance is intended to finance the planning or construction of all or a portion of the project, the anticipated total cost of construction of the project;

(e) The projected average rate increase for consumers of the electricity to be generated by the project. The rate increase shall be that which will be necessary to repay the total indebtedness incurred for the project, including estimated interest;

- (f) A summary of the final cost-effectiveness study conducted under subsection (4) of this section;
- (g) The anticipated functional life of the project;
- (h) The anticipated decommissioning costs of the project; and
- (i) If a special election is requested by the applicant, the reasons for requesting a special election. [2015 c 53 s 96; 1982 c 88 s 1; 1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 5 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**Effective date—1982 c 88:** "This act shall take effect on July 1, 1982." [1982 c 88 s 2.]

**RCW 80.52.060 Form of ballot propositions.** The proposition for each major public energy project listed upon a ballot pursuant to this chapter shall be in the form provided in this section.

(1) If the funds are intended to finance the planning or construction of all or a portion of the project, the proposition shall read substantially as follows:

"Shall           (name of applicant)           be authorized to spend           (dollar amount of financing authority requested)           to construct the           (name of the project)                     (type of project)           located at           (location)          , the anticipated total construction cost of which is           (anticipated cost of construction)          ?"

(2) If the financing authority is intended to finance the acquisition of all or a portion of the project from another party, the proposition shall read substantially as follows:

"Shall           (name of applicant)           be authorized to spend           (dollar amount of financing authority requested)           to acquire the           (name of project)                     (type of project)           located at           (location)          , the anticipated total acquisition cost of which is           (anticipated cost of acquisition)          ?"

[1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 6 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.070 Approval of request for financing authority.** A request for financing authority pursuant to this chapter shall be considered approved if it receives the approval of a majority of those voting on the request. [1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 7 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.080 Priorities.** In planning for future energy expenditures, public agencies shall give priority to projects and resources which are cost-effective. Priority for future bond sales to finance energy expenditures by public agencies shall be given: First, to conservation; second, to renewable resources; third, to generating resources utilizing waste heat or generating resources of high fuel-conversion efficiency; and fourth, to all other resources. This section does not apply to projects which are under construction on

December 3, 1981. [1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 8 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**RCW 80.52.910 Effective dates—1981 2nd ex.s. c 6.** Section 8 of this act shall take effect immediately. The remainder of this act shall take effect on July 1, 1982. Public agencies intending to submit a request for financing authority under this act are authorized to institute the procedures specified in section 5(4) of this act prior to the effective date of this act. [1981 2nd ex.s. c 6 s 11 (Initiative Measure No. 394, approved November 3, 1981).]

**Chapter 80.54 RCW**  
**ATTACHMENTS TO TRANSMISSION FACILITIES**

**Sections**

80.54.010	Definitions.
80.54.020	Regulation of rates, terms, and conditions—Criteria.
80.54.030	Commission order fixing rates, terms, or conditions.
80.54.040	Criteria for just and reasonable rate.
80.54.050	Exemptions from chapter.
80.54.060	Adoption of rules.
80.54.070	Uniform attachment rates within utility service area.

**RCW 80.54.010 Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Attachment" means any wire or cable for the transmission of intelligence by telecommunications or television, including cable television, light waves, or other phenomena, or for the transmission of electricity for light, heat, or power, and any related device, apparatus, or auxiliary equipment, installed upon any pole or in any telecommunications, electrical, cable television, or communications right-of-way, duct, conduit, manhole or handhole, or other similar facilities owned or controlled, in whole or in part, by one or more utilities, where the installation has been made with the consent of the one or more utilities.

(2) "Licensee" means any person, firm, corporation, partnership, company, association, joint stock association, or cooperatively organized association, other than a utility, which is authorized to construct attachments upon, along, under, or across the public ways.

(3) "Utility" means any electrical company or telecommunications company as defined in RCW 80.04.010, and does not include any entity cooperatively organized, or owned by federal, state, or local government, or a subdivision of state or local government. [1985 c 450 s 40; 1979 c 33 s 1.]

**RCW 80.54.020 Regulation of rates, terms, and conditions—Criteria.** The commission shall have the authority to regulate in the public interest the rates, terms, and conditions for attachments by licensees or utilities. All rates, terms, and conditions made, demanded, or received by any utility for any attachment by a licensee or by a utility must be just, fair, reasonable, and sufficient. [1979 c 33 s 2.]

**RCW 80.54.030 Commission order fixing rates, terms, or conditions.** Whenever the commission shall find, after hearing had upon complaint by a licensee or by a utility, that the rates, terms, or conditions demanded, exacted, charged, or collected by any utility in connection with attachments are unjust, unreasonable, or that the rates or charges are insufficient to yield a reasonable compensation for the attachment, the commission shall determine the just, reasonable, or sufficient rates, terms, and conditions thereafter to be observed and in force and shall fix the same by order. In determining and fixing the rates, terms, and conditions, the

commission shall consider the interest of the customers of the attaching utility or licensee, as well as the interest of the customers of the utility upon which the attachment is made. [1979 c 33 s 3.]

**RCW 80.54.040 Criteria for just and reasonable rate.** A just and reasonable rate shall assure the utility the recovery of not less than all the additional costs of procuring and maintaining pole attachments, nor more than the actual capital and operating expenses, including just compensation, of the utility attributable to that portion of the pole, duct, or conduit used for the pole attachment, including a share of the required support and clearance space, in proportion to the space used for the pole attachment, as compared to all other uses made of the subject facilities, and uses which remain available to the owner or owners of the subject facilities. [1979 c 33 s 4.]

**RCW 80.54.050 Exemptions from chapter.** Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to apply to any attachment by one or more electrical companies on the facilities of one or more other electrical companies. [1979 c 33 s 5.]

**RCW 80.54.060 Adoption of rules.** The commission shall adopt rules, regulations and procedures relative to the implementation of this chapter. [1979 c 33 s 6.]

**RCW 80.54.070 Uniform attachment rates within utility service area.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a utility as defined in RCW 80.54.010(3) and any utility not regulated by the utilities and transportation commission shall levy attachment rates which are uniform for all licensees within the utility service area. [1979 c 33 s 7.]

**Chapter 80.58 RCW**  
**NONPOLLUTING POWER GENERATION EXEMPTION**

**Sections**

80.58.010 Nonpolluting power generation by individual—Exemption from regulation—Authorization to contract with utility.

**RCW 80.58.010 Nonpolluting power generation by individual—Exemption from regulation—Authorization to contract with utility.**

The generation of power by a nonpolluting, renewable energy source by an individual natural person not otherwise engaged in the business of power generation is declared to be exempt from all statutes and rules otherwise regulating the generation of power: PROVIDED, That such an individual is hereby authorized to provide such power to the utility servicing the property on which the power is generated and the servicing utility is hereby authorized to accept such power under such terms and conditions as may be agreed to between the parties. [1979 ex.s. c 191 s 11.]

**Chapter 80.60 RCW**  
**NET METERING OF ELECTRICITY**

**Sections**

- 80.60.005 Findings.
- 80.60.010 Definitions.
- 80.60.020 Available on first-come, first-served basis—  
Interconnected metering systems allowed—Charges to customer-generator—Consumer-owned utility may develop standard rate or tariff schedule.
- 80.60.030 Net energy measurement, charges for kilowatt-hour consumption, and credits for excess kilowatt-hour generation—Required calculation—Unused credit—Net metering system—Customer-generator meter aggregation.
- 80.60.040 Safety, power quality, and interconnection requirements—Customer-generator's expense—Commission may adopt additional requirements.

**RCW 80.60.005 Findings.** The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to:

- (1) Encourage private investment in renewable energy resources;
- (2) Stimulate the economic growth of this state; and
- (3) Enhance the continued diversification of the energy resources used in this state. [1998 c 318 s 1.]

**RCW 80.60.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

- (1) "Aggregated meter" means an electric service meter measuring electric energy consumption that is eligible to receive credits under a meter aggregation arrangement as described in RCW 80.60.030.
- (2) "Commission" means the utilities and transportation commission.
- (3) "Consumer-owned utility" means a municipal electric utility formed under Title 35 RCW, a public utility district formed under Title 54 RCW, an irrigation district formed under chapter 87.03 RCW, a cooperative formed under chapter 23.86 RCW, or a mutual corporation or association formed under chapter 24.06 RCW, that is engaged in the business of distributing electricity to more than one retail electric customer in the state.
- (4) "Customer-generator" means a user of a net metering system.
- (5) "Designated meter" means an electric service meter at the service of a net metering system that is interconnected to the utility distribution system.
- (6) "Electric cooperative" means a cooperative or association organized under chapter 23.86 or 24.06 RCW.
- (7) "Electric utility" means any electrical company, public utility district, irrigation district, port district, electric cooperative, or municipal electric utility that is engaged in the business of distributing electricity to retail electric customers in the state.
- (8) "Electrical company" means a company owned by investors that meets the definition of RCW 80.04.010.

(9) "Irrigation district" means an irrigation district under chapter 87.03 RCW.

(10) "Meter aggregation" means the administrative combination of billing net energy consumption from a designated net meter and eligible aggregated meter.

(11) "Municipal electric utility" means a city or town that owns or operates an electric utility authorized by chapter 35.92 RCW.

(12) "Net metering" means measuring the difference between the electricity supplied by an electric utility and the excess electricity generated by a customer-generator's net metering system over the applicable billing period.

(13) "Net metering system" means a fuel cell, a facility that produces electricity and used and useful thermal energy from a common fuel source, or a facility for the production of electrical energy that generates renewable energy, and that:

(a) Has an electrical generating AC capacity of not more than one hundred kilowatts;

(b) Is located on the customer-generator's premises;

(c) Operates in parallel with the electric utility's transmission and distribution facilities and is connected to the electric utility's distribution system; and

(d) Is intended primarily to offset part or all of the customer-generator's requirements for electricity.

(14) "Port district" means a port district within which an industrial development district has been established as authorized by Title 53 RCW.

(15) "Premises" means any residential property, commercial real estate, or lands, owned or leased by a customer-generator within the service area of a single electric utility.

(16) "Public utility district" means a district authorized by chapter 54.04 RCW.

(17) "Renewable energy" means energy generated by a facility that uses water, wind, solar energy, or biogas as a fuel.

(18) "Retail electric customer" includes an individual, organization, group, association, partnership, corporation, agency, unit of state government, or entity that is connected to the electric utility's distribution system and purchases electricity for ultimate consumption and not for resale. [2019 c 235 s 1; 2007 c 323 s 1; 2006 c 201 s 1; 2000 c 158 s 1; 1998 c 318 s 2.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**RCW 80.60.020 Available on first-come, first-served basis—  
Interconnected metering systems allowed—Charges to customer-generator  
—Consumer-owned utility may develop standard rate or tariff schedule.**

(1) An electric utility:

(a) Shall offer to make net metering, pursuant to RCW 80.60.030, available to eligible customer-generators on a first-come, first-served basis until the earlier of either: (i) June 30, 2029; or (ii) the first date upon which the cumulative generating capacity of net metering systems equals four percent of the utility's peak demand during 1996. Not less than one-half of the utility's 1996 peak demand available for net metering systems shall be reserved for the cumulative generating capacity attributable to net metering systems that generate renewable energy;



(b) Shall allow net metering systems to be interconnected using a standard kilowatt-hour meter capable of registering the flow of electricity in two directions, unless the commission, in the case of an electrical company, or the appropriate governing body, in the case of other electric utilities, determines, after appropriate notice and opportunity for comment:

(i) That the use of additional metering equipment to monitor the flow of electricity in each direction is necessary and appropriate for the interconnection of net metering systems, after taking into account the benefits and costs of purchasing and installing additional metering equipment; and

(ii) How the cost of purchasing and installing an additional meter is to be allocated between the customer-generator and the utility;

(c) Shall charge the customer-generator a minimum monthly fee that is the same as other customers of the electric utility in the same rate class, but shall not charge the customer-generator any additional standby, capacity, interconnection, or other fee or charge unless the commission, in the case of an electrical company, or the appropriate governing body, in the case of other electric utilities, determines, after appropriate notice and opportunity for comment that:

(i) The electric utility will incur direct costs associated with interconnecting or administering net metering systems that exceed any offsetting benefits associated with these systems; and

(ii) Public policy is best served by imposing these costs on the customer-generator rather than allocating these costs among the utility's entire customer base.

(2) If a production meter and software is required by the electric utility to provide meter aggregation under RCW 80.60.030(4), the customer-generator is responsible for the purchase of the production meter and software.

(3) (a) (i) A consumer-owned utility may develop a standard rate or tariff schedule that deviates from RCW 80.60.030 for eligible customer-generators to take effect at the earlier of either: (A) June 30, 2029; or (B) the first date upon which the cumulative generating capacity of net metering systems equals four percent of the utility's peak demand during 1996.

(ii) An electrical company may submit a filing with the commission to develop a standard tariff schedule that deviates from RCW 80.60.030 for eligible customer-generators. The commission must approve, reject, or approve with conditions a net metering tariff schedule pursuant to this subsection within one year of an electrical company filing. If the commission approves the filing with conditions, the investor-owned utility may choose to accept the tariff schedule with conditions or file a new tariff schedule with the commission.

(b) An approved standard rate or tariff schedule under this subsection applies to any customer-generator subject to an interconnection agreement entered into: (i) After June 30, 2029, or (ii) the first date upon which the cumulative generating capacity of net metering systems pursuant to RCW 80.60.030 equals four percent of the utility's peak demand during 1996, whichever is earlier, unless the commission or governing body determines that a customer-generator is eligible for net metering under a rate or tariff schedule pursuant to RCW 80.60.030.

(c) (i) A consumer-owned utility must notify the Washington State University extension energy program sixty days in advance of when a

standard rate for an eligible customer-generator is first placed on the agenda of the governing body.

(ii) Each electric utility must give notice by July 31, 2020, and semiannually thereafter, to the Washington State University extension energy program of the status of meeting the cumulative generating capacity available to net metering systems pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section.

(iii) The Washington State University extension energy program must make available on its website a list of the following:

(A) Each electric utility's progress on reaching the cumulative generating capacity available to net metering systems pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section;

(B) Electric utilities that have provided notice of a rate or tariff schedule under this subsection; and

(C) Electric utilities that have adopted a standard rate or tariff schedule under this subsection.

(d) If the commission does not approve an electrical company's tariff schedule under (a)(ii) of this subsection, the commission may determine the alternative cumulative generating capacity available to net metering systems pursuant to RCW 80.60.030.

(4)(a) An electric utility must continue to credit a customer-generator pursuant to RCW 80.60.030 if:

(i) The customer-generator takes service under net metering prior to the earlier of: (A) June 30, 2029; or (B) the first date upon which the cumulative generating capacity of net metering systems reaches four percent of the utility's peak demand in 1996; and

(ii) The customer-generator's existing interconnection agreement for the net metering system remains valid.

(b) The commission, in the case of electrical companies, and a governing body, in the case of consumer-owned utilities, must determine as part of a standard rate or tariff schedule under this subsection when customer-generators become ineligible for credit pursuant to RCW 80.60.030.

(c) Upon adoption of a standard rate or tariff schedule by the commission or governing body pursuant to subsection (3)(a) of this section, the electric utility is exempt from requirements under subsection (1)(c) of this section and RCW 80.60.030 for new interconnection agreements. [2019 c 235 s 2; 2007 c 323 s 2; 2006 c 201 s 2; 2000 c 158 s 2; 1998 c 318 s 3.]

**RCW 80.60.030 Net energy measurement, charges for kilowatt-hour consumption, and credits for excess kilowatt-hour generation—Required calculation—Unused credit—Net metering system—Customer-generator meter aggregation.** Consistent with the other provisions of this chapter, the net energy measurement, billed charges for kilowatt-hour consumption, and credits for excess kilowatt-hour generation by a net metered system, must be calculated in the following manner:

(1) The electric utility shall measure the net electricity produced or consumed during the billing period, in accordance with normal metering practices.

(2) If the electricity supplied by the electric utility exceeds the electricity generated by the customer-generator's net metering system and fed back to the electric utility during the billing period, the customer-generator shall be billed for the net electricity

supplied by the electric utility, in accordance with normal metering practices.

(3) If excess electricity generated by the net metering system during a billing period exceeds the electricity supplied by the electric utility during the same billing period, the customer-generator:

(a) Shall be billed for the appropriate customer charges for that billing period, in accordance with RCW 80.60.020; and

(b) Shall be credited for the excess kilowatt-hours generated during the billing period, with the credit for kilowatt-hours appearing on the bill for the following billing period.

(4) If a customer-generator requests, an electric utility shall provide such a customer-generator meter aggregation.

(a) For a customer-generator participating in meter aggregation, credits for kilowatt-hours earned by the customer-generator's net metering system during the billing period first shall be used to offset electricity supplied by the electric utility at the location of the customer-generator's designated meter.

(b) A customer-generator may aggregate a designated meter with one additional aggregated meter located on the same parcel as the designated meter or a parcel that is contiguous with the parcel where the designated meter is located.

(c) For the purposes of (b) of this subsection, a parcel is considered contiguous if they share a common property boundary, but may be separated only by a road or rail corridor.

(d) A retail electric customer who is a customer-generator and receives retail electric service from an electric utility at an aggregated meter must be the same retail electric customer who receives retail electric service from such an electric utility at the designated meter that is located on the premises where such a customer-generator's net metering system is located.

(e) Credits for excess kilowatt-hours earned by the net metering system at the site of a designated meter during a billing period shall be credited by the electric utility for kilowatt-hour charges due at the aggregated meter at the applicable rate of the aggregated meter.

(f) If credits generated in any billing period exceed total consumption for that billing period at both meters that are part of an aggregated arrangement, credits are retained pursuant to subsections (3) and (5) of this section.

(g) Credits carried over from one billing period to the next pursuant to (f) of this subsection must be applied in subsequent billing periods in the same manner described under (a) and (e) of this subsection.

(h) Meters so aggregated shall not change rate classes due to meter aggregation under this section.

(5) On March 31st of each calendar year, any remaining unused credits for kilowatt-hours accumulated during the previous year shall be granted to the electric utility, without any compensation to the customer-generator.

(6) Nothing in this section prohibits a utility from allowing aggregation under terms different than the requirements of subsection (4) of this section if a customer-generator has an existing arrangement for meter aggregation in effect or a customer submits a written request for aggregation on or before July 1, 2019.

(7) Nothing in this section prohibits the owner of multifamily residential facility from installing a net metering system as defined in RCW 80.60.010 assigned to a single designated meter located on the

premises of the multifamily residential facility where the tenants are not individually metered customers of the utility and distributing any benefits of the net metering to tenants of the facility where the net metering system is located. The utility must measure the net energy produced and provide credit to the single designated meter to which the net metering system is assigned in accordance with subsections (1) through (3) of this section or under the terms of a standard rate or tariff schedule established under RCW 80.60.020(3). The distribution of benefits to tenants of such a system, if any, is the responsibility of the owner of the net metering system and not the responsibility of the utility. [2019 c 235 s 3; 2007 c 323 s 3; 2006 c 201 s 3; 1998 c 318 s 4.]

**RCW 80.60.040 Safety, power quality, and interconnection requirements—Customer-generator's expense—Commission may adopt additional requirements.**

(1) A net metering system used by a customer-generator shall include, at the customer-generator's own expense, all equipment necessary to meet applicable safety, power quality, and interconnection requirements established by the national electrical code, national electrical safety code, the institute of electrical and electronics engineers, and underwriters laboratories.

(2) The commission, in the case of an electrical company, or the appropriate governing body, in the case of other electric utilities, after appropriate notice and opportunity for comment, may adopt by regulation additional safety, power quality, and interconnection requirements for customer-generators, including limitations on the number of customer-generators and total capacity of net metering systems that may be interconnected to any distribution feeder line, circuit, or network that the commission or governing body determines are necessary to protect public safety and system reliability.

(3) An electric utility may not require a customer-generator whose net metering system meets the standards in subsections (1) and (2) of this section to comply with additional safety or performance standards, perform or pay for additional tests, or purchase additional liability insurance. However, an electric utility shall not be liable directly or indirectly for permitting or continuing to allow an attachment of a net metering system, or for the acts or omissions of the customer-generator that cause loss or injury, including death, to any third party.

(4) Except when required under the federal public utility regulatory policies act, an electric utility may not establish compensation arrangements or interconnection requirements, other than those permitted in this chapter, for a customer-generator that would have the effect of prohibiting or restricting the ability of a customer-generator to generate or store electricity for consumption on its premises. [2019 c 235 s 4; 2006 c 201 s 4; 2000 c 158 s 3; 1998 c 318 s 5.]

**Chapter 80.66 RCW**  
**RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE COMPANIES**

**Sections**

80.66.010 Scope of regulation—Filing of certain agreements.

**RCW 80.66.010 Scope of regulation—Filing of certain agreements.**

The commission shall not regulate radio communications service companies, except that:

(1) The commission may regulate the rates, services, facilities, and practices of radio communications service companies, within a geographic service area or a portion of a geographic service area in which it is authorized to operate by the federal communications commission if it is the only provider of basic telecommunications service within such geographic service area or such portion of a geographic service area. For purposes of this section, "basic telecommunications service" means voice grade, local exchange telecommunications service.

(2) Actions or transactions of radio communications service companies that are not regulated pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall not be deemed actions or transactions otherwise permitted, prohibited, or regulated by the commission for purposes of RCW 19.86.170.

(3) Radio communications service companies shall file with the commission copies of all agreements with any of their affiliated interests as defined in RCW 80.16.010, showing the rates, tolls, rentals, contracts, and charges of such affiliated interest for services rendered and equipment and facilities supplied to the radio communications service company, except that such agreements need not be filed where the services rendered and equipment and facilities supplied are provided by the affiliated interest under a tariff or price list filed with the commission. [1985 c 167 s 2.]

**Chapter 80.70 RCW**  
**CARBON DIOXIDE MITIGATION**

**Sections**

- 80.70.010 Definitions.
- 80.70.020 Applicability of chapter—Carbon dioxide mitigation plan—  
Mitigation by a third party.
- 80.70.030 Permanent carbon credits.
- 80.70.040 Direct investment mitigation projects—Enforcement—  
Federal requirements may replace this section.
- 80.70.050 Independent qualified organizations with experience in  
mitigation activities—Council oversight—Reports.
- 80.70.060 Costs to be assessed against applicants and holders of  
site certification agreements.
- 80.70.070 Rules.
- 80.70.080 Certain applicants for a natural gas-fired generation  
plant exempt from chapter.

**RCW 80.70.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Applicant" has the meaning provided in RCW 80.50.020 and includes an applicant for a permit for a fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facility subject to RCW 70A.15.2210 and 80.70.020(1) (b) or (d).

(2) "Authority" means any air pollution control agency whose jurisdictional boundaries are coextensive with the boundaries of one or more counties.

(3) "Carbon credit" means a verified reduction in carbon dioxide or carbon dioxide equivalents that is registered with a state, national, or international trading authority or exchange that has been recognized by the council.

(4) "Carbon dioxide equivalents" means a metric measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases based upon their global warming potential.

(5) "Cogeneration credit" means the carbon dioxide emissions that the council, department, or authority, as appropriate, estimates would be produced on an annual basis by a stand-alone industrial and commercial facility equivalent in operating characteristics and output to the industrial or commercial heating or cooling process component of the cogeneration plant.

(6) "Cogeneration plant" means a fossil-fueled thermal power plant in which the heat or steam is also used for industrial or commercial heating or cooling purposes and that meets federal energy regulatory commission standards for qualifying facilities under the public utility regulatory policies act of 1978.

(7) "Commercial operation" means the date that the first electricity produced by a facility is delivered for commercial sale to the power grid.

(8) "Council" means the energy facility site evaluation council created by RCW 80.50.030.

(9) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(10) "Fossil fuel" means natural gas, petroleum, coal, or any form of solid, liquid, or gaseous fuel derived from such material to produce heat for the generation of electricity.

(11) "Mitigation plan" means a proposal that includes the process or means to achieve carbon dioxide mitigation through use of mitigation projects or carbon credits.

(12) "Mitigation project" means one or more of the following:

(a) Projects or actions that are implemented by the certificate holder or order of approval holder, directly or through its agent, or by an independent qualified organization to mitigate the emission of carbon dioxide produced by the fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facility. This term includes but is not limited to the use of, energy efficiency measures, clean and efficient transportation measures, qualified alternative energy resources, demand-side management of electricity consumption, and carbon sequestration programs;

(b) Direct application of combined heat and power (cogeneration);

(c) Verified carbon credits traded on a recognized trading authority or exchange; or

(d) Enforceable and permanent reductions in carbon dioxide or carbon dioxide equivalents through process change, equipment shutdown, or other activities under the control of the applicant and approved as part of a carbon dioxide mitigation plan.

(13) "Order of approval" means an order issued under RCW 70A.15.2210 with respect to a fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facility subject to RCW 80.70.020(1) (b) or (d).

(14) "Permanent" means that emission reductions used to offset emission increases are assured for the life of the corresponding increase, whether unlimited or limited in duration.

(15) "Qualified alternative energy resource" has the same meaning as in RCW 19.29A.090.

(16) "Station generating capability" means the maximum load a generator can sustain over a given period of time without exceeding design limits, and measured using maximum continuous electric generation capacity, less net auxiliary load, at average ambient temperature and barometric pressure.

(17) "Total carbon dioxide emissions" means:

(a) For a fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facility described under RCW 80.70.020(1) (a) and (b), the amount of carbon dioxide emitted over a thirty-year period based on the manufacturer's or designer's guaranteed total net station generating capability, new equipment heat rate, an assumed sixty percent capacity factor for facilities under the council's jurisdiction or sixty percent of the operational limitations on facilities subject to an order of approval, and taking into account any enforceable limitations on operational hours or fuel types and use; and

(b) For a fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facility described under RCW 80.70.020(1) (c) and (d), the amount of carbon dioxide emitted over a thirty-year period based on the proposed increase in the amount of electrical output of the facility that exceeds the station generation capability of the facility prior to the applicant applying for certification or an order of approval pursuant to RCW 80.70.020(1) (c) and (d), new equipment heat rate, an assumed sixty percent capacity factor for facilities under the council's jurisdiction or sixty percent of the operational limitations on facilities subject to an order of approval, and taking into account any enforceable limitations on operational hours or fuel types and use. [2021 c 65 s 98; 2004 c 224 s 1.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**RCW 80.70.020 Applicability of chapter—Carbon dioxide mitigation plan—Mitigation by a third party.** (1) The provisions of this chapter apply to:

(a) New fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities with station-generating capability of three hundred fifty thousand kilowatts or more and fossil-fueled floating thermal electric generation facilities of one hundred thousand kilowatts or more under \*RCW 80.50.020(14)(a), for which an application for site certification is made to the council after July 1, 2004;

(b) New fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities with station-generating capability of more than twenty-five thousand kilowatts, but less than three hundred fifty thousand kilowatts, except for fossil-fueled floating thermal electric generation facilities under the council's jurisdiction, for which an application for an order of approval has been submitted after July 1, 2004;

(c) Fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities with station-generating capability of three hundred fifty thousand kilowatts or more that have an existing site certification agreement and, after July 1, 2004, apply to the council to increase the output of carbon dioxide emissions by fifteen percent or more through permanent changes in facility operations or modification or equipment; and

(d) Fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities with station-generating capability of more than twenty-five thousand kilowatts, but less than three hundred fifty thousand kilowatts, except for fossil-fueled floating thermal electric generation facilities under the council's jurisdiction, that have an existing order of approval and, after July 1, 2004, apply to the department or authority, as appropriate, to permanently modify the facility so as to increase its station-generating capability by at least twenty-five thousand kilowatts or to increase the output of carbon dioxide emissions by fifteen percent or more, whichever measure is greater.

(2)(a) A proposed site certification agreement submitted to the governor under RCW 80.50.100 and a final site certification agreement issued under RCW 80.50.100 shall include an approved carbon dioxide mitigation plan.

(b) For fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities not under jurisdiction of the council, the order of approval shall require an approved carbon dioxide mitigation plan.

(c) Site certification agreement holders or order of approval holders may request, at any time, a change in conditions of an approved carbon dioxide mitigation plan if the council, department, or authority, as appropriate, finds that the change meets all requirements and conditions for approval of such plans.

(3) An applicant for a fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facility shall include one or a combination of the following carbon dioxide mitigation options as part of its mitigation plan:

(a) Payment to a third party to provide mitigation;

(b) Direct purchase of permanent carbon credits; or

(c) Investment in applicant-controlled carbon dioxide mitigation projects, including combined heat and power (cogeneration).



(4) Fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities that receive site certification approval or an order of approval shall provide mitigation for twenty percent of the total carbon dioxide emissions produced by the facility.

(5) If the certificate holder or order of approval holder chooses to pay a third party to provide the mitigation, the mitigation rate shall be one dollar and sixty cents per metric ton of carbon dioxide to be mitigated. For a cogeneration plant, the monetary amount is based on the difference between twenty percent of the total carbon dioxide emissions and the cogeneration credit.

(a) Through rule making, the council may adjust the rate per ton biennially as long as any increase or decrease does not exceed fifty percent of the current rate. The department or authority shall use the adjusted rate established by the council pursuant to this subsection for fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(b) In adjusting the mitigation rate the council shall consider, but is not limited to, the current market price of a ton of carbon dioxide. The council's adjusted mitigation rate shall be consistent with \*\*RCW 80.50.010(3).

(6) The applicant may choose to make to the third party a lump sum payment or partial payment over a period of five years.

(a) Under the lump sum payment option, the payment amount is determined by multiplying the total carbon dioxide emissions by the twenty percent mitigation requirement under subsection (4) of this section and by the per ton mitigation rate established under subsection (5) of this section.

(b) No later than one hundred twenty days after the start of commercial operation, the certificate holder or order of approval holder shall make a one-time payment to the independent qualified organization for the amount determined under subsection (5) of this section.

(c) As an alternative to a one-time payment, the certificate holder or order of approval holder may make a partial payment of twenty percent of the amount determined under subsection (5) of this section no later than one hundred twenty days after commercial operation and a payment in the same amount or as adjusted according to subsection (5)(a) of this section, on the anniversary date of the initial payment in each of the following four years. With the initial payment, the certificate holder or order of approval holder shall provide a letter of credit or other comparable security acceptable to the council or the department for the remaining eighty percent mitigation payment amount including possible changes to the rate per metric ton from rule making under subsection (5)(a) of this section. [2004 c 224 s 2.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 80.50.020 was amended by 2007 c 325 s 1, changing subsection (14)(a) to subsection (15)(a). RCW 80.50.020 was subsequently amended by 2010 c 152 s 1 and alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k), changing subsection (15)(a) to subsection (12)(b). RCW 80.50.020 was subsequently amended by 2022 c 183 s 2 and alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k), changing subsection (12)(b) to subsection (14)(b).

\*\* (2) RCW 80.50.010 was amended by 2022 c 183 s 1, changing subsection (3) to subsection (4).

**RCW 80.70.030 Permanent carbon credits.** (1) Carbon dioxide mitigation plans relying on purchase of permanent carbon credits must meet the following criteria:

(a) Credits must derive from real, verified, permanent, and enforceable carbon dioxide or carbon dioxide equivalents emission mitigation not otherwise required by statute, regulation, or other legal requirements;

(b) The credits must be acquired after July 1, 2004; and

(c) The credits may not have been used for other carbon dioxide mitigation projects.

(2) Permanent carbon credits purchased for project mitigation shall not be resold unless approved by the council, department, or authority. [2004 c 224 s 3.]

**RCW 80.70.040 Direct investment mitigation projects—Enforcement—Federal requirements may replace this section.** (1) The carbon dioxide mitigation option that provides for direct investment shall be implemented through mitigation projects conducted directly by, or under the control of, the certificate holder or order of approval holder.

(2) Mitigation projects must be approved by the council, department, or authority, as appropriate, and made a condition of the proposed and final site certification agreement or order of approval. Direct investment mitigation projects shall be approved if the mitigation projects provide a reasonable certainty that the performance requirements of the mitigation projects will be achieved and the mitigation projects were implemented after July 1, 2004. No certificate holder or order of approval holder shall be required to make direct investments that would exceed the cost of making a lump sum payment to a third party, had the certificate holder or order of approval holder chosen that option under RCW 80.70.020.

(3) Mitigation projects must be fully in place within a reasonable time after the start of commercial operation. Failure to implement an approved mitigation plan is subject to enforcement under chapter 80.50 or 70A.15 RCW.

(4) The certificate holder or order of approval holder may not use more than twenty percent of the total funds for the selection, monitoring, and evaluation of mitigation projects and the management and enforcement of contracts.

(5) (a) For facilities under the jurisdiction of the council, the implementation of a carbon dioxide mitigation project, other than purchase of a carbon credit shall be monitored by an independent entity for conformance with the performance requirements of the carbon dioxide mitigation plan. The independent entity shall make available the mitigation project monitoring results to the council.

(b) For facilities under the jurisdiction of the department or authority pursuant to RCW 80.70.020(1) (b) or (c), the implementation of a carbon dioxide mitigation project, other than a purchase of carbon dioxide equivalent emission reduction credits, shall be monitored by the department or authority issuing the order of approval.

(6) Upon promulgation of federal requirements for carbon dioxide mitigation for fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities, those requirements may be deemed by the council, department, or

authority to be equivalent and a replacement for the requirements of this section. [2021 c 65 s 99; 2004 c 224 s 4.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**RCW 80.70.050 Independent qualified organizations with experience in mitigation activities—Council oversight—Reports.** (1)

The council shall maintain a list of independent qualified organizations with proven experience in emissions mitigation activities and a demonstrated ability to carry out their activities in an efficient, reliable, and cost-effective manner.

(2) An independent qualified organization shall not use more than twenty percent of the total funds for selection, monitoring, and evaluation of mitigation projects and the management and enforcement of contracts. None of these funds shall be used to lobby federal, state, and local agencies, their elected officials, officers, or employees.

(3) Before signing contracts to purchase offsets with funds from certificate holders or order of approval holders, an independent qualified organization must demonstrate to the council that the mitigation projects it proposes to use provides a reasonable certainty that the performance requirements of the carbon dioxide mitigation projects will be achieved.

(4) The independent qualified organization shall permit the council to appoint up to three persons to inspect plans, operation, and compliance activities of the organization and to audit financial records and performance measures for carbon dioxide mitigation projects using carbon dioxide mitigation money paid by certificate holders or order of approval holders under this chapter.

(5) An independent qualified organization must file biennial reports with the council, the department, or authority on the performance of carbon dioxide mitigation projects, including the amount of carbon dioxide reductions achieved and a statement of cost for the mitigation period. [2004 c 224 s 5.]

**RCW 80.70.060 Costs to be assessed against applicants and holders of site certification agreements.** Reasonable and necessary costs incurred by the council in implementing and administering this chapter shall be assessed against applicants and holders of site certification agreements that are subject to the requirements of this chapter. [2004 c 224 s 6.]

**RCW 80.70.070 Rules.** The council, department, and authority shall adopt rules to carry out this chapter. [2004 c 224 s 7.]

**RCW 80.70.080 Certain applicants for a natural gas-fired generation plant exempt from chapter. (Contingent expiration date.)**

(1) An applicant for a natural gas-fired generation plant to be constructed in a county with a coal-fired electric generation facility subject to RCW 80.80.040(3)(c) is exempt from this chapter if the application is filed before December 31, 2025.

(2) For the purposes of this section, an applicant means the owner of a coal-fired electric generation facility subject to RCW 80.80.040(3)(c).

(3) This section expires December 31, 2025, or when the station-generating capability of all natural gas-fired generation plants approved under this section equals the station-generating capability from a coal-fired electric generation facility subject to RCW 80.80.040(3)(c). [2011 c 180 s 306.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**Chapter 80.80 RCW**  
**GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS—BASELOAD ELECTRIC GENERATION PERFORMANCE**  
**STANDARD**

**Sections**

- 80.80.005 Findings—Intent.
- 80.80.010 Definitions.
- 80.80.030 Achieving greenhouse gases emissions reduction goals—  
Submission of policy recommendations to legislature by  
governor.
- 80.80.040 Greenhouse gas emissions performance standards—Rules—  
Sequestration.
- 80.80.050 Public comment—Commercially available turbines—Rate of  
greenhouse gas emissions—Reports—Rules.
- 80.80.060 Electrical companies—Baseload electric generation—Long-  
term financial commitments—Rules.
- 80.80.070 Consumer-owned utilities—Baseload electric generation—  
Long-term financial commitments.
- 80.80.080 Greenhouse gas emissions performance standards—Review—  
Report.
- 80.80.100 Memorandum of agreement with owners of a coal-fired  
baseload facility—Required provisions.
- 80.80.110 Limitation on adopting or imposing a greenhouse gas  
emission performance standard on certain facilities.
- 80.80.120 Memorandum of agreement—Authorized provisions.

**RCW 80.80.005 Findings—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Washington is especially vulnerable to climate change because of the state's dependence on snow pack for summer streamflows and because the expected rise in sea levels threatens our coastal communities. Extreme weather, a warming Pacific Northwest, reduced snow pack, and sea level rise are four major ways that climate change is disrupting Washington's economy, environment, and communities;

(b) Washington's greenhouse gases emissions are continuing to increase, despite international scientific consensus that worldwide emissions must be reduced significantly below current levels to avert catastrophic climate change;

(c) Washington state greenhouse gases are substantially caused by the transportation sector of the economy;

(d) Washington has been a leader in actions to slow the increase of greenhouse gases emissions, such as being the first state in the nation to adopt a carbon dioxide mitigation program for new thermal electric plants, mandating integrated resource planning for electric utilities to include life-cycle costs of carbon dioxide emissions, adopting clean car standards and stronger appliance energy efficiency standards, increasing production and use of renewable liquid fuels, and increasing renewable energy sources by electric utilities;

(e) A greenhouse gases emissions performance standard will work in unison with the state's carbon dioxide mitigation policy, chapter 80.70 RCW and its related rules, for fossil-fueled thermal electric generation facilities located in the state;

(f) While these actions are significant, there is a need to assess the trend of greenhouse gases emissions statewide over the next several decades, and to take sufficient actions so that Washington

meets its responsibility to contribute to the global actions needed to reduce the impacts and the pace of global warming;

(g) Actions to reduce greenhouse gases emissions will spur technology development and increase efficiency, thus resulting in benefits to Washington's economy and businesses; and

(h) The state of Washington has an obligation to provide clear guidance for the procurement of baseload electric generation to alleviate regulatory uncertainty while addressing risks that can affect the ability of electric utilities to make necessary and timely investments to ensure an adequate, reliable, and cost-effective supply of electricity.

(2) The legislature finds that companies that generate greenhouse gases emissions or manufacture products that generate such emissions are purchasing carbon credits from landowners and from other companies that provide carbon credits. Companies that are purchasing carbon credits would benefit from a program to trade and to bank carbon credits. Washington forests are one of the most effective resources that can absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Forests, and other planted lands and waters, provide carbon storage and mitigate greenhouse gases emissions. Washington contains the most productive forests in the world and both public and private landowners could benefit from a carbon storage trading and banking program.

(3) The legislature intends by this chapter to establish statutory goals for the statewide reduction in greenhouse gases emissions and to adopt the recommendations provided by the Washington climate change challenge stakeholder group, which is charged with designing and recommending a comprehensive set of policies to the legislature and the governor on how to achieve the goals. The legislature further intends by this chapter to authorize immediate actions in the electric power generation sector for the reduction of greenhouse gases emissions.

(4) The legislature finds that:

(a) To the extent energy efficiency and renewable resources are unable to satisfy increasing energy and capacity needs, the state will rely on clean and efficient fossil fuel-fired generation and will encourage the development of cost-effective, highly efficient, and environmentally sound supply resources to provide reliability and consistency with the state's energy priorities;

(b) It is vital to ensure all electric utilities internalize the significant and underrecognized cost of emissions and to reduce Washington consumers' exposure to costs associated with future regulation of these emissions, which is consistent with the objectives of integrated resource planning by electric utilities under chapter 19.280 RCW; and

(c) The state of California recently enacted a law establishing a greenhouse gases emissions performance standard for electric utility procurement of baseload electric generation that is based on the emissions of a combined-cycle thermal electric generation facility fueled by natural gas.

(5) The legislature finds that the climate change challenge stakeholder group provides a process for identifying the policies necessary to achieve the economic and emissions reduction goals in \*RCW 80.80.020 in a manner that maximizes economic opportunities and job creation in Washington. [2007 c 307 s 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 80.80.020 was repealed by 2008 c 14 s 13.

**RCW 80.80.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Attorney general" means the Washington state office of the attorney general.

(2) "Auditor" means: (a) The Washington state auditor's office or its designee for consumer-owned utilities under its jurisdiction; or (b) an independent auditor selected by a consumer-owned utility that is not under the jurisdiction of the state auditor.

(3) "Average available greenhouse gas emissions output" means the level of greenhouse gas emissions as surveyed and determined by the energy policy division of the department of commerce under RCW 80.80.050.

(4) "Baseload electric generation" means electric generation from a power plant that is designed and intended to provide electricity at an annualized plant capacity factor of at least sixty percent.

(5) "Coal transition power" means the output of a coal-fired electric generation facility that is subject to an obligation to meet the standards contained in RCW 80.80.040(3)(c).

(6) "Cogeneration facility" means a power plant in which the heat or steam is also used for industrial or commercial heating or cooling purposes and that meets federal energy regulatory commission standards for qualifying facilities under the public utility regulatory policies act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. Sec. 824a-3), as amended.

(7) "Combined-cycle natural gas thermal electric generation facility" means a power plant that employs a combination of one or more gas turbines and steam turbines in which electricity is produced in the steam turbine from otherwise lost waste heat exiting from one or more of the gas turbines.

(8) "Commission" means the Washington utilities and transportation commission.

(9) "Consumer-owned utility" means a municipal utility formed under Title 35 RCW, a public utility district formed under Title 54 RCW, an irrigation district formed under chapter 87.03 RCW, a cooperative formed under chapter 23.86 RCW, a mutual corporation or association formed under chapter 24.06 RCW, or port district within which an industrial district has been established as authorized by Title 53 RCW, that is engaged in the business of distributing electricity to more than one retail electric customer in the state.

(10) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(11) "Distributed generation" means electric generation connected to the distribution level of the transmission and distribution grid, which is usually located at or near the intended place of use.

(12) "Electric utility" means an electrical company or a consumer-owned utility.

(13) "Electrical company" means a company owned by investors that meets the definition of RCW 80.04.010.

(14) "Governing board" means the board of directors or legislative authority of a consumer-owned utility.

(15) "Greenhouse gas" includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

(16) "Long-term financial commitment" means:

(a) Either a new ownership interest in baseload electric generation or an upgrade to a baseload electric generation facility; or

(b) A new or renewed contract for baseload electric generation with a term of five or more years for the provision of retail power or wholesale power to end-use customers in this state.

(17) "Memorandum of agreement" or "memorandum" means a binding and enforceable contract entered into pursuant to RCW 80.80.100 between the governor on behalf of the state and an owner of a baseload electric generation facility in the state that produces coal transition power.

(18) "Plant capacity factor" means the ratio of the electricity produced during a given time period, measured in kilowatt-hours, to the electricity the unit could have produced if it had been operated at its rated capacity during that period, expressed in kilowatt-hours.

(19) "Power plant" means a facility for the generation of electricity that is permitted as a single plant by a jurisdiction inside or outside the state.

(20) "Upgrade" means any modification made for the primary purpose of increasing the electric generation capacity of a baseload electric generation facility. "Upgrade" does not include routine or necessary maintenance, installation of emission control equipment, installation, replacement, or modification of equipment that improves the heat rate of the facility, or installation, replacement, or modification of equipment for the primary purpose of maintaining reliable generation output capability that does not increase the heat input or fuel usage as specified in existing generation air quality permits as of July 22, 2007, but may result in incidental increases in generation capacity. [2011 c 180 s 102. Prior: 2009 c 565 s 54; 2009 c 448 s 1; 2007 c 307 s 2.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** "(1) The legislature finds that generating electricity from the combustion of coal produces pollutants that are harmful to human health and safety and the environment. While the emission of many of these pollutants continues to be addressed through application of federal and state air quality laws, the emission of greenhouse gases resulting from the combustion of coal has not been addressed.

(2) The legislature finds that coal-fired electricity generation is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the state, and is the largest source of such emissions from the generation of electricity in the state.

(3) The legislature finds coal-fired electric generation may provide baseload power that is necessary in the near-term for the stability and reliability of the electrical transmission grid and that contributes to the availability of affordable power in the state. The legislature further finds that efforts to transition power to other fuels requires a reasonable period of time to ensure grid stability and to maintain affordable electricity resources.

(4) The legislature finds that coal-fired baseload electric generation facilities are a significant contributor to family-wage jobs and economic health in parts of the state and that transition of these facilities must address the economic future and the preservation of jobs in affected communities.

(5) Therefore, it is the purpose of this act to provide for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from large coal-fired baseload electric power generation facilities, to effect an orderly transition



to cleaner fuels in a manner that ensures reliability of the state's electrical grid, to ensure appropriate cleanup and site restoration upon decommissioning of any of these facilities in the state, and to provide assistance to host communities planning for new economic development and mitigating the economic impacts of the closure of these facilities." [2011 c 180 s 101.]

**RCW 80.80.030 Achieving greenhouse gases emissions reduction goals—Submission of policy recommendations to legislature by governor.**

(1) The governor shall develop policy recommendations to the legislature on how the state can achieve the greenhouse gases emissions reduction goals established under \*RCW 80.80.020. These recommendations must include, but are not limited to:

(a) How market mechanisms, such as a load-based cap and trade system, would assist in achieving the greenhouse gases emissions reduction goals;

(b) How geologic injection, forest sequestration, and other carbon sequestration options could be used to achieve state greenhouse gases emissions reduction goals;

(c) A process for replacing the highest emitting thermal electric plants that have exceeded their expected useful life with newer technologies that have lower greenhouse gases emissions levels;

(d) Methods to utilize indigenous resources, such as landfill gas, geothermal resources, and other assets that might reduce greenhouse gases emissions consistent with the purposes of this chapter;

(e) How regulatory and tax policies for electric utilities could be improved to help achieve these goals in a manner that is equitable for electric utilities and consumers.

(2) Recommendations under subsection (1) of this section shall be submitted to the appropriate committees of the house of representatives and the senate for consideration in the 2008 legislative session. [2007 c 307 s 4.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 80.80.020 was repealed by 2008 c 14 s 13.

**RCW 80.80.040 Greenhouse gas emissions performance standards—Rules—Sequestration.** (1) Beginning July 1, 2008, the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard for all baseload electric generation for which electric utilities enter into long-term financial commitments on or after such date is the lower of:

(a) One thousand one hundred pounds of greenhouse gases per megawatt-hour; or

(b) The average available greenhouse gas emissions output as determined under RCW 80.80.050.

(2) This chapter does not apply to long-term financial commitments with the Bonneville power administration.

(3)(a) Except as provided in (c) of this subsection, all baseload electric generation facilities in operation as of June 30, 2008, are deemed to be in compliance with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under this section until the facilities are the subject of long-term financial commitments.

(b) All baseload electric generation that commences operation after June 30, 2008, and is located in Washington, must comply with

the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established in subsection (1) of this section.

(c) (i) A coal-fired baseload electric generation facility in Washington that emitted more than one million tons of greenhouse gases in any calendar year prior to 2008 must comply with the lower of the following greenhouse gas emissions performance standard such that one generating boiler is in compliance by December 31, 2020, and any other generating boiler is in compliance by December 31, 2025:

(A) One thousand one hundred pounds of greenhouse gases per megawatt-hour; or

(B) The average available greenhouse gas emissions output as determined under RCW 80.80.050.

(ii) This subsection (3)(c) does not apply to a coal-fired baseload electric generating [generation] facility in the event the department determines as a requirement of state or federal law or regulation that selective catalytic reduction technology must be installed on any of its boilers.

(4) All electric generation facilities or power plants powered exclusively by renewable resources, as defined in RCW 19.280.020, are deemed to be in compliance with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under this section.

(5) All cogeneration facilities in the state that are fueled by natural gas or waste gas or a combination of the two fuels, and that are in operation as of June 30, 2008, are deemed to be in compliance with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under this section until the facilities are the subject of a new ownership interest or are upgraded.

(6) In determining the rate of emissions of greenhouse gases for baseload electric generation, the total emissions associated with producing electricity shall be included.

(7) In no case shall a long-term financial commitment be determined to be in compliance with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard if the commitment includes more than twelve percent of electricity from unspecified sources.

(8) For a long-term financial commitment with multiple power plants, each specified power plant must be treated individually for the purpose of determining the annualized plant capacity factor and net emissions, and each power plant must comply with subsection (1) of this section, except as provided in subsections (3) through (5) of this section.

(9) The department shall establish an output-based methodology to ensure that the calculation of emissions of greenhouse gases for a cogeneration facility recognizes the total usable energy output of the process, and includes all greenhouse gases emitted by the facility in the production of both electrical and thermal energy. In developing and implementing the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard, the department shall consider and act in a manner consistent with any rules adopted pursuant to the public utilities regulatory policy act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. Sec. 824a-3), as amended.

(10) The following greenhouse gas emissions produced by baseload electric generation owned or contracted through a long-term financial commitment shall not be counted as emissions of the power plant in determining compliance with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard:

(a) Those emissions that are injected permanently in geological formations;

(b) Those emissions that are permanently sequestered by other means approved by the department; and

(c) Those emissions sequestered or mitigated as approved under subsection (16) of this section.

(11) In adopting and implementing the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard, the department of commerce energy policy division, in consultation with the commission, the department, the Bonneville power administration, the western electricity coordinating council, the energy facility site evaluation council, electric utilities, public interest representatives, and consumer representatives, shall consider the effects of the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard on system reliability and overall costs to electricity customers.

(12) In developing and implementing the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard, the department shall, with assistance of the commission, the department of commerce energy policy division, and electric utilities, and to the extent practicable, address long-term purchases of electricity from unspecified sources in a manner consistent with this chapter.

(13) The directors of the energy facility site evaluation council and the department shall each adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW in coordination with each other to implement and enforce the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard. The rules necessary to implement this section shall be adopted by June 30, 2008.

(14) In adopting the rules for implementing this section, the energy facility site evaluation council and the department shall include criteria to be applied in evaluating the carbon sequestration plan, for baseload electric generation that will rely on subsection (10) of this section to demonstrate compliance, but that will commence sequestration after the date that electricity is first produced. The rules shall include but not be limited to:

(a) Provisions for financial assurances, as a condition of plant operation, sufficient to ensure successful implementation of the carbon sequestration plan, including construction and operation of necessary equipment, and any other significant costs;

(b) Provisions for geological or other approved sequestration commencing within five years of plant operation, including full and sufficient technical documentation to support the planned sequestration;

(c) Provisions for monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of the sequestration plan;

(d) Penalties for failure to achieve implementation of the plan on schedule;

(e) Provisions for an owner to purchase emissions reductions in the event of the failure of a sequestration plan under subsection (16) of this section; and

(f) Provisions for public notice and comment on the carbon sequestration plan.

(15)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, as part of its role enforcing the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard, the department shall determine whether sequestration or a plan for sequestration will provide safe, reliable, and permanent protection against the greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere from the power plant and all ancillary facilities.

(b) For facilities under its jurisdiction, the energy facility site evaluation council shall contract for review of sequestration or the carbon sequestration plan with the department consistent with the

conditions under (a) of this subsection, consider the adequacy of sequestration or the plan in its adjudicative proceedings conducted under \*RCW 80.50.090(3), and incorporate specific findings regarding adequacy in its recommendation to the governor under RCW 80.50.100.

(16) A project under consideration by the energy facility site evaluation council by July 22, 2007, is required to include all of the requirements of subsection (14) of this section in its carbon sequestration plan submitted as part of the energy facility site evaluation council process. A project under consideration by the energy facility site evaluation council by July 22, 2007, that receives final site certification agreement approval under chapter 80.50 RCW shall make a good faith effort to implement the sequestration plan. If the project owner determines that implementation is not feasible, the project owner shall submit documentation of that determination to the energy facility site evaluation council. The documentation shall demonstrate the steps taken to implement the sequestration plan and evidence of the technological and economic barriers to successful implementation. The project owner shall then provide to the energy facility site evaluation council notification that they shall implement the plan that requires the project owner to meet the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard by purchasing verifiable greenhouse gas emissions reductions from an electric generation facility located within the western interconnection, where the reduction would not have occurred otherwise or absent this contractual agreement, such that the sum of the emissions reductions purchased and the facility's emissions meets the standard for the life of the facility. [2011 c 180 s 103; 2009 c 448 s 2; 2007 c 307 s 5.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 80.50.090 was amended by 2022 c 183 s 9, changing subsection (3) to subsection (4).

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.80.050 Public comment—Commercially available turbines—Rate of greenhouse gas emissions—Reports—Rules.** The energy policy division of the department of commerce shall provide an opportunity for interested parties to comment on the development of a survey of new combined-cycle natural gas thermal electric generation turbines commercially available and offered for sale by manufacturers and purchased in the United States to determine the average rate of emissions of greenhouse gases for these turbines. The department of commerce shall report the results of its survey to the legislature every five years, beginning June 30, 2013. The department of commerce shall adopt by rule the average available greenhouse gas emissions output every five years beginning five years after July 22, 2007. [2023 c 470 s 2128; 2007 c 307 s 7.]

**Explanatory statement—2023 c 470:** See note following RCW 10.99.030.

**RCW 80.80.060 Electrical companies—Baseload electric generation—Long-term financial commitments—Rules.** (1) No electrical company may enter into a long-term financial commitment unless the baseload electric generation supplied under such a long-term financial

commitment complies with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under RCW 80.80.040.

(2) In order to enforce the requirements of this chapter, the commission shall review in a general rate case or as provided in subsection (5) of this section any long-term financial commitment entered into by an electrical company after June 30, 2008, to determine whether the baseload electric generation to be supplied under that long-term financial commitment complies with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under RCW 80.80.040.

(3) In determining whether a long-term financial commitment is for baseload electric generation, the commission shall consider the design of the power plant and its intended use, based upon the electricity purchase contract, if any, permits necessary for the operation of the power plant, and any other matter the commission determines is relevant under the circumstances.

(4) Upon application by an electric utility, the commission may provide a case-by-case exemption from the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard to address: (a) Unanticipated electric system reliability needs; (b) extraordinary cost impacts on utility ratepayers; or (c) catastrophic events or threat of significant financial harm that may arise from unforeseen circumstances.

(5) Upon application by an electrical company, the commission shall determine whether the company's proposed decision to acquire electric generation or enter into a power purchase agreement for electricity complies with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under RCW 80.80.040. The commission shall not decide in a proceeding under this subsection (5) issues involving the actual costs to construct and operate the selected resource, cost recovery, or other issues reserved by the commission for decision in a general rate case or other proceeding for recovery of the resource or contract costs.

(6) An electrical company may account for and defer for later consideration by the commission costs incurred in connection with a long-term financial commitment, including operating and maintenance costs, depreciation, taxes, and cost of invested capital. The deferral begins with the date on which the power plant begins commercial operation or the effective date of the power purchase agreement and continues for a period not to exceed twenty-four months; provided that if during such period the company files a general rate case or other proceeding for the recovery of such costs, deferral ends on the effective date of the final decision by the commission in such proceeding. Creation of such a deferral account does not by itself determine the actual costs of the long-term financial commitment, whether recovery of any or all of these costs is appropriate, or other issues to be decided by the commission in a general rate case or other proceeding for recovery of these costs. For the purpose of this subsection (6) only, the term "long-term financial commitment" also includes an electric company's ownership or power purchase agreement with a term of five or more years associated with an eligible renewable resource as defined in RCW 19.285.030.

(7) The commission shall consult with the department to apply the procedures adopted by the department to verify the emissions of greenhouse gases from baseload electric generation under RCW 80.80.040. The department shall report to the commission whether baseload electric generation will comply with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard for the duration of the period the baseload electric generation is supplied to the electrical company.

(8) The commission shall adopt rules for the enforcement of this section with respect to electrical companies and adopt procedural rules for approving costs incurred by an electrical company under subsection (4) of this section.

(9) This section does not apply to a long-term financial commitment for the purchase of coal transition power with termination dates consistent with the applicable dates in RCW 80.80.040(3)(c).

(10) The commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement this section by December 31, 2008. [2011 c 180 s 104. Prior: 2009 c 448 s 3; 2009 c 147 s 1; 2007 c 307 s 8.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.80.070 Consumer-owned utilities—Baseload electric generation—Long-term financial commitments.** (1) No consumer-owned utility may enter into a long-term financial commitment unless the baseload electric generation supplied under such a long-term financial commitment complies with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under RCW 80.80.040.

(2) The governing board shall review and make a determination on any long-term financial commitment by the utility, pursuant to this chapter and after consultation with the department, to determine whether the baseload electric generation to be supplied under that long-term financial commitment complies with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under RCW 80.80.040. No consumer-owned utility may enter into a long-term financial commitment unless the baseload electric generation to be supplied under that long-term financial commitment complies with the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established under RCW 80.80.040.

(3) In confirming that a long-term financial commitment is for baseload electric generation, the governing board shall consider the design of the power plant and the intended use of the power plant based upon the electricity purchase contract, if any, permits necessary for the operation of the power plant, and any other matter the governing board determines is relevant under the circumstances.

(4) The governing board may provide a case-by-case exemption from the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard to address: (a) Unanticipated electric system reliability needs; or (b) catastrophic events or threat of significant financial harm that may arise from unforeseen circumstances.

(5) The governing board shall apply the procedures adopted by the department to verify the emissions of greenhouse gases from baseload electric generation under RCW 80.80.040, and may request assistance from the department in doing so.

(6) For consumer-owned utilities, the auditor is responsible for auditing compliance with this chapter and rules adopted under this chapter that apply to those utilities and the attorney general is responsible for enforcing that compliance.

(7) This section does not apply to long-term financial commitments for the purchase of coal transition power with termination dates consistent with the applicable dates in RCW 80.80.040(3)(c). [2011 c 180 s 105; 2007 c 307 s 9.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.80.080 Greenhouse gas emissions performance standards—Review—Report.** For the purposes of RCW 80.80.040 through 80.80.080 and 80.70.020, the department, in consultation with the department of commerce energy policy division, the energy facility site evaluation council, the commission, and the governing boards of consumer-owned utilities, shall review the greenhouse gas emissions performance standard established in this chapter to determine need, applicability, and effectiveness no less than every five years following July 22, 2007, or upon implementation of a federal or state law or rule regulating carbon dioxide emissions of electric utilities, and report to the legislature. [2023 c 470 s 2129; 2007 c 307 s 10.]

**Explanatory statement—2023 c 470:** See note following RCW 10.99.030.

**RCW 80.80.100 Memorandum of agreement with owners of a coal-fired baseload facility—Required provisions.** (1) By January 1, 2012, the governor on behalf of the state shall enter into a memorandum of agreement that takes effect on April 1, 2012, with the owners of a coal-fired baseload facility in Washington that emitted more than one million tons of greenhouse gases in any calendar year prior to 2008. The memorandum of agreement entered into by the governor may only contain provisions authorized in this section, except as provided under RCW 80.80.120.

(2) The memorandum of agreement must:

(a) Incorporate by reference RCW 80.80.040, 80.80.060, and 80.80.070 as of July 22, 2011;

(b) Incorporate binding commitments to install selective noncatalytic reduction pollution control technology in any coal-fired generating boilers by January 1, 2013, after discussing the proper use of ammonia in this technology.

(3) (a) The memorandum of agreement must include provisions by which the facility owner will provide financial assistance:

(i) To the affected community for economic development and energy efficiency and weatherization; and

(ii) For energy technologies with the potential to create considerable energy, economic development, and air quality, haze, or other environmental benefits.

(b) Except as described in (c) of this subsection, the financial assistance in (a) (i) of this subsection must be in the amount of thirty million dollars and the financial assistance in (a) (ii) of this subsection must be in the amount of twenty-five million dollars, with investments beginning January 1, 2012, and consisting of equal annual investments through December 31, 2023, or until the full amount has been provided. Only funds for energy efficiency and weatherization may be spent prior to December 31, 2015.

(c) If the tax exemptions provided under RCW 82.08.811 or 82.12.811 are repealed, any remaining financial assistance required by this section is no longer required.

(4) The memorandum of agreement must:

(a) Specify that the investments in subsection (3) of this section be held in independent accounts at an appropriate financial institution; and

(b) Identify individuals to approve expenditures from the accounts. Individuals must have relevant expertise and must include

members representing the Lewis county economic development council, local elected officials, employees at the facility, and the facility owner.

(5) The memorandum of agreement must include a provision that allows for the termination of the memorandum of agreement in the event the department determines as a requirement of state or federal law or regulation that selective catalytic reduction technology must be installed on any of its boilers.

(6) The memorandum of agreement must include enforcement provisions to ensure implementation of the agreement by the parties.

(7) If the memorandum of agreement is not signed by January 1, 2012, the governor must impose requirements consistent with the provisions in subsection (2)(b) of this section. [2011 c 180 s 106.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.80.110 Limitation on adopting or imposing a greenhouse gas emission performance standard on certain facilities.** No state agency or political subdivision of the state may adopt or impose a greenhouse gas emission performance standard, or other operating or financial requirement or limitation relating to greenhouse gas emissions, on a coal-fired electric generation facility located in Washington in operation on or before July 22, 2011, or upon an electric utility's long-term purchase of coal transition power, that is inconsistent with or in addition to the provisions of RCW 80.80.040 or the memorandum of agreement entered into under RCW 80.80.100. [2011 c 180 s 107.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.80.120 Memorandum of agreement—Authorized provisions.**

(1) A memorandum of agreement entered into pursuant to RCW 80.80.100 may include provisions to assist in the financing of emissions reductions that exceed those required by RCW 80.80.040(3)(c) by providing for the recognition of such reductions in applicable state policies and programs relating to greenhouse gas emissions, and by encouraging and advocating for the recognition of the reductions in all established and emerging emission reduction frameworks at the regional, national, or international level.

(2) The governor may recommend actions to the legislature to strengthen implementation of an agreement or a proposed agreement relating to recognition of investments in emissions reductions described in subsection (1) of this section. [2011 c 180 s 108.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.



**Chapter 80.82 RCW**  
**CLOSURE OF COAL-FIRED ELECTRIC GENERATION FACILITIES**

**Sections**

- 80.82.010 Closure and postclosure plans for certain facilities.  
80.82.020 Guarantee of funds to perform activities specified in a decommissioning plan—Letter of credit.

**RCW 80.82.010 Closure and postclosure plans for certain facilities.** (1) A facility subject to closure under either RCW 80.80.040(3)(c) or a memorandum of agreement under RCW 80.80.100, or both, must provide the department of ecology with a plan for the closure and postclosure of the facility at least twenty-four months prior to facility closure or twenty-four months prior to start of decommissioning work, whichever is earlier. This plan must be consistent with the rules established by the energy facility site evaluation council for site restoration and preservation applicable to facilities subject to a site certification agreement under chapter 80.50 RCW and include but not be limited to:

- (a) A detailed estimate of the cost to implement the plan based on the cost of hiring a third party to conduct all activities;
  - (b) Demonstrating financial assurance to fund the closure and postclosure of the facility and providing methods by which this assurance may be demonstrated;
  - (c) Methods for estimating closure costs, including full site reclamation under all applicable federal and state clean-up standards; and
  - (d) A decommissioning and site restoration plan that addresses restoring physical topography, cleanup of all hazardous substances on the site, potential future uses of the site following restoration, and coordination with local and community plans for economic development in the vicinity of the site.
- (2) All cost estimates in the plan must be in current dollars and may not include a net present value adjustment or offsets for salvage value of wastes or other property.
- (3) Adoption of the plan and significant revisions to the plan must be approved by the department of ecology. [2011 c 180 s 201.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**RCW 80.82.020 Guarantee of funds to perform activities specified in a decommissioning plan—Letter of credit.** (1) A facility subject to closure under either RCW 80.80.040(3)(c) or a memorandum of agreement under RCW 80.80.100, or both, must guarantee funds are available to perform all activities specified in the decommissioning plan developed under RCW 80.82.010. The amount must equal the cost estimates specified in the decommissioning plan and must be updated annually for inflation. All guarantees under this section must be assumed by any successor owner, parent company, or holding company.

(2) The guarantee required under subsection (1) of this section may be accomplished by letter of credit, surety bond, or other means acceptable to the department of ecology.

(3) The issuing institution of the letter of credit must be an entity that has the authority to issue letters of credit and whose

letter of credit operations are regulated by a federal or state agency. The surety company issuing a surety bond must, at a minimum, be an entity listed as an acceptable surety on federal bonds in circular 570, published by the United States department of the treasury.

(4) A qualifying facility that uses a letter of credit or a surety bond to satisfy the requirements of chapter 180, Laws of 2011 must also establish a standby trust fund as a means to hold any funds issued from the letter of credit or a surety bond. Under the terms of the letter of credit or a surety bond, all amounts paid pursuant to a draft from the department of ecology must be deposited by the issuing institution directly into the standby trust fund in accordance with instructions from the department of ecology. This standby trust fund must be approved by the department of ecology.

(5) The letter of credit or a surety bond must be irrevocable and issued for a period of at least one year. The letter of credit or a surety bond must provide that the expiration date will be automatically extended for a period of at least one year unless, at least one hundred twenty days before the current expiration date, the issuing institution notifies both the qualifying facility and the department of ecology of a decision not to extend the expiration date. Under the terms of the letter of credit, the one hundred twenty days will begin on the date when both the qualifying plant and the department of ecology have received the notice, as evidenced by certified mail return receipts or by overnight courier delivery receipts.

(6) If the qualifying facility does not establish an alternative method of guaranteeing decommissioning funds are available within ninety days after receipt by both the qualifying facility plant and the department of ecology of a notice from the issuing institution that it has decided not to extend the letter of credit beyond the current expiration date, the department of ecology must draw on the letter of credit or a surety bond. The department of ecology must approve any replacement or substitute guarantee method before the expiration of the ninety-day period.

(7) If a qualifying facility elects to use a letter of credit as the sole method for guaranteeing decommissioning funds are available, the face value of the letter of credit must meet or exceed the current inflation-adjusted cost estimate. If a qualifying facility elects to use a surety bond as the sole method for guaranteeing decommissioning funds are available, the penal sum of the surety bond must meet or exceed the current inflation-adjusted cost estimate.

(8) A qualifying facility must adjust the decommissioning costs and financial guarantees annually for inflation and may use an amendment to increase the face value of a letter of credit or a surety bond each year to account for this inflation. A qualifying facility is not required to obtain a new letter of credit or a surety bond to cover annual inflation adjustments. [2011 c 180 s 202.]

**Findings—Purpose—2011 c 180:** See note following RCW 80.80.010.

**Chapter 80.84 RCW**  
**TRANSITION OF ELIGIBLE COAL UNITS**

**Sections**

- 80.84.010 Definitions.  
80.84.020 Placement of regulatory liabilities into a retirement account—Authorization—Conditions.

**RCW 80.84.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Eligible coal plant" means a coal-fired electric generation facility that: (a) Is owned in whole or in part by more than one electrical company as of January 1, 2016; and (b) provides, as a portion of the load served by the coal-fired electric generation facility, electricity paid for in rates by customers in the state of Washington.

(2) "Eligible coal unit" means any generating unit of an eligible coal plant. [2019 c 288 s 16; 2016 c 220 s 1.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2019 c 288:** See RCW 19.405.010 and 19.405.901.

**RCW 80.84.020 Placement of regulatory liabilities into a retirement account—Authorization—Conditions.** (1) The commission may, after conducting an adjudicative proceeding under chapters 34.05 and 80.04 RCW, authorize an electrical company to place amounts from one or more regulatory liabilities into a retirement account established pursuant to RCW 80.04.350 to cover decommissioning and remediation costs of eligible coal units that commenced commercial operations before January 1, 1980.

(2) Regulatory liabilities placed in a retirement account pursuant to subsection (1) of this section must: (a) Not be used for any purpose other than the funding and recovery of prudently incurred decommissioning and remediation costs for such eligible coal units; (b) except as provided in RCW 80.04.350, not be reduced, altered, impaired, or limited from the date of commission approval of the inclusion of the regulatory liabilities in the retirement account until all prudently incurred decommissioning and remediation costs for such coal units are recovered or paid in full; and (c) provide that any remaining funds in the retirement account, after recovery by the electrical company of all prudently incurred decommissioning and remediation costs for such eligible coal units, be returned to customers. [2016 c 220 s 2.]

**Chapter 80.86 RCW**  
**WASHINGTON DECARBONIZATION ACT FOR LARGE COMBINATION UTILITIES**

**Sections**

80.86.010	Definitions.
80.86.020	Consolidated planning requirements for gas and electric services—Integrated system plan requirements.
80.86.030	Sale of wholesale electricity—Greenhouse gas attributes.
80.86.040	Certificate of necessity for certain construction, investment, or purchase costs—Application.
80.86.050	Emissions baseline and projected cumulative emissions—Emissions reduction period.
80.86.060	Multiyear rate plans.
80.86.070	Certain rebates to natural gas customers prohibited—Education regarding benefits of electrification.
80.86.080	Planned electrification in a consumer-owned utility service area—Provision of data.
80.86.090	Community workforce agreements/project labor agreements for certain projects.
80.86.100	Rule-making authority.
80.86.901	Short title.

**RCW 80.86.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Carbon dioxide equivalent" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 70A.65.010.

(2) "Combined heat and power" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.280.020.

(3) "Commission" means the utilities and transportation commission.

(4) "Conservation and efficiency resources" means any reduction in electric or natural gas consumption that results from increases in the efficiency of energy use, production, transmission, transportation, or distribution.

(5) "Cost-effective" means that a project or resource is, or is forecast to:

(a) Be reliable and available within the time it is needed; and

(b) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet or reduce the energy demand or supply an equivalent level of energy service to the intended customers at an estimated long-term incremental system cost no greater than that of the least-cost similarly reliable and available alternative project or resource, or any combination thereof, including the cost of compliance with chapter 70A.65 RCW, based on the forward allowance ceiling price of allowances approved by the department of ecology under RCW 70A.65.160.

(6) "Costs of greenhouse gas emissions" means the costs of greenhouse gas emissions established in RCW 80.28.395 and 80.28.405.

(7) "Delivery system" includes any power line, pipe, equipment, apparatus, mechanism, machinery, instrument, or ancillary facility used by a large combination utility to deliver electricity or gas for ultimate consumption by a customer of the large combination utility.

(8) "Demand flexibility" means the capacity of demand-side loads to change their consumption patterns hourly or on another timescale.

(9) "Electrical company" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 80.04.010.

(10)(a) "Electrification" means the installation of energy efficient electric end-use equipment.

(b) Electrification programs may include weatherization and conservation and efficiency measures.

(11) "Electrification readiness" means upgrades or changes required before the installation of energy efficient electric end-use equipment to prevent heat loss from homes including, but not limited to: Structural repairs, such as roof repairs, preweatherization, weatherization, and electrical panel and wiring upgrades.

(12) "Emissions baseline" means the actual cumulative greenhouse gas emissions of a large combination utility, calculated pursuant to chapter 70A.65 RCW, for the five-year period beginning January 1, 2015, and ending December 31, 2019.

(13) "Emissions reduction period" means one of five periods of five calendar years each, with the five periods beginning on January 1st of calendar years 2030, 2035, 2040, 2045, and 2050, respectively.

(14) "Emissions reduction target" means a targeted reduction of projected cumulative greenhouse gas emissions of a large combination utility approved by the commission for an emissions reduction period that is at least as stringent as the limits established in RCW 70A.45.020.

(15) "Gas company" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 80.04.010.

(16) "Geographically targeted electrification" means the geographically targeted transition of a portion of gas customers of the large combination utility with an intent to electrify loads of such customers and, in conjunction, to reduce capital and operational costs of gas operations of the large combination utility serving such customers.

(17) "Greenhouse gas" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 70A.45.010.

(18) "Highly impacted community" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.405.020.

(19) "Integrated system plan" means a plan that the commission may approve, reject, or approve with conditions pursuant to RCW 80.86.020.

(20) "Large combination utility" means a public service company that is both an electrical company and a gas company that serves more than 800,000 retail electric customers and 500,000 retail gas customers in the state of Washington as of June 30, 2024.

(21) "Low-income" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.405.020.

(22) "Lowest reasonable cost" means the lowest cost mix of demand-side and supply side resources and decarbonization measures determined through a detailed and consistent analysis of a wide range of commercially available resources and measures. At a minimum, this analysis must consider long-term costs and benefits, market-volatility risks, resource uncertainties, resource dispatchability, resource effect on system operation, the risks imposed on the large combination utility and its ratepayers, public policies regarding resource preference adopted by Washington state or the federal government, the cost of risks associated with environmental effects including potential spills and emissions of carbon dioxide, and the need for security of supply.

(23) "Multiyear rate plan" means a multiyear rate plan of a large combination utility filed with the commission pursuant to RCW 80.28.425.

(24) "Natural gas" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.405.020.

(25) "Nonemitting electric generation" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.405.020.

(26) "Nonpipeline alternative" means activities or investments that delay, reduce, or avoid the need to build, upgrade, or repair gas plant, such as pipelines and service lines.

(27) "Overburdened community" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 70A.65.010.

(28) "Overgeneration event" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.280.020.

(29) "Renewable resource" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.405.020.

(30) "Supply side resource" means, as applicable: (a) Any resource that can provide capacity, electricity, or ancillary services to the large combination utility's electric delivery system; or (b) any resource that can provide conventional or nonconventional gas supplies to the large combination utility's gas delivery system.

(31) "System cost" means actual direct costs or an estimate of all direct costs of a project or resource over its effective life including, if applicable: The costs of transmission and distribution to the customers; waste disposal costs; permitting, siting, mitigation, and end-of-cycle decommissioning and remediation costs; fuel costs, including projected increases; resource integration and balancing costs; and such quantifiable environmental costs and benefits and other energy and nonenergy benefits as are directly attributable to the project or resource, including flexibility, resilience, reliability, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and air quality.

(32) "Vulnerable populations" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 19.405.020. [2024 c 351 s 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2024 c 351:** "(1) The legislature finds that the state's gas and electrical companies face transformational change brought on by new technology, emerging opportunities for customers, and state clean energy laws. Chapter 19.405 RCW, the Washington clean energy transformation act, and chapter 70A.65 RCW, the Washington climate commitment act, require these companies to find innovative and creative solutions to equitably serve their customers, provide clean energy, reduce emissions, and keep rates fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.

(2) Gas companies that serve over 500,000 gas customers in Washington state, which are also electrical companies, or large combination utilities, play an important role in providing affordable and reliable heating and other energy services, and in leading the implementation of state climate policies. As the state transitions to cleaner sources of energy, large combination utilities are an important partner in helping their customers make smart energy choices, including actively supporting the replacement of fossil fuel-based space and water heating equipment and other fossil fuel-based equipment with high-efficiency nonemitting equipment. Programs to accelerate the adoption of efficient, nonemitting appliances have the potential to allow large combination utilities to optimize the use of

energy infrastructure, improve the management of energy loads, better manage the integration of variable renewable energy resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the buildings sector, mitigate the environmental impacts of utility operations and power purchases, and improve health outcomes for occupants. Legislative clarity is important for utilities to offer programs and services, including incentives, in the decarbonization of homes and buildings for their customers.

(3) In order to meet the statewide greenhouse gas limits in the energy sectors of the economy, more resources must be directed toward achieving decarbonization of residential and commercial heating loads and other loads that are served with fossil fuels, while continuing to protect all customers, but especially low-income customers, vulnerable populations, highly impacted communities, and overburdened communities. The legislature finds that regulatory innovation may be needed to remove barriers that large combination utilities may face to meet the state's public policy objectives and expectations. The enactment of chapter 188, Laws of 2021 (Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5295) began that regulatory transition from traditional cost-of-service regulation, with investor-owned gas and electrical companies using forward-looking multiyear rate plans and taking steps toward performance-based regulation. These steps are intended to provide certainty and stability to both customers and to investor-owned gas and electrical companies, aligning public policy objectives with investments, safety, and reliability.

(4) The legislature finds that as Washington transitions to 100 percent clean electricity and as the state implements the Washington climate commitment act, switching from fossil fuel-based heating equipment and other fossil fuel-based appliances to high-efficiency nonemitting equipment will reduce climate impacts and fuel price risks for customers in the long term. This new paradigm requires a thoughtful transition to decarbonize the energy system to ensure that all customers benefit from the transition, that customers are protected, are not subject to sudden price shocks, and continue to receive needed energy services, with an equitable allocation of benefits and burdens. This transition will require careful and integrated planning by and between utilities, the commission, and customers, as well as new regulatory tools.

(5) It is the intent of the legislature to require large combination utilities to decarbonize their systems by: (a) Prioritizing efficient and cost-effective measures to transition customers off of the direct use of fossil fuels at the lowest reasonable cost to customers; (b) investing in the energy supply, storage, delivery, and demand-side resources that will be needed to serve any increase in electrical demand affordably and reliably; (c) maintaining safety and reliability as the gas system undergoes transformational changes; (d) integrating zero-carbon and carbon-neutral fuels to serve high heat and industrial loads where electrification may not be technically feasible; (e) managing peak demand of the electric system; and (f) ensuring an equitable distribution of benefits to, and reduction of burdens for, vulnerable populations, highly impacted communities, and overburdened communities that have historically been underserved by utility energy efficiency programs, and may be disproportionately impacted by rising fuel and equipment costs or experience high energy burden.

(6) It is the intent of the legislature to support this transition by adopting requirements for large combination utilities to

conduct integrated system planning to develop specific actions supporting gas system decarbonization and electrification, and reduction in the gas rate base.

(7) It is the intent of the legislature to encourage a robust competitive wholesale market for generation, storage, and demand-side resources to serve the state's electrical companies, other electric utilities, and end-users that secure their own power supply." [2024 c 351 s 1.]

**Effective date—2024 c 351:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 28, 2024]." [2024 c 351 s 22.]

**RCW 80.86.020 Consolidated planning requirements for gas and electric services—Integrated system plan requirements.** (1) The legislature finds that large combination utilities are subject to a range of reporting and planning requirements as part of the clean energy transition. The legislature further finds that current natural gas integrated resource plans under development might not yield optimal results for timely and cost-effective decarbonization. To reduce regulatory barriers, achieve equitable and transparent outcomes, and integrate planning requirements, the commission may consolidate a large combination utility's planning requirements for both gas and electric operations, including consolidation into a single integrated system plan that is approved by the commission.

(2)(a) By July 1, 2025, the commission shall complete a rule-making proceeding to implement consolidated planning requirements for gas and electric services for large combination utilities that may include plans required under: (i) RCW 19.280.030; (ii) RCW 19.285.040; (iii) RCW 19.405.060; (iv) RCW 80.28.380; (v) RCW 80.28.365; (vi) RCW 80.28.425; and (vii) RCW 80.28.130. The commission may extend the rule-making proceeding for 90 days for good cause shown. The large combination utilities' filing deadline required in subsection (4) of this section will be extended commensurate to the rule-making extension period set by the commission. Subsequent planning requirements for future integrated system plans must be fulfilled on a timeline set by the commission. Large combination utilities that file integrated system plans are no longer required to file separate plans that are required in an integrated system plan. The statutorily required contents of any plan consolidated into an integrated system plan must be met by the integrated system plan.

(b) In its order adopting rules or issuing a policy statement approving the consolidation of planning requirements, the commission shall include a compliance checklist and any additional guidance that is necessary to assist the large combination utility in meeting the minimum requirements of all relevant statutes and rules.

(3) Upon request by a large combination utility, the commission may issue an order extending the filing and reporting requirements of a large combination utility under RCW 19.405.060 and 19.280.030, and requiring the large combination utility to file an integrated system plan pursuant to subsection (4) of this section if the commission finds that the large combination utility has made public a work plan that demonstrates reasonable progress toward meeting the standards under RCW 19.405.040(1) and 19.405.050(1) and achieving equity goals.



The commission's approval of an extension of filing and reporting requirements does not relieve the large combination utility from the obligation to demonstrate progress towards meeting the standards under RCW 19.405.040(1) and 19.405.050(1) and the interim targets approved in its most recent clean energy implementation plan. Commission approval of an extension under this section fulfills the large combination utilities statutory filing deadlines under RCW 19.405.060(1).

(4) By January 1, 2027, and on a timeline set by the commission thereafter, large combination utilities shall file an integrated system plan demonstrating how the large combination utilities' plans are consistent with the requirements of this chapter and any rules and guidance adopted by the commission, and which:

(a) Achieve the obligations of all plans consolidated into the integrated system plan;

(b) Provide a range of forecasts, for at least the next 20 years, of projected customer demand that takes into account econometric data and addresses changes in the number, type, and efficiency of customer usage;

(c) Include scenarios that achieve emissions reductions for both gas and electric operations equal to at least their proportional share of emissions reductions required under RCW 70A.45.020;

(d) Include scenarios with emissions reduction targets for both gas and electric operations for each emissions reduction period that account for the interactions between gas and electric systems;

(e) Achieve two percent of electric load annually with conservation and energy efficiency resources, unless the commission finds that a higher target is cost-effective. However, the commission may accept a lower level of achievement if it determines that the requirement in this subsection (4)(e) is neither technically nor commercially feasible during the applicable emissions reduction period;

(f) Assess commercially available conservation and efficiency resources, including demand response and load management, to achieve the conservation and energy efficiency requirements in (e) of this subsection, and as informed by the assessment for conservation potential under RCW 19.285.040 for the planning horizon consistent with (b) of this subsection. Such an assessment may include, as appropriate, opportunities for development of combined heat and power as an energy and capacity resource, demand response and load management programs, and currently employed and new policies and programs needed to obtain the conservation and efficiency resources. The value of recoverable waste heat resulting from combined heat and power must be reflected in analyses of cost-effectiveness under this subsection;

(g) Achieve annual demand response and demand flexibility equal to or greater than 10 percent of winter and summer peak electric demand, unless the commission finds that a higher target is cost-effective. However, the commission may accept a lower level of achievement if it determines that the requirement in this subsection (4)(g) is neither technically nor commercially feasible during the applicable emissions reduction period;

(h) Achieve all cost-effective electrification of end uses currently served by natural gas identified through an assessment of alternatives to known and planned gas infrastructure projects, including nonpipeline alternatives, rebates and incentives, and geographically targeted electrification;

(i) Include low-income electrification programs that must:

(i) Include rebates and incentives to low-income customers and customers experiencing high energy burden for the deployment of high-efficiency electric-only heat pumps in homes and buildings currently heating with wood, oil, propane, electric resistance, or gas;

(ii) Provide demonstrated material benefits to low-income participants including, but not limited to, decreased energy burden, the addition of air conditioning, and backup heat sources or energy storage systems, if necessary to protect health and safety in areas with frequent outages, or improved indoor air quality;

(iii) Enroll customers in energy assistance programs or provide bill assistance;

(iv) Provide dedicated funding for electrification readiness;

(v) Include low-income customer protections to mitigate energy burden, if electrification measures will increase a low-income participant's energy burden; and

(vi) Coordinate with community-based organizations in the gas or electrical company's service territory including, but not limited to, grantees of the department of commerce, community action agencies, and community-based nonprofit organizations, to remove barriers and effectively serve low-income customers;

(j) Accept as proof of eligibility for energy assistance enrollment in any means-tested public benefit, or low-income energy assistance program, for which eligibility does not exceed the low-income definition set by the commission pursuant to RCW 19.405.020;

(k) Assess the potential for geographically targeted electrification including, but not limited to, in overburdened communities, on gas plant that is fully depreciated or gas plant that is included in a proposal for geographically targeted electrification that requires accelerating depreciation pursuant to RCW 80.86.060(1) for the gas plant subject to such electrification proposal;

(l) Assess commercially available supply side resources, including a comparison of the benefits and risks of purchasing electricity or gas or building new resources;

(m) Assess nonpipeline alternatives, including geographically targeted electrification and demand response, as an alternative to replacing aging gas infrastructure or expanded gas capacity. Assessments must involve, at a minimum:

(i) Identifying all known and planned gas infrastructure projects, including those without a fully defined scope or cost estimate, for at least the 10 years following the filing;

(ii) Estimating programmatic expenses of maintaining that portion of the gas system for at least the 10 years following the filing; and

(iii) Ranking all gas pipeline segments for their suitability for nonpipeline alternatives;

(n) Assess distributed energy resources that meets the requirements of RCW 19.280.100;

(o) Provide an assessment and 20-year forecast of the availability of and requirements for regional supply side resource and delivery system capacity to provide and deliver electricity and gas to the large combination utility's customers and to meet, as applicable, the requirements of chapter 19.405 RCW and the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction limits in RCW 70A.45.020. The delivery system assessment must identify the large combination utility's expected needs to acquire new long-term firm rights, develop new, or expand or upgrade existing, delivery system facilities consistent with the requirements of this section and reliability standards and take into

account opportunities to make more effective use of existing delivery facility capacity through improved delivery system operating practices, conservation and efficiency resources, distributed energy resources, demand response, grid modernization, nonwires solutions, and other programs if applicable;

(p) Assess methods, commercially available technologies, or facilities for integrating renewable resources and nonemitting electric generation including, but not limited to, battery storage and pumped storage, and addressing overgeneration events, if applicable to the large combination utility's resource portfolio;

(q) Provide a comparative evaluation of supply side resources, delivery system resources, and conservation and efficiency resources using lowest reasonable cost as a criterion;

(r) Include a determination of resource adequacy metrics for the integrated system plan consistent with the forecasts;

(s) Forecast distributed energy resources that may be installed by the large combination utility's customers and an assessment of their effect on the large combination utility's load and operations;

(t) Identify an appropriate resource adequacy requirement and measurement metric consistent with prudent utility practice in implementing RCW 19.405.030 through 19.405.050;

(u) Integrate demand forecasts, resource evaluations, and resource adequacy requirements into a long-range assessment describing the mix of supply side resources and conservation and efficiency resources that will meet current and projected needs, including mitigating overgeneration events and implementing RCW 19.405.030 through 19.405.050, at the lowest reasonable cost and risk to the large combination utility and its customers, while maintaining and protecting the safety, reliable operation, and balancing of the energy system of the large combination utility;

(v) Include an assessment, informed by the cumulative impact analysis conducted under RCW 19.405.140, of: Energy and nonenergy benefits and the avoidance and reductions of burdens to vulnerable populations and highly impacted communities; long-term and short-term public health and environmental benefits, costs, and risks; and energy security and risk;

(w) Include a 10-year clean energy action plan for implementing RCW 19.405.030 through 19.405.050 at the lowest reasonable cost, and at an acceptable resource adequacy standard;

(x) Include an analysis of how the integrated system plan accounts for:

(i) Model load forecast scenarios that consider the anticipated levels of zero emissions vehicle use in a large combination utility's service area, including anticipated levels of zero emissions vehicle use in the large combination utility's service area provided in RCW 47.01.520, if feasible;

(ii) Analysis, research, findings, recommendations, actions, and any other relevant information found in the electrification of transportation plans submitted under RCW 80.28.365; and

(iii) Assumed use case forecasts and the associated energy impacts, which may use the forecasts generated by the mapping and forecasting tool created in RCW 47.01.520;

(y) Establish that the large combination utility has:

(i) Consigned to auction for the benefit of ratepayers the minimum required number of allowances allocated to the large combination utility for the applicable compliance period pursuant to RCW 70A.65.130, consistent with the climate commitment act, chapter

70A.65 RCW, and rules adopted pursuant to the climate commitment act; and

(ii) Prioritized, to the maximum extent permissible under the climate commitment act, chapter 70A.65 RCW, revenues derived from the auction of allowances allocated to the utility for the applicable compliance period pursuant to RCW 70A.65.130, first to programs that eliminate the cost burden for low-income ratepayers, such as bill assistance, nonvolumetric credits on ratepayer utility bills, or electrification programs, and second to electrification programs benefiting residential and small commercial customers;

(z) Propose an action plan outlining the specific actions to be taken by the large combination utility in implementing the integrated system plan following submission; and

(aa) Report on the large combination utility's progress towards implementing the recommendations contained in its previously filed integrated system plan.

(5) In evaluating the lowest reasonable cost of decarbonization measures included in an integrated system plan, large combination utilities must apply a risk reduction premium that must account for the applicable allowance ceiling price approved by the department of ecology pursuant to the climate commitment act, chapter 70A.65 RCW. For the purpose of this chapter, the risk reduction premium is necessary to ensure that a large combination utility is making appropriate long-term investments to mitigate against the allowance and fuel price risks to customers of the large combination utility.

(6) The clean energy action plan must:

(a) Identify and be informed by the large combination utility's 10-year cost-effective conservation potential assessment as determined under RCW 19.285.040, if applicable;

(b) Establish a resource adequacy requirement;

(c) Identify the potential cost-effective demand response and load management programs that may be acquired;

(d) Identify renewable resources, nonemitting electric generation, and distributed energy resources that may be acquired and evaluate how each identified resource may be expected to contribute to meeting the large combination utility's resource adequacy requirement;

(e) Identify any need to develop new, or expand or upgrade existing, bulk transmission and distribution facilities and document existing and planned efforts by the large combination utility to make more effective use of existing transmission capacity and secure additional transmission capacity consistent with the requirements of subsection (4)(o) of this section; and

(f) Identify the nature and possible extent to which the large combination utility may need to rely on alternative compliance options under RCW 19.405.040(1)(b), if appropriate.

(7) A large combination utility shall consider the social cost of greenhouse gas emissions, as determined by the commission pursuant to RCW 80.28.405, when developing integrated system plans and clean energy action plans. A large combination utility must incorporate the social cost of greenhouse gas emissions as a cost adder when:

(a) Evaluating and selecting conservation policies, programs, and targets;

(b) Developing integrated system plans and clean energy action plans; and

(c) Evaluating and selecting intermediate term and long-term resource options.

(8) Plans developed under this section must be updated on a regular basis, on intervals approved by the commission.

(9) (a) To maximize transparency, the commission may require a large combination utility to make the utility's data input files available in a native format. Each large combination utility shall publish its final plan either as part of an annual report or as a separate document available to the public. The report may be in an electronic form.

(b) Nothing in this subsection limits the protection of records containing commercial information under RCW 80.04.095.

(10) The commission shall establish by rule a cost test for emissions reduction measures achieved by large combination utilities to comply with state clean energy and climate policies. The cost test must be used by large combination utilities under this chapter for the purpose of determining the lowest reasonable cost of decarbonization and electrification measures in integrated system plans, at the portfolio level, and for any other purpose determined by the commission by rule.

(11) The commission must approve, reject, or approve with conditions an integrated system plan within 12 months of the filing of such an integrated system plan. The commission may for good cause shown extend the time by 90 days for a decision on an integrated system plan filed on or before January 1, 2027, as such date is extended pursuant to subsection (2) (a) of this section.

(12) In determining whether to approve the integrated system plan, reject the integrated system plan, or approve the integrated system plan with conditions, the commission must evaluate whether the plan is in the public interest, and includes the following:

(a) The equitable distribution and prioritization of energy benefits and reduction of burdens to vulnerable populations, highly impacted communities, and overburdened communities;

(b) Long-term and short-term public health, economic, and environmental benefits and the reduction of costs and risks;

(c) Health and safety concerns;

(d) Economic development;

(e) Equity;

(f) Energy security and resiliency;

(g) Whether the integrated system plan:

(i) Would achieve a proportional share of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions for each emissions reduction period on the gas and electric systems;

(ii) Would achieve the energy efficiency and demand response targets in subsection (4) (e) and (g) of this section;

(iii) Would achieve cost-effective electrification of end uses as required by subsection (4) (h) of this section;

(iv) Results in a reasonable cost to customers, and projects the rate impacts of specific actions, programs, and investments on customers;

(v) Would maintain system reliability and reduces long-term costs and risks to customers;

(vi) Would lead to new construction career opportunities and prioritizes a transition of natural gas and electricity utility workers to perform work on construction and maintenance of new and existing renewable energy infrastructure; and

(vii) Describes specific actions that the large combination utility plans to take to achieve the requirements of the integrated system plan. [2024 c 351 s 3.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.030 Sale of wholesale electricity—Greenhouse gas attributes.** Large combination utilities shall work in good faith with other utilities, independent power producers, power marketers, end-use customers, and interested parties in the region to develop market structures and mechanisms that require the sale of wholesale electricity from generating resources in a manner that allows the greenhouse gas attributes of those resources to be accounted for when they are sold into organized markets. [2024 c 351 s 4.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.040 Certificate of necessity for certain construction, investment, or purchase costs—Application.** (1) Concurrent with an application for an integrated system plan pursuant to RCW 80.86.020, a large combination utility may propose to construct a new renewable or nonemitting electric generation or transmission facility, make a significant investment in an existing renewable or nonemitting electric generation or transmission facility, purchase an existing renewable or nonemitting electric generation or transmission facility, or enter into a power purchase agreement for the purchase of renewable or nonemitting electric energy or capacity for a period of five years or longer. The large combination utility may submit an application to the commission seeking a certificate of necessity for that construction, investment, or purchase, including entering into a power purchase agreement, if that construction, investment, or purchase costs \$100,000,000 or more, requires the utility to begin incurring significant portions of those costs more than five years before the facility is estimated to be in service, and all or a portion of the costs would be allocable to retail customers in this state. A significant investment may include a group of investments undertaken jointly and located on the same site for a singular purpose, such as increasing the capacity of an existing renewable or nonemitting electric generation or transmission plant. Applications must be submitted in conjunction with a large combination utility's integrated system plan. However, a large combination utility may submit an application outside of the integrated system plan process for a time-sensitive project.

(2) A large combination utility submitting an application under this section may request one or more of the following:

(a) A certificate of necessity that the electric energy or capacity to be supplied or transmitted as a result of the proposed construction, investment, or purchase, including entering into a power purchase agreement, is needed;

(b) A certificate of necessity that the size, fuel type, and other design characteristics of the existing or proposed electric generation or transmission facility or the terms of the power purchase agreement represent the most appropriate and reasonable means of meeting that power need;

(c) A certificate of necessity that the estimated purchase or capital costs of and the financing plan for the existing or proposed

electric generation or transmission facility including, but not limited to, the costs of siting and licensing a new facility and the estimated cost of power from the new or proposed electric generation facility, or the cost of transmission on the new or proposed electric transmission facility, are reasonable; or

(d) A request to: (i) Recognize, accrue, and defer the allowance for funds used during construction; and (ii) recover financing interest costs in base rates on construction work in progress for capital improvements approved under this section prior to the assets being considered used and useful.

(3) The commission may approve, reject, or approve with conditions an application under this section if it is in the public interest, and the construction, investment, or purchase, including entering into a power purchase agreement, complies with the commission's administrative rules governing electric resource procurement.

(4) In a certificate of necessity under this section, the commission may specify the estimated costs included for the construction of or significant investment in the electric generation or transmission facility, the estimated price included for the purchase of the existing electric generation or transmission facility, or the estimated price included for the purchase of power pursuant to the terms of the power purchase agreement.

(5) The large combination utility shall file reports to the commission regarding the status of any project for which a certificate of necessity has been granted under this section, including an update concerning the cost and schedule of that project at intervals determined by the commission.

(6) If the commission denies any of the relief requested by a large combination utility, the large combination utility may withdraw its application or proceed with the proposed construction, purchase, investment, or power purchase agreement without a certificate and the assurance granted under this section under its ordinary course of business.

(7) If the assumptions underlying an approved certificate of necessity materially change, a large combination utility shall request, or the commission or potential intervenor on its own motion may initiate, a proceeding to review whether it is reasonable to complete an unfinished project for which a certificate of necessity has been granted. The commission shall list the assumptions underlying an approved certificate in the order approving the certificate. If the commission finds that the completion of the project is no longer reasonable, the commission may modify or cancel approval of the certificate of necessity. The commission may allow recovery of reasonable costs already incurred or committed to by contract. Once the commission finds that completion of the project is no longer reasonable, the commission may limit future cost recovery to those costs that could not be reasonably avoided. Nothing in this subsection may be construed as amending, modifying, or repealing any existing authority of the commission to ascertain and determine the fair value for rate-making purposes of the property of any large combination utility.

(8) A proposed or existing supplier of electric generation capacity that seeks to provide electric generation energy or capacity resources to the large combination utility may submit a written proposal directly to the commission as an alternative to the construction, investment, or purchase, including entering into a power

purchase agreement, for which the certificate of necessity is sought under this section. The entity submitting an alternative proposal under this subsection has standing to intervene and the commission may allow reasonable discovery in the contested case proceeding conducted under this subsection. In evaluating an alternative proposal, the commission may consider the cost of the alternative proposal and the submitting entity's qualifications, technical competence, capability, reliability, creditworthiness, and past performance. In reviewing an application, the commission may consider any alternative proposals submitted under this subsection. This subsection does not limit the ability of any other person to submit to the commission an alternative proposal to the construction, investment, or purchase, including entering into a power purchase agreement, for which a certificate of necessity is sought under this subsection and to petition for and be granted leave to intervene in the contested case proceeding conducted under this subsection under the rules of practice and procedure of the commission. This subsection does not authorize the commission to order or otherwise require a large combination utility to adopt any alternative proposal submitted under this subsection. [2024 c 351 s 5.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.050 Emissions baseline and projected cumulative emissions—Emissions reduction period.** (1) Large combination utilities must include the following in calculating the emissions baseline and projected cumulative emissions for an emissions reduction period, consistent with reporting of greenhouse gas emissions pursuant to the Washington clean air act, chapter 70A.15 RCW:

(a) Methane leaked from the transportation and delivery of gas from the gas distribution and service pipelines from the city gate to customer end use;

(b) Greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the combustion of gas by customers not otherwise subject to federal greenhouse gas emissions reporting and excluding all transport customers; and

(c) Emissions of methane resulting from leakage from delivery of gas to other gas companies.

(2) In calculating an emissions reduction target, a large combination utility must show its emissions baseline and projected cumulative greenhouse gas emissions for the applicable emissions reduction period separately and must show that the total emissions reductions are projected to make progress toward the achievement of the emissions reduction targets identified in the applicable integrated system plan. The final calculation must be presented on a carbon dioxide equivalent basis.

(3) All emissions are metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent as reported to the federal environmental protection agency pursuant to 40 C.F.R. 98, either subpart W (methane) or subpart NN (carbon dioxide), or successor reporting requirements. [2024 c 351 s 6.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.



**RCW 80.86.060 Multiyear rate plans.** (1) In any multiyear rate plan filed by a large combination utility pursuant to RCW 80.28.425 and in accordance with this chapter, the large combination utility must include an updated depreciation study that reduces the gas rate base consistent with an approved integrated system plan, and the commission may adopt depreciation schedules that accelerate cost recovery and reduce the rate base for any gas plant. The commission shall approve a depreciation schedule that depreciates all gas plants in service as of July 1, 2024, by a date no later than January 1, 2050, in any multiyear rate plan, but the commission may adjust depreciation schedules for gas plants as necessary when considering future multiyear rate plans to address affordability provided all plants in service as of July 1, 2024, are fully depreciated by 2050.

(2) In any multiyear rate plan proposed by a large combination utility, the company may propose a merger of regulated gas and electric operations into a single rate base. The commission may approve the merger of electric and gas rate bases if the commission finds that the proposal will result in a net benefit to customers of the large combination utility and includes reasonable rate protections for low-income natural gas and electric customers.

(3) For a large combination utility that has merged gas and electricity rate bases, the large combination utility must monetize benefits received from any applicable federal and state tax and other incentives for the benefit of customers. These benefits must be separately accounted for and amortized on a schedule designed to mitigate the rate impacts to customers after the rate bases are combined. These credits may not be used for any other purpose, unless directed by the commission.

(4) For the first multiyear rate plan proposed by a large combination utility following commission approval or approval with conditions of the initial integrated system plan identified in RCW 80.86.020, the commission may for good cause shown extend the deadline for a decision set forth under RCW 80.04.130 by up to 60 days. [2024 c 351 s 7.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.070 Certain rebates to natural gas customers prohibited—Education regarding benefits of electrification.** (1) Beginning January 1, 2025, no large combination utility may offer any form of rebate, incentive, or other inducement to residential gas customers to purchase any natural gas appliance or equipment. Until January 1, 2031, rebates and incentives for commercial and industrial gas customers are not included in this requirement. Rebates and incentives for electric heat pumps that include natural gas backups may be offered until January 1, 2031.

(2) By November 1, 2025, a large combination utility must initiate and maintain an effort to educate its ratepayers about the benefits of electrification and the availability of rebates, incentives, or other inducements to purchase energy efficient electric appliances and equipment including, but not limited to, the maintenance of an educational website and the inclusion of educational materials in monthly billing statements.

(3) Beginning January 1, 2031, a large combination utility may not include electric air source heat pumps with gas backups as part of its electrification programs. [2024 c 351 s 8.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.080 Planned electrification in a consumer-owned utility service area—Provision of data.** (1) When an integrated system plan of a large combination utility proposes geographically targeted electrification of all or a portion of a service area in which the large combination utility provides gas service to such a service area and one or more consumer-owned utilities provide electric service to such a service area, the integrated system plan of the large combination utility must include a process for outreach by the large combination utility to all consumer-owned utilities providing electric service to such a service area. As part of that outreach, the large combination utility shall provide gas delivery data of sufficient granularity for the consumer-owned electric company to assess the sufficiency of the capacity of the electric distribution system to accommodate the additional load from electrification at the circuit level. This data must be provided at least one plan cycle prior to electrification actions by the large combination utility to allow affected consumer-owned electric companies sufficient time to upgrade electrical distribution equipment and materials as needed to preserve system reliability.

(2) Consumer-owned utilities are encouraged to:

(a) Work with large combination utilities providing gas service within their service areas to identify opportunities for electrification and mitigating grid impacts by the large combination utility;

(b) Account for the costs of greenhouse gas emissions, set total energy savings and greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, and develop and implement electrification programs in collaboration with large combination utilities providing gas service in service areas of consumer-owned utilities; and

(c) Include an electrification plan or transportation electrification program as part of collaboration with large combination utilities.

(3) Nothing in this section may be construed as expanding or contracting the authority of any electric utility with regard to the designation of the boundaries of adjoining service areas that each electric utility must observe. [2024 c 351 s 10.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.090 Community workforce agreements/project labor agreements for certain projects.** (1) For any project in an integrated system plan of a large combination utility that is part of a competitive solicitation and with a cost of more than \$10,000,000, the large combination utility must certify to the commission that any work associated with such a project will be constructed by a prime contractor and its subcontractors in a way that includes community

workforce agreements or project labor agreements and the payment of area standard prevailing wages and apprenticeship utilization requirements, provided the following apply:

(a) The project owner and the prime contractor and all of its subcontractors, regardless of tier, have the absolute right to select any qualified and responsible bidder for the award of contracts on a specified project without reference to the existence or nonexistence of any agreements between such a bidder and any party to such a project labor agreement, and only when such a bidder is willing, ready, and able to become a party to, signs a letter of assent, and complies with such an agreement or agreements, should it be designated the successful bidder; and

(b) It is understood that this is a self-contained, stand-alone agreement, and that by virtue of having become bound to such an agreement or agreements, neither the prime contractor nor the subcontractors are obligated to sign any other local, area, or national agreement.

(2) Nothing in this section supersedes RCW 19.28.091 or 19.28.261 or chapter 49.17 RCW, without regard to project cost. [2024 c 351 s 11.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.100 Rule-making authority.** The commission may adopt rules to ensure the proper implementation and enforcement of chapter 351, Laws of 2024. [2024 c 351 s 12.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**RCW 80.86.901 Short title.** This chapter may be known and cited as the Washington decarbonization act for large combination utilities. [2024 c 351 s 19.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2024 c 351:** See notes following RCW 80.86.010.

**Chapter 80.98 RCW  
CONSTRUCTION**

**Sections**

- 80.98.010 Continuation of existing law.
- 80.98.020 Title, chapter, section headings not part of law.
- 80.98.030 Invalidity of part of title not to affect remainder.
- 80.98.040 Repeals and saving.
- 80.98.050 Emergency—1961 c 14.

**RCW 80.98.010 Continuation of existing law.** The provisions of this title insofar as they are substantially the same as statutory provisions repealed by this chapter, and relating to the same subject matter, shall be construed as restatements and continuations, and not as new enactments. [1961 c 14 s 80.98.010.]

**RCW 80.98.020 Title, chapter, section headings not part of law.** Title headings, chapter headings, and section or subsection headings, as used in this title do not constitute any part of the law. [1961 c 14 s 80.98.020.]

**RCW 80.98.030 Invalidity of part of title not to affect remainder.** If any provision of this title, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the title, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected. [1961 c 14 s 80.98.030.]

**RCW 80.98.040 Repeals and saving.** See 1961 c 14 s 80.98.040.

**RCW 80.98.050 Emergency—1961 c 14.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately. [1961 c 14 s 80.98.050.]