

RCW 82.38.365 Fuel tax evasion—Forfeiture procedure. In all cases of seizure of property made subject to forfeiture under this chapter, the state patrol must proceed as follows:

(1) Forfeiture is deemed to have commenced by the seizure.

(2) The state patrol must list and particularly describe in duplicate the conveyance seized. After the appropriate appeal period has expired, a seized conveyance must be sold at a public auction in accordance with chapter 43.19 RCW.

(3) The state patrol must list and particularly describe in duplicate the fuel seized. The selling price of the fuel seized must be the average terminal rack price for similar fuel, at the closest terminal rack on the day of sale, unless circumstance warrants that a different selling price is appropriate. The method used to value the fuel must be documented. The fuel must be sold at the earliest point in time, and the total price must include all appropriate state and federal taxes. The state patrol or the department may enter into contracts for the transportation, handling, storage, and sale of fuel subject to forfeiture.

(4) The state patrol must, within five days after the seizure of a conveyance or fuel, cause notice to be served on the owner of the property seized, if known, on the person in charge of the property, and on any other person having any known right or interest in the property, of the seizure and intended forfeiture. The notice may be served by any method authorized by law or court rule including but not limited to service by mail. If service is by mail it must be by both certified mail with return receipt requested and regular mail. Service by mail is deemed complete upon mailing within the five-day period after the date of seizure.

(5) If no person notifies the state patrol in writing of the person's claim of ownership or right to possession of the items seized within fifteen days of the date of the notice of seizure, the items seized are considered forfeited.

(6) If any person notifies the state patrol, in writing, of the person's claim of ownership or right to possession of the items seized within fifteen days of the date of the notice of seizure, the person or persons must be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard as to the claim or right. The hearing must be before the director of licensing, or the director's designee. A hearing and any appeals must be in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW. The burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence is upon the person claiming to be the lawful owner or the person claiming to have the lawful right to possession of the items seized. The state patrol and the department must promptly return the conveyance seized, and money from the sale of fuel seized, to the claimant upon a determination that the claimant is the present lawful owner and is lawfully entitled to possession of the items seized. [2013 c 225 s 133; 2003 c 358 s 8.]

Effective date—2013 c 225: See note following RCW 82.38.010.

Captions not law—2003 c 358: See note following RCW 82.38.270.