

**WAC 352-11-055 Timing of the SEPA process.** (1) The SEPA process shall be integrated with agency activities following and according to established agency SEPA procedures at the earliest possible time to ensure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to seek to resolve potential problems.

(2) Additional timing considerations.

(a) Agency staff receiving an application will forward it to the responsible official who will determine whether the proposal is an "action" and, if so, whether another agency is the lead agency for the proposal. If not, the responsible official will determine if the action is "categorically exempt" from SEPA. If the proposal is an "action" and is not exempt, the responsible official will ask the applicant to complete an environmental checklist. A new checklist is not needed if the responsible official and applicant agree that an EIS is required, SEPA compliance has been completed, SEPA compliance has been initiated by another agency, or a complete checklist is included with the application.

(b) Notwithstanding the guidance and requirements of WAC 197-11-922 through 197-11-948, if the agency is presented with an application to undertake a project generally falling under the jurisdiction and/or environmental expertise of another state or local agency, staff will direct the applicant to initiate SEPA with the appropriate agency before it considers the action being requested by the applicant.

(c) Agency staff and applicants may hold preliminary discussions or exploration of ideas and options prior to commencing formal environmental review, under provisions of this chapter and chapter 197-11 WAC, subject to RCW 42.36.060.

(3) All commission actions require SEPA.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 79A.05 RCW. WSR 07-03-121, § 352-11-055, filed 1/22/07, effective 2/22/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.120. WSR 96-01-029, § 352-11-055, filed 12/11/95, effective 1/11/96. Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.21C RCW. WSR 84-20-112 (Order 84), § 352-11-055, filed 10/3/84.]