

**WAC 296-32-200 Scope and application.** (1) This chapter sets forth safety and health standards that apply to the work conditions, practices, means, methods, operations, installations and processes performed at telecommunications facilities and at telecommunications field installations, which are located outdoors or in building spaces used for such field installations. "Facility" work includes the installation, operation, maintenance, rearrangement, and removal of communications equipment and other associated equipment in telecommunications facilities. "Field" work includes the construction, installation, operation, maintenance, rearrangement, and removal of conductors, antenna systems and other equipment used for signal or communication service, and of their supporting or containing structures for landline or wireless communications. This could include overhead or underground, on public or private rights of way, or other lands, buildings or other structures, including those locations that may fall under the scope of chapter 296-45 WAC.

**Note:** Work that falls under the scope of chapter 296-45 WAC may include, but is not limited to, transmission towers, poles, substations, and substation equipment.

(2) These rules set forth the minimum requirements for employers to protect employees from the hazards associated with working on communication towers, structures, and poles. This includes antenna and antenna supporting structures, broadcast and other similar structures that support communication related equipment, during construction, alteration, repair, operation, inspection, maintenance, demolition activities and any other activities connected to accomplishing work associated with this chapter.

(3) The three primary parts of this chapter are as follows:

- Part A: General requirements - This part is intended to convey the areas of responsibility to employers when working on telecommunications facilities or locations of any type.

- Part B: Requirements that apply to wireline - This part is intended to convey to the employer the responsibilities for the training and protection of their employees working with or in telecommunications wireline facilities and field installations. Areas of Part B may also apply to the wireless Part C.

- Part C: Requirements that apply to wireless - This part is intended to convey to the employer the responsibilities for the training and protection of their employees working with or upon telecommunications wireless facilities and field installations. Areas of Part C may also apply to the wireline Part B.

(4) These standards do not apply to installations under the exclusive control of electric utilities used for the purpose of communications or metering, or for generation, control, transformation, transmission, and distribution of electric energy, which are located in buildings used exclusively by the electric utilities for such purposes, or located outdoors on property owned or leased by the electric utilities or on public highways, streets, roads, etc., or outdoors by established rights on private property.

(5) Operations or conditions not specifically covered by this chapter are subject to all other applicable Washington Administrative Code to include, but not limited to, chapter 296-24 WAC, general safety and health standards, chapter 296-27 WAC, Recordkeeping and reporting, chapter 296-800 WAC, Safety and health core rules, and chapter 296-62 WAC, General occupational health standards. Operations which involve construction work not covered by this chapter, as defined in chapter 296-155 WAC, are subject to the applicable standards contained in chapter 296-155 WAC, safety standards for construction work and

other recognized industry standards that may be applicable to hazards or exposures not covered by this chapter.

(6) This standard will augment the Washington state general safety and health standards chapter 296-24 WAC, General occupational health standards, chapter 296-62 WAC, electric power generation, transmission, and distribution rules, chapter 296-45 WAC, and any other standards which are applicable to all industries governed by the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act. In the event of a conflict arising between any portion of this chapter and any portion of the aforementioned standards, the provisions of this chapter 296-32 WAC, will apply. Additionally, operations, conditions, work methods and other work related situations or activities may be subject to additional rules and regulations depending upon the nature of the work being performed.

(7) All communication companies and entities operating communication facilities, networks or systems within the state of Washington must design, construct, operate, and repair their lines and equipment according to the requirements of the following:

(a) Wireline facilities must meet the requirements of 2016 National Electric Safety Code (NESC) (ANSI-C2).

(b) Structures which have the primary purpose to serve as antenna supporting structures must meet the design requirements of ANSI/TIA 222-G-2005.

(c) Telecommunication construction standards, ANSI/TIA-322, 2016 and ANSI/ASSE A10.48, 2016.

(8) In exceptional cases where compliance with specific provisions of this chapter can only be accomplished to the serious detriment and disadvantage of an operation, variance from the standards or requirements may be permitted by the director of the department of labor and industries after receipt of application and approval for a variance which meets the requirements of WAC 296-900-11005.

(9) The provisions of this chapter will be enforced through inspections or consultation activities conducted by properly trained, qualified and authorized safety and health officers designated by the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 20-20-109, § 296-32-200, filed 10/6/20, effective 11/6/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, and chapter 49.17 RCW. WSR 17-20-069, § 296-32-200, filed 10/2/17, effective 1/1/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060. WSR 07-03-163, § 296-32-200, filed 1/24/07, effective 4/1/07. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].040, and [49.17].050. WSR 01-11-038, § 296-32-200, filed 5/9/01, effective 9/1/01; Order 76-38, § 296-32-200, filed 12/30/76; Order 75-41, § 296-32-200, filed 12/19/75.]