

WSR 25-05-096
PROPOSED RULES
PUGET SOUND
CLEAN AIR AGENCY

[Filed February 19, 2025, 8:59 a.m.]

Original Notice.

Proposal is exempt under RCW 34.05.310(4) or 34.05.330(1).

Title of Rule and Other Identifying Information: Amend Regulation I, Section 7.07 Operating Permit Fees.

Hearing Location(s): On March 27, 2025, at 8:45 a.m., via Zoom meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9128500665?pwd=dGhUdnU2Q0gzdHQxbTNTM0lNbllMUT09>, Meeting ID 912 850 0665, Pass-code 1904; or call in 888-788-0099 U.S. Toll-free; or in person at the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (agency), 1904 3rd Avenue, Suite 105, Seattle, WA.

Date of Intended Adoption: April 24, 2025.

Submit Written Comments to: Betsy Wheelock, 1904 3rd Avenue, Suite 105, Seattle, WA 98101, email RegUpdates@psccleanair.gov, fax 206-343-7522, beginning February 28, 2025, 8:00 a.m., by March 31, 2025, 4:30 p.m.

Assistance for Persons with Disabilities: Contact agency reception, phone 206-343-8800, fax 206-343-7522, email RegUpdates@psccleanair.gov, by March 21, 2025.

Purpose of the Proposal and Its Anticipated Effects, Including Any Changes in Existing Rules: **Section 7.07:** The operating permit program fees, like the other fee programs of the agency (registration, notice of construction, and asbestos), are designed to recover the costs implementing and administering the program. Changes to the operating permit fee schedule in Regulation I, Section 7.07 were made in 2022, 2023, and 2024, recognizing the cumulative effects of inflation. Prior to these actions, the last across the board fee increases were made in 2012.

The current proposed changes are intended to further adjust fees to keep the revenues in balance with the level of effort to complete the compliance work associated with the operating permit program. While the revenue and expenses for the operating permit program have been roughly balanced for most of the past dozen years, the increasing costs to the program in the last few years and increasing level of effort for some types of work by the agency for certain aspects of the operating permit program need to be addressed through another adjustment to the fee schedule to ensure the agency does not reach a deficit condition.

The proposed amendments to the operating permit fee schedule include cost increases for each base fee category of four percent. The proposed increase anticipates the effects of inflation will not entirely ease, and this proposal assumes some inflationary effects through the fiscal year 2026 time period (and the calendar year 2026 time period) will continue. The lag between proposed fee increases and the actual billings that reflects that revenue have also been considered in this proposal. The emission fees, a \$/ton fee for reportable air pollutant emissions levels, are proposed to remain unchanged. This recommendation regarding emission fee charges remaining unchanged will keep the emission fee charges equivalent to those for registration program sources. Additionally, no changes are proposed for the fee elements that relate to permit issuance transactions.

Reasons Supporting Proposal: The long-standing financial policy of the agency's board of directors is that fees support the costs of the compliance programs. These proposed operating permit fee changes are necessary to maintain consistency with that policy and this proposal is intended to cover increasing and future program costs based upon a reasonable evaluation of work needed to be performed by the agency for the operating permit program.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: Chapter 70A.15 RCW.

Statute Being Implemented: Chapter 70A.15 RCW.

Rule is not necessitated by federal law, federal or state court decision.

Name of Proponent: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, governmental.

Name of Agency Personnel Responsible for Drafting: John Dawson, 1904 3rd Avenue, Suite 105, Seattle, WA 98101, 206-689-4060; Implementation and Enforcement: Steve Van Slyke, 1904 3rd Avenue, Suite 105, Seattle, WA 98101, 206-689-4052.

A school district fiscal impact statement is not required under RCW 28A.305.135.

A cost-benefit analysis is not required under RCW 34.05.328. RCW 34.05.328 does not apply to local air agencies, per RCW 70A.15.2040.

This rule proposal, or portions of the proposal, is exempt from requirements of the Regulatory Fairness Act because the proposal:

Is exempt under RCW 19.85.025(3) as the rules set or adjust fees under the authority of RCW 19.02.075 or that set or adjust fees or rates pursuant to legislative standards, including fees set or adjusted under the authority of RCW 19.80.045.

Is exempt under RCW 19.85.011.

Explanation of exemptions: Chapter 19.85 RCW does not appear to apply to local air agencies.

Scope of exemption for rule proposal:

Is fully exempt.

February 18, 2025
Christine Cooley
Executive Director

AMENDATORY SECTION

REGULATION I SECTION 7.07 OPERATING PERMIT FEES

(a) The Agency shall assess annual operating permit fees as set forth in Section 7.07(b) below to cover the cost of administering the operating permit program.

(b) Upon assessment by the Agency, the following annual operating permit fees are due and payable within 45 days of the invoice date. They shall be deemed delinquent if not fully paid within 90 days of the date of the invoice and will be subject to an additional delinquent fee equal to 25% of the original fee, not to exceed \$8,125. In addition, persons knowingly under-reporting emissions or other information used to set fees, or persons required to pay emission or permit fees who are more than 90 days late with such payments may be subject to a penalty equal to 3 times the amount of the original fee owed (in addition to other penalties provided by chapter 70A.15 RCW).

(1) Sources in the following North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes (*North American Industry Classification System Manual*, U.S. Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2012), or sources subsequently determined by the con-

trol officer to be assigned to either Section 7.07 (b) (1) (i) or 7.07 (b) (1) (ii) shall be subject to the following facility fees:

(i) Operating permit sources with the following NAICS codes:

NAICS	NAICS Description Fee
221112	Fossil Fuel Electric Power Generation
324110	Petroleum Refineries
327213	Glass Container Manufacturing
327310	Cement Manufacturing
331110	Iron and Steel Mills and Ferroalloy Manufacturing
336411	Aircraft Manufacturing
336413	Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing
562212	Solid Waste Landfill
928110	National Security
..... ((\$87,833)) <u>\$91,346</u>	

(ii) Operating permit sources with the following NAICS codes:

NAICS	NAICS Description Fee
311119	Other Animal Food Manufacturing
311812	Commercial Bakeries
321912	Cut Stock, Resawing Lumber, and Planing
321918	Other Millwork (including Flooring)
321999	All Other Miscellaneous Wood Product Manufacturing
322220	Paper Bag and Coated and Treated Paper Manufacturing
326140	Polystyrene Foam Product Manufacturing
332996	Fabricated Pipe and Pipe Fitting Manufacturing
..... ((\$21,956)) <u>\$22,834</u>	

(iii) Operating permit sources with NAICS codes other than listed above. ((~~\$43,922~~)) \$45,679

(2) Additional emission rate fees shall be paid in addition to the annual operating permit fees of Section 7.07 (b) (1):

\$30 for each ton of CO reported in the previous calendar year,

and

\$60 for each ton of NOx reported in the previous calendar year,

and

\$60 for each ton of PM10 reported in the previous calendar year,

and

\$60 for each ton of SOx reported in the previous calendar year,

and

\$60 for each ton of VOC reported in the previous calendar year,

and

\$60 for each ton of HAP reported in the previous calendar year.

(c) In addition to the fees under Sections 7.07 (b) (1) and (b) (2) above, the Agency shall, on a source-by-source basis, assess the following fees:

(1) \$500 for administrative permit amendments [WAC 173-401-720], and

(2) for minor permit modifications [WAC 173-401-725 (2) and (3)], a fee equal to 10% of the annual operating permit fee, not to exceed \$8,125, and

(3) for the original issuance [WAC 173-401-700], significant modification [WAC 173-401-725(4)], reopening for cause [WAC 173-401-730],

or renewal [WAC 173-401-710] of an operating permit, a fee equal to 20% of the annual operating permit fee, not to exceed \$16,250, and

(4) to cover the costs of public involvement under WAC 173-401-800, and

(5) to cover the costs incurred by the Washington State Department of Health in enforcing 40 CFR Part 61, Subpart I and chapter 246-247 WAC.

(d) In addition to the fees described under Sections 7.07 (b) and (c) above, the Agency shall collect and transfer to the Washington State Department of Ecology a surcharge established by the Department of Ecology under chapter 173-401 WAC to cover the Department of Ecology's program development and oversight costs.

(e) Continued payment to the Agency of the annual operating permit fee maintains the operating permit and the status of the source as an operating facility.