

RENEWABLE ENERGY STANDARD AND CLEAN ENERGY TRANSFORMATION

Washington

Policy type

Renewable Portfolio Standard

Clean Energy Standard

Targets

- **RPS:** 3% by 2012, 9% by 2016, 15% by 2020 and thereafter
- **CES:** Coal phaseout by December 31, 2025, energy generation portfolios 100% “GHG-neutral” by 2030, 100% renewable or non-emitting with no offsets by 2045

Economy-wide goal: Reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions to 95% below 1990 levels by 2050

Point of regulation: Retail sales

Regulated entities: Consumer-owned and investor-owned electric utilities serving retail customers

Percent of retail sales covered by RPS: 76%

Implementing agencies: Washington State Department of Commerce; Utilities and Transportation Commission

Enforcement mechanisms: Charge per MWh of non-compliant electric generation starting at \$100 with a multiplier of 1.5 for coal-fired resources, 0.84 for gas-fired peaking power plants, and 0.60 for gas-fired combined-cycle power plants

Compliance flexibility and cost containment: Utilities may adopt a slower transition path if necessary to avoid rate shock. The law also provides for short-term waivers of the clean energy standards if needed to protect reliability. The administrative penalty may be relieved if the Commission finds compliance conflicts with reliability, or noncompliance due to reasons beyond the utility’s control. If this occurs, the Commission may also temporarily exempt the utility from compliance. Through December 31, 2044, the utility may satisfy up to 20% of its compliance obligation with an alternative compliance option. Smaller, multi-state utilities may apply the amount of retired coal to compliance obligation. A consumer-owned utility is considered in compliance if the compliance cost meets or exceeds a 2% increase of its retail revenue.

Carve-outs and incentives: Distributed generation 2.0 compliance multiplier in RPS

Compliance tracking: [WREGIS](#)

Notable features: Consistent with the requirements of RCW 19.280.030 and 19.405.140, utilities must ensure that all customers benefit from the transition to clean energy through the equitable distribution of energy and nonenergy benefits and reduction of burdens to vulnerable populations. In 2024, voters rejected Initiative 2117, a measure to repeal the Climate Commitment Act, which established the state’s cap and invest program.

Links to agency website and statutes/rules: [Wash. Admin. Code § 480-109-200](#); [Chapter 19.405 RCW](#); [Department of Commerce: Clean Energy Transformation Act](#); [Washington Clean Energy Transformation Act](#); [Retail Electricity Sales](#); [EPA’s REC Tracking Systems](#)

Form of the standard

Energy-based RPS

% of renewable energy required

Energy-based CES

% of clean energy required

Eligible sources

RPS

Biofuel

Biogas

Biomass

Distributed
Generation

Energy
Efficiency

Geothermal

Hydrogen

Hydropower

Solar

Waste-to-Energy

Wave/Tidal

Wind

CES

Tech-neutral

See [RCW 19.405.020\(33\)](#) for definitions of eligible resources; [WAC 480-109-200\(4\)\(b\)](#) for distributed generation; [RCW 19.405.040](#) and [WAC 480-100-610\(4\)](#) for energy efficiency; [RCW 19.405.040\(d\)](#) and [RCW 19.405.050](#) for hydropower; [RCW 19.405.020\(27\)](#) for nuclear; [RCW 19.405.020\(32\)](#) and [RCW 19.405.030](#) (coal phase-out) and [RCW 19.405.020](#) for fossil fuels. Certain limits may apply.