

Reporting Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This publication is an overview for those who may need to report greenhouse gas emissions.

Q: What are greenhouse gases?

A: Greenhouse gases are chemicals that contribute to climate change by trapping heat in the atmosphere. There are six internationally-recognized greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

Q: Where do greenhouse gases come from?

A: Greenhouse gases are released during:

- Fuel combustion (like driving, mowing your lawn, or running your gas furnace) or specific chemical/physical processes
- “Stationary combustion” – places that produce electricity, steam, heat, or power using equipment (like boilers)
- “Mobile combustion” - fuel burned for transportation (such as in cars, trucks, ships, trains, and planes)
- “Production processes” - the manufacturing of cement, aluminum, ammonia, etc
- “Fugitive releases” - releases from the production, processing, transmission, storage, and use of fuels and other substances that do not pass through a stack, chimney, vent, or exhaust pipe (such as the release of sulfur hexafluoride from electrical equipment)

Q: What does “mandatory reporting” mean?

A: Mandatory reporting means you are required by law to report.

Q: How do you know if you need to report?

A: To determine whether you will be required to report your greenhouse gas emissions, you first need to figure out whether your operations meet the *reporting thresholds* (the amount of emissions when reporting is required).

WHY IT MATTERS

Greenhouse gases contribute to climate change. Washington is especially vulnerable to climate change because:

- We depend on snow pack for much of our public water supply and for hydroelectricity.
- Our nearly 3000 miles of coastline are vulnerable to the expected rise in sea levels, threatening our coastal communities.
- Losses in coastline habitat threaten our fish and wildlife.
- Eastern Washington relies on irrigation and drought can have a catastrophic effect on agriculture.

Go to Ecology's Climate Change web site:
www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/

Contact information:

Nancy Pritchett
(360) 407-6082
npri461@ecy.wa.gov

Special accommodations:

If you need this publication in an alternate format, call the Air Quality Program at (360) 407-6800. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

If your total annual greenhouse gas emissions is equal or greater than:

- 2500 metric tons (1 metric ton equals 2204 pounds) from on-road motor vehicles; or
- 10,000 metric tons of all direct greenhouse gas emissions from a source or combination of sources.

For more information about determining your reporting threshold, read the publication “Reporting Greenhouse Gas Emissions” on the web at www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/0801010.pdf.

Q: What do you have to do to comply?

A: If you meet the threshold, you will be required to report your organization’s annual greenhouse gas emissions. Ecology is in the process of establishing the annual reporting process.

Q: When do you need to report?

A: You must report each year, starting in 2010 for calendar year 2009 emissions. Ecology will establish deadlines for submitting reports and keeping records in its regulation.

Q: Who will you report your greenhouses gas emissions to?

A: Ecology will establish the reporting process and location for reporting in its regulation.

Q: Why is Ecology doing this?

A: The Governor’s 2007 Executive Order about climate change set goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within Washington over the next several decades. In 2008, the Legislature passed the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Bill, requiring Ecology to adopt a mandatory greenhouse gas reporting rule. In order to meet those goals, we need to determine what sources are emitting greenhouse gases and how much they are emitting. This will help us determine what actions to take.

Q: How much will this (a) cost the state and (b) reporting organizations?

A: We currently do not know what the cost will be to either the state or reporting organizations. The law says Ecology will establish fees in its regulation to pay for the costs of administering the reporting program.

Q: What, if anything, are other states doing?

A: Several other states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon) as well as EPA are developing regulations for reporting greenhouse gas emissions. Europe, the United Kingdom, Australia, and other nations also have reporting programs. Washington’s law requires the rule to be more expansive because it includes fleets (trucks, cars, trains, planes, vessels) as well as energy usage (heating/cooling).

Q: How is Washington developing its rule for this?

A: The proposed rule will follow the Administrative Procedures Act. Starting in August 2008, Ecology staff will work with a stakeholder advisory group to develop a draft rule. Changes and revisions will be posted on the Ecology web site and provided to interested parties. The draft rule developed during this

process will be available in Spring 2009 for review and comment during a public comment period and public hearings.

Q: Who can be involved and how?

A: Stakeholders and the public can submit written or verbal comments throughout the rule-making process. The final chance for input will be during the public comment period or at a public hearing about this rule. Information about the public comment period and public hearings will be posted on Ecology's web site.

Q: What happens next?

A: Ecology will begin meeting with the stakeholder advisory group in August 2008 to develop the mandatory reporting regulation. It should be final in the summer of 2009.

Q: Where can you get copies of the regulation and guidance documents?

A: See Ecology's web site at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/globalwarm_RegHaze/GreenHouseGasreporting_rule.html.

Q: Who can you contact with questions?

A: If you need more information, contact Nancy Pritchett at (360) 407-6082 or npri461@ecy.wa.gov.