

## **Clean, green, competitive: Forbes ranks Washington in top states for business and for environment**

Forbes, the national business and financial news publisher, ranks Washington among the very best states on two national scorecards - quality of the environment and health of the business environment.

We don't see this as coincidence; we believe a clean environment and a healthy business climate go hand in hand. And we're dead serious about both.

As of August 2008, Washington is the only state to score in the top three states in both rankings.

**Washington is in Forbes' Top 3 states for business** - in 2008, we moved from No. 5 to No. 3. Forbes noted Washington state is one of only three states to finish in the top 10 in four of the six categories, ranking second in labor and business growth prospects, and achieving high rankings in the environment and economic climate categories. Areas where Washington particularly excelled - growth prospects and labor - suggest Washington has the skilled work force which keeps the state competitive in an international market place.

<i>America's Greenest State Top 5</i>		<i>Best States for Business Top 5</i>	
<i>Rank</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>State</i>
1	Vermont	1	Virginia
2	Oregon	2	Utah
3	Washington	3	Washington
4	Hawaii	4	North Carolina
5	Maryland	5	Georgia

Forbes, "America's Greenest States," October 2007  
Forbes, "The Best States For Business," July 2008

**As for environmental quality, Forbes ranks three states above all others** - Vermont, Oregon and Washington. Says Forbes: "All have low carbon dioxide emissions per capita (or 'carbon footprints'), strong policies to promote energy efficiency and high air quality, as indicated by their major metro areas that are low in smog and ozone pollution. They're also among the states with the most buildings (on a per capita basis) that have received the U.S. Green Building Council's benchmark certification, known as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Washington also has some of the nation's cleanest water. "

Governor Gregoire told Forbes: "We're blessed by birth. We have an innovative spirit in the state. We've made improvements to get out of the way and let innovation and creativity take over."

### **By the numbers: Washington's clean, green economy**

The importance of Washington's natural environment - the awe-inspiring geography and topography that we all call home - is far more than dollars and cents. However, here are a few

numbers that illustrate Washington's environment is good for families, good for business, and good for our quality of life:

- **Water for irrigation** in eastern Washington generates about \$3 billion in agricultural product sales in a year.
- **Water** adds more than \$1 billion to the economy each year.
- **Water passing through hydropower dams** creates energy worth more than \$3 billion per year.
- **Puget Sound** drives \$20 billion per year in economic activity – jobs, trade, recreation, tourism, fishing, boating, etc.



*Clean water adds billions of dollars to Washington's economy.*

## Smart investments

In the past four years, Washington state has made smart investments and has enacted laws that will promote a cleaner, greener Washington; restore Puget Sound to a healthy condition; and enhance our already enviable position in the global economy.

Here are some of the recent results we have achieved for Washington families:

- Through our historic Columbia River water management program (adopted by the Governor and the legislature in 2006), we have projects under way that will make large amounts of water available for farms, fish and people in eastern Washington for the first time since the Columbia Basin dams were completed in the 1970s.
- The Department of Ecology and seven local clean air agencies have developed one of the nation's most comprehensive school bus retrofit programs to capture toxic diesel soot from buses. We have installed pollution-prevention systems on more than 5,000 school buses, protecting the health of tens of thousands of children.
- We've removed soil containing lead, arsenic and other toxic threats at 22 schools statewide and seven child-care facilities (as of October 2007). That means more than 7,000 children are safer.
- We passed an electronic product recycling law that makes it easy for people here to recycle these products when they outlive their usefulness. Our state was one of the first in the nation to require computer and television manufacturers to offer convenient recycling at no additional charge to the consumer by January 2009. Recycling these products will prevent toxic chemicals from being thrown into landfills and potentially contaminating water supplies.



*Students in the Kent School District perform the "white handkerchief test" on the cleanest possible diesel technology.*

- We enacted the nation's first ban on a fast growing health threat – toxic chemical flame retardants in consumer products. This new ban will protect children and the environment from this growing toxic threat. And we're doing it without compromising fire safety for Washington families.
- We've cleaned up millions of discarded tires around the state.
- We have tough new rules protect against spills during oil transfers. We're continuing to drive the number and size of oil spills down, and are recognized as having one of the best oil spill prevention and response programs in the country.
- Rapid response to oil spills: Learning from a major marina fire and resulting petroleum spill at Gig Harbor in 2005, we delivered ready-to-roll oil spill response equipment to 99 locations around the state and provided training so local first responders have the equipment on hand if there is a spill nearby. This means 61 communities and tribes can respond immediately to contain future spills. Local first responders already have successfully used the equipment to help clean up eight different oil spills.
- Cleaner water entering Puget Sound from Fort Lewis complex: With leadership of state government and our congressional delegation, we secured an agreement with the United States Army to eliminate a major source of contamination of South Puget Sound. The Army agreed to intercept and pre-treat industrial wastes before they enter the Fort's wastewater treatment system. This is important; the system was not designed to handle hazardous waste from: Madigan Army Medical Center, McChord Air Force Base, Camp Murray, the American Lake Veterans Administration Hospital and Clover Park district schools.
- We have cleaned up more than 80 contaminated sites in and around Puget Sound.
- Working together, state agencies, local governments, tribes and conservation districts have upgraded 1,134 acres of shellfish beds by cutting off sources of pollution to the Sound.
- We have removed more than 800 tons of creosote logs and pilings from the Sound and continue to work with local governments and private parties to remove more. These logs and pilings ooze poisons into the water and sediments of the Sound and enter the food chain.



*Tire pile in the City of Goldendale with Mt. Adams in the background.*



*Washington is a leading producer of commercial shellfish.*

## **The Washington way**

Clean, green and economically competitive - that's the Washington way.

## **For more information**

To learn more about Ecology's work priorities visit our web site at [www.ecy.wa.gov/priorities.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/priorities.html).

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