

Washington state limits carbon pollution from large sources

Latest state to take action on climate change

By PHUONG LE
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Washington state adopted a new rule Thursday to limit greenhouse gas emissions from large carbon polluters, joining a handful of other states in capping emissions to address climate change.

State environmental regulators finalized a rule requiring large industrial emitters to gradually reduce carbon emissions over time. The change will cover power plants, oil refineries, fuel distributors, pulp and paper mills and other industries.

"When we consider the challenges our communities face from climate change, we are compelled to act," state Ecology Director Maia Bellon said at a news conference on Seattle's waterfront.

Critics say it will hurt families, as costs are passed on to consumers; limit the state in attracting and retaining businesses; and hamper the ability of energy-intensive businesses to compete globally.

Supporters say limiting heat-trapping gas is needed to protect human health and the environment; the state faces severe economic and environmental disruption from rising sea levels; increased risks of drought and wildfire, and other climate change impacts.

Inslee sought rule

Gov. Jay Inslee sought the rule last year after failing to gain legislative support for a more ambitious plan to charge polluters a fee, similar to California's cap-and-trade program. A coalition of Northeast states also has a cap-and-trade program that applies to power plants.

Under Washington state's rule, large carbon polluters will be required to reduce carbon emissions by an average of 1.7 percent annually. The rule would apply to those that release at least 100,000 metric tons of carbon a year. More facilities will likely be covered by the rule as the threshold is lowered over the coming decades.

Unlike the cap-and-trade legislation Inslee sought last year, the rule adopted Thursday won't charge emitters a fee for carbon emissions. Inslee had previously pitched a polluter fee as a way to raise more than \$1 billion a year for schools, transportation and other state needs.

Republican lawmakers have criticized Inslee, a Democrat, for taking executive action on the issue, saying lawmakers should set such policy. Some legislators have previously tried to prohibit the Ecology Department from passing such a rule.

State Sen. Doug Ericksen, R-Ferndale, said in statement Thursday that the rule "will have no impact on the world climate,

but will have a chilling effect on our economy." It would force families to pay more to heat their homes and drive to work, he said.

But Bellon says consumers likely won't feel the impacts. Using worst-case scenarios, the state estimates that by 2020 electricity prices would go up by \$16 a year and gas prices would increase by 1 cent.

Climate action

Several environmental groups on Thursday applauded Inslee for pushing ahead on climate action, saying it's an important first step.

"We must continue to work toward a comprehensive climate policy" that puts a price on emissions and reinvests the money in clean energy programs and communities most impacted by climate change, Sasha Pollack with the Washington Environmental Council said in a statement.


Businesses would have different ways to comply. They could lower their emissions, invest in projects that permanently reduce carbon pollution or buy credits from others in the program or from other approved market-trading carbon markets.

A state economic analysis indicates the costs for all businesses to comply over 20 years range from a low of \$410 million to a high of \$6.9 billion, depending on the way they comply. The measure is also estimated to provide \$9.6 billion in benefits over 20 years by improving environmental, health and other conditions.

Tax measure

Two dozen businesses likely will be covered when the rule takes effect in October 2017. They include all five oil refineries, several Puget Sound Energy facilities, including those in Longview, Goldendale and Sumas, the Grays Harbor Energy Center in Elma, Frederickson Power facility in Tacoma and Spokane's Waste to Energy facility.


In November, Washington state voters will consider Initiative 732 that would impose a direct tax on carbon emissions from fossil fuels burned in the state while lowering state sales and business taxes.



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The **Coral Princess** will be arriving at the Port on **September 19, 2016 at 11am** and departing at **10:30pm**.

The **Silver Shadow** has changed its itinerary and **will not be stopping** at the Port on **September 22, 2016**.



'Culture change' needed at state human services agency

High rate of harm for kids in care

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Saying the state has a "deep and abiding moral obligation" to keep children in its care safe, a committee assembled by the governor to assess the safety of children in substitute care has agreed that the Department of Human Services and state leaders need to follow through on ongoing reform efforts.

The agency faces a somber diagnosis: Oregon has a high rate of harm of kids in foster and residential care compared to other states, and the committee was created after revelations of abuse that went unaddressed by agency leaders.

The external advisory committee on child safety includes lawmakers, child welfare professionals and advocates.

Its meeting Wednesday

focused on the recommendations of a consulting firm hired to assess the agency's most pressing problems.

The firm, Public Knowledge, presented four "foundational recommendations," or things that had to be changed before its detailed recommendations could get traction.

Consultants said the Department of Human Services needs to change its culture; focus on child safety; use data to inform decisions; and increase staffing resources for entities within the department, including Child Protective Services.

Implementing the recommendations, though, is going to require adequate staff and external experts in areas such as policy and data use, consultants said.

Costs not clear

It's not immediately clear how much making and maintaining the recommended changes may cost, though consultants noted that increasing staffing may be cost-intensive, compared to the three other foundational measures that

consultants rated either low-cost or cost-neutral.

The committee agreed that funding for the agency should be a priority in the upcoming legislative session.

The cost of failing to protect foster children from harm is high — the committee estimated that in the last five years, the state has paid between \$30 million and \$35 million to settle claims brought by children who were abused in foster care or residential facilities.

In a letter to the governor, a draft of which was read at the meeting Wednesday, the committee said that "the need for a cultural shift in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies is paramount."

The committee also noted that the recommendations presented by the consulting firm were "not altogether different from past proposals developed by and for DHS."

Prior failures

Clyde Saiki, the department's director, has acknowledged the prior failures of the

agency to make changes after problems were brought to light.

A draft of the consultants' report released late last month identified two main deficiencies that, if tackled, consultants said, could prevent child abuse: How the agency chooses where to place kids in care and how it receives and addresses reports of abuse.

Placements could be better matched to children's needs, consultants said, and the system for reporting and monitoring abuse is decentralized and disjointed.

But the agency also has limited capacity, making headlines for putting children up in hotels.

In the past two years, the state has "lost nearly 400 foster homes and 100 residential beds statewide," the agency's child welfare spokeswoman, Andrea Cantu-Schomus, wrote in an email last week.

Consultant Stacey Obrecht noted Wednesday that the number of children in residential facilities outside Oregon is more than 20, compared to none several years ago.

Others in Warrenton bike theft ring sentenced

The men stole bikes from campgrounds

By KYLE SPURR
The Daily Astorian

The two other Warrenton men involved in stealing more than a dozen bicycles in July from visitors at Fort Stevens State Park and the KOA campground have been sentenced.

Jacob Martin Kitzman, 25, pleaded no contest Wednesday in Circuit Court to second-degree theft. Kitzman was sentenced to 46 days in jail.

Earlier this month, the District Attorney's Office dismissed a first-degree theft charge against John Michael Lafreniere, 26, as part of a plea negotiation to settle past cases.

Lafreniere was sentenced to 2 1/2



Jacob Martin Kitzman



John Michael Lafreniere

past theft and burglary cases. He was sentenced to two years in prison.

Warrenton Police received multiple reports in July of stolen bicycles from the local campgrounds. None of the bicycles were locked or secured.

Officers increased patrols, and were able to identify the trio. The three men were arrested July 31.

In total, police recovered nearly 15 stolen bicycles, valued at \$8,000 to \$10,000, and returned several to their owners. Some of the bicycles had been dismantled, had parts or accessories removed, and one had been repainted a different color, according to police.

Police found many of the bicycles at a location near the campgrounds, and at a residence on U.S. Highway 101 just south of Warrenton. A stolen motorcycle was also recovered.

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