

### Water Right and Water Storage Fees

- The 2005 Legislature amended [RCW 90.03.470](#) and added a new section to [RCW 90.14](#), changing the fee structure for new water-right applications, water-storage applications, water-right change applications, and inspection of water storage facilities. This was the first change to the fee structure since 1951.

#### Q: What are the current fees?

**A:** Current fees include:

- The application fee to appropriate new water is \$1 per one hundredth cubic foot per second (cfs), with a minimum filing fee of \$50 and a maximum of \$25,000.
- The application fee to change, transfer, or amend an existing water-right certificate, permit, or claim is 50 cents per one hundredth cfs of water, with the minimum of \$50 and a maximum of \$12,500.
- For a change, transfer, or amendment involving a single project operating under more than one water right, only one examination fee and one certificate fee are required. This includes related secondary diversion rights, or the consolidation of multiple water rights.
- The application fee for new water-storage projects is \$2 per acre-foot of storage, with a minimum of \$50 and the maximum of \$25,000.
- The application fee to change a storage-water right is \$1 for each acre-foot of water, with a minimum of \$50 and a maximum of \$12,500.
- The fee for filing and recording a formal protest against approving an application is \$50, although there is no fee required to submit a comment on an application.
- The fee to apply for an extension to a development schedule for a water right permit or change authorization is \$50.
- The fee for a temporary or seasonal water right change is \$50.
- The application fee for amending a water-right claim, filed under RCW 90.14, is \$50.
- The fee for applying for or recording an assignment of a permit to appropriate water is \$50.
- The fee for preparing and issuing all water-right certificates is \$50.

#### MORE INFORMATION

##### Water Rights Web page:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/water-right-home.html>

##### Water Rights Fee Estimator:

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/fee\\_estimate.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/fee_estimate.html)

##### Contact information

###### Central Region - Yakima

Counties: Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan and Yakima  
509-575-2597

###### Eastern Region - Spokane

Counties: Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla and Whitman  
Office: 509-329-3541

###### Northwest Region - Bellevue

Counties: Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom  
425-649-7020

###### Southwest Region - Lacey

Counties: Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston and Wahkiakum  
360-407-6859

##### Special accommodations

If you need this document in a format for the visually impaired, call the Water Resources Program at 360-407-6872.

Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

**Q: Are there any fee exemptions?**

**A:** There are a number of fee exemptions. Ecology requires no fees for:

- Water-right change applications involving the donation of a trust water right to the state.
- An application to process a change associated with the acquisition of a trust water right for instream flows or other public purposes.
- Water-right change applications filed with a water conservancy board or for Ecology's review of a water conservancy board's record of decision (ROD).
- Applications for emergency withdrawal authorizations or for temporary drought-related water-right change requests that Ecology receives in an area where a drought emergency is in effect.
- Water right acquisition, storage, or change requests filed by a party under a cost-reimbursement agreement entered into under state law (RCW 90.03.265).

**Q: What are the fees for inspections of water-storage projects?**

**A:** There are no inspection fees for dams with less than 10 acre-feet capacity. The fee for a dam construction permit for a new dam or modifying an existing dam to store 10 or more acre-feet is based on the height and breadth of the proposed structure. Prorated annual fees for periodic safety inspections are \$881 for significant hazard dams (1 to 2 homes downstream) and \$1,208 for high hazard dams (3 or more homes downstream). For additional information on fees, visit our Web site at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/dams/Fees2.html>

**Q: Is there an exemption for newer storage facilities?**

**A:** There is an exemption. No fees are required for any water-storage project or reservoir that is less than 10 years old, provided Ecology has already examined and approved the construction plans and specifications for the structure. For high hazard dams (3 or more homes downstream) that are older than 10 but less than 20 years old and had plans approved by the department, the periodic inspection fee is equal to the lesser fee for a significant hazard dam (1 or 2 homes downstream).

**Q: How should I submit my fees to Ecology?**

**A:** Fees must be paid by check or money order. Ecology cannot accept cash and all fees must be collected in advance of any requested action.

**Q: Are any of the fees refundable?**

**A:** No.

**Q: What happens to the collected money?**

**A:** As required by law, 80 percent of the fees will go to the state's general fund. The remaining 20 percent will be deposited in a special account that Ecology will use to develop, implement, and manage a water rights tracking system, including a mapping system and a database.