

Focus on: New Numbers for Environmental Laws



Why It Matters

The Revised Code of Washington, or RCW, is the official compilation of laws enacted by the state Legislature. Our laws are arranged broadly by topic, into titles. Each title contains several chapters devoted to specific subjects.

A title change to state law is not simple to address. Decades of written and online references to “Title 70” will require a long time to update, and additional customer service resources to help people find the title for which they are looking.

ADA Accessibility

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New Title 70A Consolidates and Improves Organization of Environmental Laws

Title 70 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) used to contain 157 chapters of both environmental and public health and safety laws. This title was getting very long. So the legislature created the new Title 70A in the 2020 session (Substitute House Bill 2246). It places all the environmental health and safety laws in the new Title 70A. Public health and safety chapters will remain under Title 70.

The environmental laws originally filed under Title 70 have also been reorganized. New Title 70A groups laws concerning similar topics together. This will help policymakers, the public, and the regulated community by providing a better-organized statute.

All of the Department of Ecology’s guiding statutes are now under the new Title 70A, including:

- The former Chapter 70.95 RCW - **Solid Waste Management – Reduction and Recycling**, now **Chapter 70A.205 RCW**.
- **The Waste Reduction, Recycling and Litter Control Act**, formerly Chapter 70.93 RCW, now **Chapter 70A.200 RCW**



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Modernized References

While Title 70A does not change the law, it does reorganize the laws in the title and make technical fixes, including renaming accounts and correcting outdated references.

The addition of a new title is important to note because as Washington's environmental protection agency, Ecology is required to cite the basis of its statutory authority when developing rules, which often contain references to specific statutory provisions. Local ordinances and regulations adopted by cities, counties, and other political subdivisions also reference statutory authority or other provisions codified in the RCWs.

Ecology will update the impacted rules to reflect the new statutory references. Rules adopted by Ecology under any recodified statute are still valid (RCW 70A.01.020).

Next steps: Update rules, websites, and guidance

Updating rules, websites, and guidance documents with the correct citations for Title 70A is no small task and will require sustained effort. The law encourages state and local government agencies to update their rules to reflect the new statutory references by July 1, 2025.

Helpful Title 70A References

Title 70A RCW Environmental Health and Safety: <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?Cite=70A>

Title 70 RCW Dispositions Public Health and Safety: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/dispo.aspx?cite=70>

Contact information

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