



# Rule Implementation Plan

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## Chapter 173-167 WAC

### Emergency Drought Funding (2025 filing)

By

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For the

**Water Resources Program**

Washington State Department of Ecology  
Olympia, Washington

April 2025, Publication 25-11-006

## Publication Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's website at:

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/summarypages/2511006.html>

### Related Information

- [Drought Response, Application Instructions 2025](#)<sup>1</sup>, Pub# 25-11-005
- [Drought Response Grant Funding Guidance](#)<sup>2</sup>, Pub# 25-11-004
- [Rulemaking WAC 173-167, 2025](#)<sup>3</sup>, webpage

## Contact Information

### Water Resources Program

P.O. Box 47600

Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Phone: 360-407-6872

**Website**<sup>4</sup>: [Washington State Department of Ecology](#)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/summarypages/2511005.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/summarypages/2511004.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ecykenpub/regulations-permits/laws-rules-rulemaking/rulemaking/wac-173-167-2025>

<sup>4</sup> [www.ecology.wa.gov/contact](http://www.ecology.wa.gov/contact)

# Department of Ecology's Regional Offices

## Map of Counties Served



<b>Southwest Region</b> 360-407-6300	<b>Northwest Region</b> 206-594-0000	<b>Central Region</b> 509-575-2490	<b>Eastern Region</b> 509-329-3400
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Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
<b>Southwest</b>	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	P.O. Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
<b>Northwest</b>	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	P.O. Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
<b>Central</b>	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 West Alder Street Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
<b>Eastern</b>	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 North Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
<b>Headquarters</b>	Statewide	P.O. Box 46700 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

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## Chapter 173-167 WAC Emergency Drought Funding (2025 filing)

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Washington State Department of Ecology  
Olympia, WA

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DEPARTMENT OF  
**ECOLOGY**  
State of Washington

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## Purpose

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) provides the information in this implementation plan to meet agency and Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.328) requirements related to rule adoptions.

# Introduction

On April 8, 2025, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) issued a Drought Emergency Declaration for the Yakima Basin watersheds of Upper Yakima, Lower Yakima, and Naches, which include portions of Yakima, Kittitas, and Benton Counties, Chapter 173-167 WAC (AO # 25-03).

The purpose of this rule implementation plan is to inform those who must comply with chapter 173-167 WAC about how Ecology intends to continue to implement the following:

- Implement and enforce the rule.
- Inform and educate persons affected by the rule.
- Promote and assist voluntary compliance for the rule.
- Evaluate the rule.
- Train and inform Ecology staff about the new or amended rule.

Also included in this plan is information about:

- Supporting documents that may need to be written or revised because of the new rule or amended rule.
- Other resources where more information about the rule is available.
- Contact information for Ecology employees who can answer questions about the rule implementation.

## Implementation and Enforcement

Ecology's Water Resources Program staff at headquarters and regional offices will implement this rule. This grant program will continue to provide funding to implement measures that reduce hardship caused by drought. Ecology staff will make funding decisions based on the applicant and eligibility criteria defined in the rule.

This rule does not create a compliance or enforcement obligation for the regulated public. There is no anticipated enforcement related to this rule. Voluntary applicants must meet eligibility criteria and agency grant/contract standards (see "Promoting and Assisting Voluntary Compliance" and the "More Information" sections).



## Informing and Educating Persons Affected by the Rule

Upon the reissued rule adoption, Ecology will notify Tribes, notify other interested parties, send Listserv notifications (Washington Water Supply list, Water Resources list, Water Resources Advisory Committee list, WAC Track list), and post updates to our website.

Ecology has produced grant application guidance, and staff will be available to provide technical assistance for applicants throughout the process.

Ecology created a publication describing the 2025 drought response, including a summary of activities and projects completed under the funding rule.

## Promoting and Assisting Voluntary Compliance

This rule does not create a compliance obligation for the regulated public. Those who wish to apply for funding through the emergency drought grant program are required to meet eligibility requirements set in rule. The rule, the grant website, the grant guidance, and the Tier 2 application and accompanying instructions provide additional guidance on how we will evaluate project proposals and support applicants in developing sound proposals. Ecology staff will also be available to provide technical assistance.

Ecology will support local partners promoting voluntary water conservation using methods and messaging that have worked well in the past.

## Evaluating the Rule

Public entities may continue to experience impacts from drought at various times throughout the current drought declaration and reissuance of the emergency drought funding rule. Balancing the immediate need with long-term planning is critical. In balancing these interests, it is essential that projects are chosen based on their effectiveness to alleviate immediate emergency drought-related hardship and will be implemented in a timely fashion. Since funding is limited, the agency will continue to prioritize the most immediate and imminent threats including projects that address imminent human health, fisheries, and agricultural emergency drought needs. Fulfilling these criteria will in turn help us determine effectiveness of rule implementation.

## Training and Informing Ecology Staff

Ecology will use staff meetings, the agency website, and e-mail to train and inform agency staff about the emergency drought grant funding. The agency drought funding coordinator, fiscal staff, and regional representatives will collaborate to continue to implement the rule.

## List of Supporting Documents that May Need to be Written or Revised

All documents related to this grant program were updated in April 2025 (dates updated from April 2024 documents).

Guidance on 2025 emergency drought funding under chapter 173-167 WAC and is available at <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/UIPages/SummaryPages/2511004.html>

Instructions for applicants for emergency drought funding  
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/UIPages/SummaryPages/2511005.html>

## More Information

Links to more information:

- <https://ecykenpub/regulations-permits/laws-rules-rulemaking/rulemaking/wac-173-167-2025>
- <https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/water-supply/water-availability/statewide-conditions/drought-response>

## Contact Information

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