RCW 19.27A.200 State energy performance standard—Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 19.27A.210, 19.27A.220, 19.27A.230, 19.27A.240, and 19.27A.250 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agricultural structure" means a structure designed and constructed to house farm implements, hay, grain, poultry, livestock, or other horticultural products, and that is not a place used by the public or a place of human habitation or employment where agricultural products are processed, treated, or packaged.

(2) "Baseline energy use intensity" means a building's energy use intensity that is representative of energy use in a normal weather year.

(3)(a) "Building owner" means an individual or entity possessing title to a building.

(b) In the event of a land lease, "building owner" means the entity possessing title to the building on leased land.

(4) "Building tenant" means a person or entity occupying or holding possession of a building or premises pursuant to a rental agreement.

(5) "Conditional compliance" means a temporary compliance method used by covered building owners that demonstrate the owner has implemented energy use reduction strategies required by the standard, but has not demonstrated full compliance with the energy use intensity target or alternative metric.

(6) "Consumer-owned utility" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 19.27A.140.

(7) "Covered building" includes a tier 1 covered building and a tier 2 covered building.

(8) "Department" means the department of commerce.

(9) "Director" means the director of the department of commerce or the director's designee.

(10) "Electric utility" means a consumer-owned electric utility or an investor-owned electric utility.

(11) "Eligible building owner" means: (a) The owner of a covered building required to comply with the standard established in RCW 19.27A.210; or (b) all eligible tier 2 covered building owners.

(12) "Energy" includes: Electricity, including electricity delivered through the electric grid and electricity generated at the building premises using solar or wind energy resources; natural gas, including natural gas derived from renewable sources, synthetic sources, and fossil fuel sources; district steam; district hot water; district chilled water; propane; fuel oil; wood; coal; or other fuels used to meet the energy loads of a building.

(13) "Energy use intensity" means a measurement that normalizes a building's site energy use relative to its size. A building's energy use intensity is calculated by dividing the total net energy consumed in one year by the gross floor area of the building, excluding the parking garage. "Energy use intensity" is reported as a value of thousand British thermal units per square foot per year.

(14) "Energy use intensity target" means the target for net energy use intensity of a covered building.

(15) "Gas company" includes every corporation, company, association, joint stock association, partnership, and person, their lessees, trustees, or receiver appointed by any court whatsoever, and every city or town owning, controlling, operating, or managing any gas plant within this state.

(16) "Greenhouse gas" includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

(17)(a) "Gross floor area" means the total number of square feet measured between the exterior surfaces of the enclosing fixed walls of a building, including all supporting functions such as offices, lobbies, restrooms, equipment storage areas, mechanical rooms, break rooms, and elevator shafts.

(b) "Gross floor area" does not include outside bays or docks.

(18) "Investor-owned utility" means a corporation owned by investors that meets the definition of "corporation" as defined in RCW 80.04.010 and is engaged in distributing either electricity or natural gas, or both, to more than one retail electric customer in the state.

(19) "Multifamily residential building" means a covered multifamily building containing sleeping units or more than five dwelling units where occupants are primarily permanent in nature.

(20) "Net energy use" means the sum of metered and bulk fuel energy entering the building, minus the sum of metered energy leaving the building or campus. Renewable energy produced on a campus that is not attached to a covered building may be included.

(21) "Qualifying utility" means a consumer-owned or investor-owned gas or electric utility that serves more than 25,000 customers in the state of Washington.

(22) "Savings-to-investment ratio" means the ratio of the total present value savings to the total present value costs of a bundle of an energy or water conservation measure estimated over the projected useful life of each measure. The numerator of the ratio is the present value of net savings in energy or water and nonfuel or nonwater operation and maintenance costs attributable to the proposed energy or water conservation measure. The denominator of the ratio is the present value of the net increase in investment and replacement costs less salvage value attributable to the proposed energy or water conservation measure.

(23) "Standard" means the state energy performance standard for covered buildings established under RCW 19.27A.210.

(24) "Thermal energy company" has the same meaning as defined in *RCW 80.04.550.

(25) "Tier 1 covered building" means a building where the sum of nonresidential, hotel, motel, and dormitory floor areas exceed 50,000 gross square feet, excluding the parking garage area.

(26) "Tier 2 covered building" means a building where the sum of multifamily residential, nonresidential, hotel, motel, and dormitory floor areas exceeds 20,000 gross square feet, but does not exceed 50,000 gross square feet, excluding the parking garage area. Tier 2 covered buildings also include multifamily residential buildings where floor areas are equal to or exceed 50,000 gross square feet, excluding the parking garage area.

(27) "Weather normalized" means a method for modifying the measured building energy use in a specific weather year to energy use under normal weather conditions. [2025 c 264 s 3. Prior: 2022 c 177 s 2; 2019 c 285 s 2.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 80.04.550 was amended by 2025 c 263 s 2, deleting the definition of "thermal energy company." 2025 c 263 s 1 amended RCW 80.04.010, adding the definition of "thermal energy company."

Findings—Intent—2022 c 177: "The legislature finds that in order to meet the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limits in RCW 70A.45.020, the state must require performance standards for existing buildings.

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of the need and potential for updating the state's building stock, including the "split incentive issue" in which tenants are responsible for energy costs and building owners are responsible for choices about energy systems and building maintenance, more robust benchmarking and reporting for building performance, operations, and maintenance is needed. While the state has adopted comprehensive reporting requirements for larger buildings, it currently lacks similar requirements for smaller buildings. It is the intent of the legislature to extend existing building benchmarking, energy management, and operations and maintenance planning requirements to smaller commercial and multifamily residential buildings in order to assess the needs and opportunities for job creation and incentives and environmental and public health improvements.

The legislature further finds that in order to meet the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limits in the energy sectors of the economy, more resources must be directed toward achieving decarbonization of building heating and cooling loads, while continuing to relieve energy burdens that exist in overburdened communities. These resources must include comprehensive customer support, outreach, and technical assistance. These efforts must include notifying building owners of requirements through communications campaigns, providing resources to aid in compliance, and delivering training to equip building owners, and the industry, to be successful." [2022 c 177 s 1.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 285: See note following RCW 19.27A.210.