

RCW 46.68.090 Distribution of statewide fuel taxes.

*** CHANGE IN 2026 *** (SEE 2711-S.SL) ***

(1) All moneys that have accrued or may accrue to the motor vehicle fund from the fuel tax must be first expended for purposes enumerated in (a) and (b) of this subsection. The remaining net tax amount must be distributed monthly by the state treasurer in accordance with subsections (2) through (9) of this section.

(a) For payment of refunds of fuel tax that has been paid and is refundable as provided by law;

(b) For payment of amounts to be expended pursuant to appropriations for the administrative expenses of the offices of state treasurer, state auditor, and the department of licensing of the state of Washington in the administration of the fuel tax, which sums must be distributed monthly.

(2) All of the remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(1) must be distributed as set forth in (a) through (j) of this subsection.

(a) For distribution to the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 44.387 percent to be expended for highway purposes of the state as defined in RCW 46.68.130;

(b) (i) For distribution to the special category C account, hereby created in the motor vehicle fund, an amount equal to 3.2609 percent to be expended for special category C projects. Special category C projects are category C projects that, due to high cost only, will require bond financing to complete construction.

(ii) The following criteria, listed in order of priority, must be used in determining which special category C projects have the highest priority:

(A) Accident experience;

(B) Fatal accident experience;

(C) Capacity to move people and goods safely and at reasonable speeds without undue congestion; and

(D) Continuity of development of the highway transportation network.

(iii) Moneys deposited in the special category C account in the motor vehicle fund may be used for payment of debt service on bonds the proceeds of which are used to finance special category C projects under this subsection (2) (b);

(c) For distribution to the Puget Sound ferry operations account in the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 2.3283 percent;

(d) For distribution to the Puget Sound capital construction account in the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 2.3726 percent;

(e) For distribution to the transportation improvement account in the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 7.5597 percent;

(f) For distribution to the transportation improvement account in the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 5.6739 percent and expended in accordance with RCW 47.26.086;

(g) For distribution to the cities and towns from the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 10.6961 percent in accordance with RCW 46.68.110;

(h) For distribution to the counties from the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 19.2287 percent: (i) Out of which there must be distributed from time to time, as directed by the department of transportation, those sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of RCW 47.56.725; and (ii) less any amounts appropriated to

the county road administration board to implement the provisions of RCW 47.56.725(4), with the balance of such county share to be distributed monthly as the same accrues for distribution in accordance with RCW 46.68.120;

(i) For distribution to the county arterial preservation account, hereby created in the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 1.9565 percent. These funds must be distributed by the county road administration board to counties in proportions corresponding to the number of paved arterial lane miles in the unincorporated area of each county and must be used for improvements to sustain the structural, safety, and operational integrity of county arterials. The county road administration board must adopt reasonable rules and develop policies to implement this program and to assure that a pavement management system is used. During the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium, the county arterial preservation account may also be used for staffing-related expenses of the board, contracting costs, and grants associated with bridge ratings;

(j) For distribution to the rural arterial trust account in the motor vehicle fund an amount equal to 2.5363 percent and expended in accordance with RCW 36.79.020.

(3) The remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(2) must be distributed to the transportation 2003 account (nickel account).

(4) The remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(3) must be distributed as follows:

(a) 8.3333 percent must be distributed to the incorporated cities and towns of the state in accordance with RCW 46.68.110;

(b) 8.3333 percent must be distributed to counties of the state in accordance with RCW 46.68.120; and

(c) The remainder must be distributed to the transportation partnership account created in RCW 46.68.290.

(5) The remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(4) must be distributed as follows:

(a) 8.3333 percent must be distributed to the incorporated cities and towns of the state in accordance with RCW 46.68.110;

(b) 8.3333 percent must be distributed to counties of the state in accordance with RCW 46.68.120; and

(c) The remainder must be distributed to the transportation partnership account created in RCW 46.68.290.

(6) The remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(5) and (6) must be distributed to the transportation partnership account created in RCW 46.68.290.

(7) The remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(7) and (8) must be distributed to the connecting Washington account created in RCW 46.68.395.

(8) The remaining net tax amount collected under RCW 82.38.030(9) through (12) must be distributed as follows:

(a) Two and one-half percent must be distributed to the incorporated cities and towns of the state in accordance with RCW 46.68.110;

(b) Two and one-half percent must be distributed to counties of the state in accordance with RCW 46.68.120; and

(c) The remainder must be distributed to the motor vehicle fund created in RCW 46.68.070.

(9) Nothing in this section or in RCW 46.68.130 may be construed so as to violate any terms or conditions contained in any highway construction bond issues now or hereafter authorized by statute and

whose payment is by such statute pledged to be paid from any excise taxes on fuel. [2025 c 417 s 103; 2025 c 416 s 706; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 44 s 105; (2015 3rd sp.s. c 44 s 104 expired July 1, 2016); 2013 c 225 s 645; 2011 c 120 s 4; 2005 c 314 s 103; 2003 c 361 s 403. Prior: 1999 c 269 s 2; 1999 c 94 s 6; prior: 1994 c 225 s 2; 1994 c 179 s 3; 1991 c 342 s 56; 1990 c 42 s 102; 1983 1st ex.s. c 49 s 21; 1979 c 158 s 184; 1977 ex.s. c 317 s 8; 1967 c 32 s 74; 1961 ex.s. c 7 s 5; 1961 c 12 s 46.68.090; prior: 1943 c 115 s 3; 1939 c 181 s 2; Rem. Supp. 1943 s 6600-1d; 1937 c 208 ss 2, part, 3, part.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2025 c 416 s 706 and by 2025 c 417 s 103, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Effective date—2025 c 417 ss 101-103, 406, 701-709, 808-814, 1102, 1103, and 1305: See note following RCW 82.38.030.

Findings—Intent—2025 c 417: See note following RCW 82.38.030.

Effective date—2025 c 416: See note following RCW 36.79.020.

Effective date—2015 3rd sp.s. c 44 ss 103, 105, and 110: See note following RCW 82.38.030.

Contingent expiration date—2015 3rd sp.s. c 44 ss 101, 102, 104, and 109: See note following RCW 82.38.030.

Effective date—2013 c 225: See note following RCW 82.38.010.

Effective date—2005 c 314 ss 101-107, 109, 303-309, and 401: See note following RCW 46.68.290.

Part headings not law—2005 c 314: See note following RCW 46.68.035.

Findings—2003 c 361: See note following RCW 82.38.030.

Effective dates—2003 c 361: See note following RCW 82.08.020.

Effective date—1999 c 269: See note following RCW 36.78.070.

Legislative finding—Effective dates—1999 c 94: See notes following RCW 43.84.092.

Effective date—1994 c 225: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect May 1, 1994." [1994 c 225 s 4.]

Effective dates—1991 c 342: See note following RCW 47.01.425.

Purpose of state and local transportation funding program—1990 c 42: "(1) The legislature finds that a new comprehensive funding program is required to maintain the state's commitment to the growing mobility needs of its citizens and commerce. The transportation

funding program is intended to satisfy the following state policies and objectives:

(a) Statewide system: Provide for preservation of the existing statewide system and improvements for current and expected capacity needs in rural, established urban, and growing suburban areas throughout the state;

(b) Local flexibility: Provide for necessary state highway improvements, as well as providing local governments with the option to use new funding sources for projects meeting local and regional needs;

(c) Multimodal: Provide a source of funds that may be used for multimodal transportation purposes;

(d) Program compatibility: Implement transportation facilities and services that are consistent with adopted land use and transportation plans and coordinated with recently authorized programs such as the act authorizing creation of transportation benefit districts and the local transportation act of 1988;

(e) Interjurisdictional cooperation: Encourage transportation planning and projects that are multijurisdictional in their conception, development, and benefit, recognizing that mobility problems do not respect jurisdictional boundaries;

(f) Public and private sector: Use a state, local, and private sector partnership that equitably shares the burden of meeting transportation needs.

(2) The legislature further recognizes that the revenues currently available to the state and to counties, cities, and transit authorities for highway, road, and street construction and preservation fall far short of the identified need. The 1988 Washington road jurisdiction study identified a statewide funding shortfall of between \$14.6 and \$19.9 billion to bring existing roads to acceptable standards. The gap between identified transportation needs and available revenues continues to increase. A comprehensive transportation funding program is required to meet the current and anticipated future needs of this state.

(3) The legislature further recognizes the desirability of making certain changes in the collection and distribution of motor vehicle excise taxes with the following objectives: Simplifying administration and collection of the taxes including adoption of a predictable depreciation schedule for vehicles; simplifying the allocation of the taxes among various recipients; and the dedication of a portion of motor vehicle excise taxes for transportation purposes.

(4) The legislature, therefore, declares a need for the three-part funding program embodied in this act: (a) Statewide funding for highways, roads, and streets in urban and rural areas; (b) local option funding authority, available immediately, for the construction and preservation of roads, streets, and transit improvements and facilities; and (c) the creation of a multimodal transportation fund that is funded through dedication of a portion of motor vehicle excise tax. This funding program is intended, by targeting certain new revenues, to produce a significant increase in the overall capacity of the state, county, and city transportation systems to satisfy and efficiently accommodate the movement of people and goods." [1990 c 42 s 1.]

Effective dates—Application—Implementation—1990 c 42: "(1) Sections 101 through 104, 115 through 117, 201 through 214, 405

through 411, and 503, chapter 42, Laws of 1990 are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect April 1, 1990.

(2) Sections 105 through 114, chapter 42, Laws of 1990 shall take effect September 1, 1990. The additional fees in sections 105 through 108, chapter 42, Laws of 1990 apply for all motor vehicle registrations that expire August 31, 1991, and thereafter.

(3) Sections 301 through 303 and 305 through 328, chapter 42, Laws of 1990 shall take effect September 1, 1990, and apply to the purchase of vehicle registrations that expire August 31, 1991, and thereafter.

(4) Section 304, chapter 42, Laws of 1990 shall take effect July 1, 1991, and apply to all vehicles registered for the first time with an expiration date of June 30, 1992, and thereafter.

(5) The director of licensing may immediately take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the sections of chapter 42, Laws of 1990 are implemented on their effective dates.

(6) *Sections 401 through 404, chapter 42, Laws of 1990 shall take effect September 1, 1990, only if the bonds issued under RCW 47.56.711 for the Spokane river toll bridge have been retired or fully defeased, and shall become null and void if the bonds have not been retired or fully defeased on that date." [1990 c 298 s 38; 1990 c 42 s 504.]

***Reviser's note:** The bonds were fully defeased on June 1, 1990.

Effective date—1983 1st ex.s. c 49: See RCW 36.79.901.

Effective dates—1977 ex.s. c 317: See note following RCW 82.38.030.

Rural arterial trust account: RCW 36.79.020.