

Seattle Public Utilities (McKenna Morrigan)

Seattle Public Utilities comments on Sustainable Food Management Grants Rulemaking, Chapter 173-316 WAC, are included in the attached letter.



August 28, 2026

Uploaded via Online Comment Form

Re: Chapter 173-316 WAC Sustainable Food Management Grants

Department of Ecology,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on draft rule WAC 173-316. Seattle Public Utilities appreciates Ecology's leadership in supporting food waste prevention, rescue, and recovery across the state. We respectfully request the following revisions to ensure the rule aligns with legislative requirements and intentions.

1. Competitive vs. Non-Competitive Grant Categories

We ask that the first four grant categories described (WAC 173-316-200, -210, -220, and -230) be awarded on a competitive basis, with selection criteria and preferences consistent with the directive in RCW 70A.207.040. The fifth category, WAC 173-316-240, however, should be awarded on a non-competitive basis to local governments per RCW 70A.207.050(2), *"The department may not require, as a condition of financial assistance under this section, that matching funds be made available by a local government recipient. **The department must provide assistance to each local government that demonstrates eligibility for grant assistance under this section.**"*

2. Alignment of Definitions

Please align the definitions of terms used in this rule with other definitions in the WAC (e.g. "beneficial use") to ensure consistency and regulatory clarity.

3. Eligible Work Clarification

Please ensure that the language used to describe the eligible work under 173-316-220 includes post-consumer food waste prevention strategies, including education and outreach, for residents.

4. Eligible Costs by Grant Category

To better support outcomes associated with the goals of these grants, please add the following eligible expenses to the following grant categories:

- WAC 173-316-200: Edible Food Rescue and Prevention
 - Employee and contractor time for technical assistance
 - Education and outreach
 - Real estate
 - Technology
 - Storage and transportation equipment
 - Food packaging

- Analytics tools
- Convening and event expenses
- Construction costs related to site or infrastructure improvements
- WAC 173-316-210: Safe Food Transport and Supply Chain Modernization
 - Employee and contractor time
 - Training costs
 - Development and deployment of new operating protocols
 - Education and outreach
 - Technical assistance
 - Data analytics tools
- WAC 173-316-220: Food Access and Waste Reduction Equity
 - Employee and contractor time
 - Education and outreach (including post-consumer food waste prevention for residents)
 - Technical assistance
 - Storage & transport equipment
 - Food packaging
 - Data analytics tools
- WAC 173-316-230: Food Waste Reduction Pilots and Data Improvement
 - Pilot project design, deployment, and evaluation
 - Employee and contractor time
 - Technology development
 - Data analytics tools
- WAC 173-316-240: Organics Policy Implementation and Compliance
 - Employee and contractor time
 - Real estate
 - Data analytics tools
 - Training expenses
 - Equipment purchases or upgrades

Thank you for your consideration, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations further to ensure WAC 173-316 effectively supports statewide food waste prevention, rescue, and recovery.

Sincerely,



McKenna Morrigan
Strategic Advisor – Waste Prevention and Solid Waste Policy
Solid Waste Planning & Program Management Division
Seattle Public Utilities