

City of Seattle - City Light

The City of Seattle, including Seattle City Light, appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Washington Clean Vehicles Program draft rule. The city strongly supports the program's goals which have important implications for the city's sustainability goals. We offer the following recommendations for electric utility vehicles that directly respond to emergency repair and restoration of electricity services following power outages. These vehicles are vital to restoring power that directly affects public life and safety.

Ecology to consider adding a vehicle exemption type:

WAC 173-423-060 Exemptions – Add "Utility vehicles directly used in emergency repair and restoration of electricity services" to this exemption list.

Washington Department of Ecology

Chapter 173-423 WAC; Clean Vehicles Program Rulemaking

Re: City of Seattle Comments on Ecology's Clean Vehicles Program Rulemaking

Dear Washington State Department of Ecology,

The City of Seattle, including Seattle City Light, appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Washington Clean Vehicles Program draft rule. The city strongly supports the program's goals which have important implications for the city's sustainability goals. We offer the following recommendations for electric utility vehicles that directly respond to emergency repair and restoration of electricity services following power outages. These vehicles are vital to restoring power that directly affects public life and safety.

[WAC 173-423-060 Exemptions](#) – Add "Utility vehicles directly used in emergency repair and restoration of electricity services" to this exemption list.

Reference: [EPA Act Section 707 Emergency Repair and Restoration Vehicle Exclusions](#)

Program and Compliance: [Alternative Fuel Transportation Program \(10 CFR Part 490\)](#)

Purpose and Scope: The provisions of this part implement the alternative fuel transportation program for State government and alternative fuel provider fleets under titles III, IV, and V of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102-486).

List of Excluded Vehicles Through EPA Act Program:

Excluded Vehicles

- **Emergency vehicles, including vehicles directly used in the emergency repair of transmission lines and in the restoration of electricity service following power outages**
- Law enforcement vehicles
- Nonroad vehicles
- Vehicles parked at private residences when not in use
- Vehicles used for evaluating or testing products of a motor vehicle manufacturer, including those owned or held by a university for research purposes
- Vehicles owned or held by a testing laboratory or other evaluation facility that are used solely for evaluating the vehicles' performance
- Vehicles acquired and used for purposes that the U.S. Secretary of Defense certifies must be exempted for national security reasons

- Vehicles held for lease or rental to the general public
- Vehicles held for sale by motor vehicle dealers, including demonstration vehicles

Adding the additional language above to the WAC 173-423-060 vehicle exemption list will safeguard power restoration to the public. In the event of a major outage these vehicles will be called upon to operate continuously until electrical services are restored. Many of these events happen in winter when electric vehicles have lower performance and higher power consumption. With the recent Bomb Cyclone in 2024, power restoration took days to complete with vehicles working around the clock. While ZEVs can perform routine daily electric utility work, the current market ready ZEVs only supports a small portion of the types of equipment needed to perform restoration work during an outage.

With the uncertainty of Advance Clean Fleet (ACF) which helps Fleets with exemptions for Mutual Aid Assistance (largely electrical outages) this addition will build resilience into the Clean Vehicle Program rule now and in the future.

Alternative recommendation:

Limited Enforcement Discretion for Electric Restoration Vehicles – Ecology to consider agency discretion to limit enforcement of [Chapter 173-423 WAC](#) for “Utility vehicles directly used in emergency repair and restoration of electricity services.” This will allow electric utilities to purchase the required vehicles to restore power for public life and safety.