

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CLEAN FUEL STANDARD

The Clean Fuel Standard requires oil refiners and importers to reduce the carbon intensity of fuels by 20% by 2035, reducing carbon and air pollution, supporting expanded transportation electrification, and creating more homegrown jobs in the production of clean, low-carbon fuels.

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Can Washington State make a difference on a global problem like climate change with a Clean Fuel Standard?

Yes, absolutely. The Clean Fuel Standard will cut global warming pollution from the transportation sector—Washington’s most polluting sector and one of the hardest and most important to address if we are going to address the climate crisis in time. Everyone must act but Washington has a critical role. Our transportation emissions alone are equal to or greater than the emissions of entire countries such as Norway, Ireland, New Zealand, and Ecuador, to name a few.

We also know that Clean Fuel Standards work. The best way to know if a policy works is to look to places that already have implemented it: California has avoided 38 million tons of carbon pollution and cut almost 13.7 billion gallons of petroleum under their Clean Fuel Standard. California has also invested \$2.8 billion of investment in clean fuels production. Oregon’s Clean Fuels Program reduced climate pollution by almost 1.3 million tons in 2019 alone. In Washington, the Clean Fuel Standard will reduce our emissions by 4-6 million tons annually—the equivalent of taking one in five cars off the road.

Will this policy help me and my family?

Yes, this policy will literally help us all breathe easier. As the recent Washington wildfires and the continuing COVID-19 pandemic have shown, clean air matters to us all—and less emissions from our cars and trucks means cleaner air. Public health organizations are prioritizing the Clean Fuel Standard to improve public health and air quality, save millions in healthcare costs, and address climate change.

Prioritizing cleaner fuels and cleaner air will also help address long-standing inequities in who is most impacted by climate change and pollution. In King County, diesel particulate pollution contributes to a reduction in life expectancy by 13 years for those living in the Duwamish Valley compared to other parts of the County. Clean Fuel Standards in CA, OR, and BC have contributed to billions of dollars in avoided public health costs because of fewer asthma attacks and hospitalizations, lower rates of lung cancer and heart attacks, and thousands of fewer lost workdays. For example, California’s Clean Fuel Standard will help save the state \$8.3 billion by 2025 through lower health care costs.

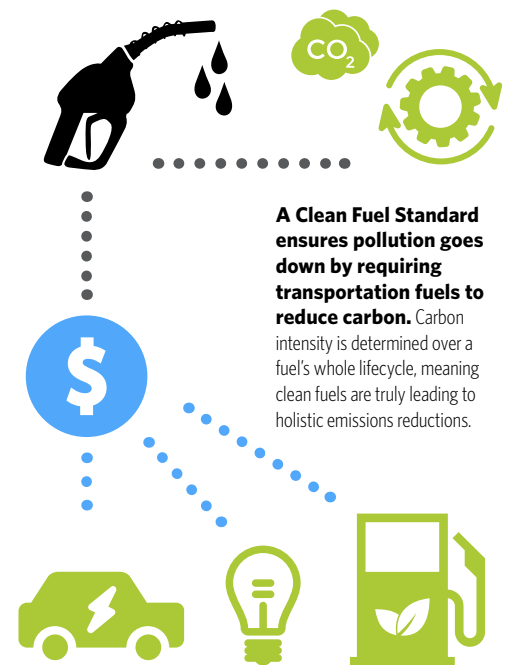


How does the Clean Fuel Standard work?

A Clean Fuel Standard simply requires fuel producers to sell a cleaner product or invest in clean, low-carbon choices like electricity and local, sustainable biofuels to power our transportation.

Dirty fuel producers can either clean up their act or pay for clean fuels production.

This will create a positive cycle: clean fuels producers and green fleet operators will be able to expand clean fuels use and production while oil companies pay for it.



A Clean Fuel Standard ensures pollution goes down by requiring transportation fuels to reduce carbon. Carbon intensity is determined over a fuel’s whole lifecycle, meaning clean fuels are truly leading to holistic emissions reductions.

Under the Clean Fuel Standard, utilities will invest the credits they receive from clean electricity being used as a fuel into further transportation electrification. Credit revenues generated from oil companies will also be reinvested in communities impacted by pollution to help address transportation and clean air issues.

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How will this policy help our economy?

It will help our economy by keeping clean fuels and green jobs here at home. We actually produce clean fuels in our state, but the product gets shipped to our neighbors that have adopted a Clean Fuel Standard: CA, OR, and B.C.. These states continue to attract new clean fuels business investments—like sustainable biofuel feedstock production in rural communities and electric vehicle infrastructure—while Washington is missing out. By implementing the Clean Fuel Standard, Washington can become even more competitive, turning agricultural, food, and forestry waste into revenue.

Can we cut carbon from transportation without raising costs?

Yes. Dependence on a global fossil fuel market already costs us with volatile oil prices, and the health care costs of air pollution. Right now, Washington consumers have no choice or ability to influence the price of fuels. The oil industry dictates the price of gas, bringing in about 80 cents per gallon of pure profit in the Seattle metropolitan area. A Clean Fuel Standard would ensure the cleanest and most affordable fuels compete on a level playing field. In 2019, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency found a Clean Fuel Standard would ultimately lower transportation costs per mile, saving Washingtonians millions of dollars a year.

Isn't pricing or capping carbon a better way to address global warming pollution?

It's a false choice to think we must choose only one policy to address global warming. CA and B.C. both have Clean Fuel Standards and carbon cap/pricing policies working together to reduce carbon pollution. Well-designed carbon pricing systems can be effective tools, but they are a complement, not a replacement, for a Clean Fuel Standard. Reducing carbon pollution via a price alone is difficult. We need a Clean Fuel Standard to truly cut carbon in the transportation sector, protect our health, and to support local economic growth.

Every year we hear this will increase the price of gas. Is that reflected in other states?

No. Oil companies will tell you that this policy will raise the price of gas, when the reality is they inflate the costs by running some of their highest profit margins here in Washington State. The oil industry has thrown around multiple numbers about how much a Clean Fuel Standard would supposedly raise the price of gas. However, these numbers are based on incomplete speculations—only including credit prices—and not real world information on retail fuel prices. In fact, the current average cost for gas in CA is slightly less than when their program began! Meanwhile, OR's Clean Fuels Program has seen the cost of gasoline increase by only about one percent. This corresponds with a study using data from the American Petroleum Institute and AAA which determined that California's Clean Fuel Standard accounted for only one percent of the cost of gasoline there.

Can we create biofuels sustainably?

Yes. The Clean Fuel Standard requires a lifecycle analysis of a fuel's carbon intensity—covering the fuel's production and distribution, as well as its end use as a fuel. For example, fuels made from palm oil garnered through deforestation would be too carbon intensive to be rewarded under the policy. Using a lifecycle analysis disincentivizes negative impacts like converting forests to agriculture.

Are there enough clean fuels to meet the standard?

Yes. A study by the International Council on Clean Transportation found that low-carbon fuels can replace over a quarter of the gasoline and diesel used by vehicles in the Pacific Coast region by 2030. Washington is already producing clean fuels but must ship it to neighboring states that have a Clean Fuel Standard since there is not a market here. That needs to change.