

Employee Commute Options

Oregon Administrative Rules 340-242-0010 through 0290

What are the ECO Rules?

The Employee Commute Options rules, also called ECO, apply to employers in the Portland area with more than 100 employees reporting to a work site. These employers must provide incentives for employee use of commute options like taking the bus or carpooling. The incentives must have the potential to reduce commute trips to the work site by 10 percent from an established baseline.

ECO is part of a federally required plan to reduce smog levels. This plan also includes the DEQ Vehicle Inspection Program and industry regulations.

Why do we have ECO?

The main goal of ECO is to protect public health by reducing air pollution from motor vehicles. Car exhaust is one of our region's largest single sources of air pollution.

ECO also helps reduce traffic congestion. Added time to deliver goods and services hurts the competitiveness of our region's businesses.

Health and environmental effects of air pollution

Car exhaust is a main ingredient in ground-level ozone, also called smog. Breathing even low levels of smog can decrease lung function and aggravate asthma.

Smog hurts everyone but is especially harmful to children, older adults and people with heart disease and breathing problems like asthma. According to the Oregon Health Authority, approximately 10.2 percent of adults and 9.5 percent of children in Oregon have asthma. This is higher than the national average. More than a quarter of adults with asthma report missing at least one day of work per year due to their condition.

Car exhaust is a primary source of carbon dioxide, a global warming gas.

Car exhaust also is a major source of air toxics - chemicals known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health effects. A recent DEQ study shows unhealthy levels of benzene and other air toxics in Portland's air.

How does an employer comply?

DEQ requires employers to:

- Survey employees to determine current commute methods
- Prepare a plan to meet the target reduction and submit the plan to DEQ for approval
- Perform follow-up surveys every two years to measure progress toward the 10 percent trip reduction goal

What are some typical commute options incentives?

Popular programs include:

- Transit and vanpool subsidies
- Allowing employees to purchase transit passes with pre-tax dollars (can also reduce an employer's FICA and unemployment taxes)
- Carpool matching and preferential parking for carpools
- Compressed work weeks (4/10s for example)
- Telecommuting
- Bike/walk incentives
- Emergency ride home program



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

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Air Operations**
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Portland, OR 97232
Phone: 503- 229-6154
800- 452-4011
Fax: 503- 229-5408

Contacts:
email: eco@deq.state.or.us
web site:
www.oregon.gov/DEQ

Is there a penalty for not complying?

Yes. DEQ requires an employer to demonstrate *good faith effort*. This means an employer must survey employees and submit and implement a reasonable trip reduction plan. Failure to follow through with these requirements can result in a fine.

DEQ will not fine a company for not reaching its trip reduction goal.

Alternative formats

Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696; or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.

Resources

<p>DEQ ECO Compliance Help (503) 229-6154 E-mail: eco@deq.state.or.us www.oregon.gov/deq/aq/programs/Pages/ECO.aspx</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECO rule interpretation & compliance assistance • Survey and plan assistance • Referral to other resources 		
<p>TriMet Employer Programs (503) 962-7670 E-mail: employerprograms@trimet.org www.trimet.org/employers/index.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit pass plans for employees, students • ECO planning assistance • Surveys and survey processing • On-line survey • Information about pretax payroll deduction • Employee transportation coordinator training 		
<p>C-TRAN (360) 695-0123 or (503) 238-8054 Website: www.c-tran.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transit serving the Vancouver/Portland Metro area • Trip planning assistance 		
<p>Get There Oregon Metro Regional Travel Options (503) 797-1757 RTO@oregonmetro.gov https://getthereoregon.gov/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rideshare and carpool matching • Commuter incentives • Walk, bike, transit, and vanpool trip planning tools • Trip-tracking diary and more 		
<p>Metro Regional Travel Options (503) 797-1757 E-mail: rto@OregonMetro.gov www.OregonMetro.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find local resources for walking, biking, ridesharing and taking transit 		
<p>Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) advocate for employers and are central sources of information on commute transportation issues. Contact the TMA that most closely serves your area for help with ECO compliance and to learn about transportation options in your area.</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Columbia Corridor Association (503) 287-8686 info@columbiacorridor.org www.columbiacorridor.org</p> <p>Explore Washington Park (503) 319-0999 info@explorewashingtonpark.org www.explorewashingtonpark.org</p> <p>Go Lloyd (503) 236-6441 E-mail: mail@golloyd.org www.golloyd.org</p> <p>Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center (503) 665-1131 E-mail: gacc@greshamchamber.org www.greshamchamber.org</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Get Around Slabtown (503) 488-2244 E-mail: slabtownTDM@nelsonnygaard.com www.slabtownpdx.org</p> <p>SMART Transit (Wilsonville) (503) 570-0332 E-mail: smart@ridesmart.com www.ridesmart.com</p> <p>South Waterfront Community Relations (503) 972-2830 E-mail: communityrelations@thesouthwaterfront.com www.southwaterfront.com</p> <p>Westside Transportation Alliance (503) 489-8520 E-mail: wta@wta-tma.org www.wta-tma.org</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Columbia Corridor Association (503) 287-8686 info@columbiacorridor.org www.columbiacorridor.org</p> <p>Explore Washington Park (503) 319-0999 info@explorewashingtonpark.org www.explorewashingtonpark.org</p> <p>Go Lloyd (503) 236-6441 E-mail: mail@golloyd.org www.golloyd.org</p> <p>Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center (503) 665-1131 E-mail: gacc@greshamchamber.org www.greshamchamber.org</p>	<p>Get Around Slabtown (503) 488-2244 E-mail: slabtownTDM@nelsonnygaard.com www.slabtownpdx.org</p> <p>SMART Transit (Wilsonville) (503) 570-0332 E-mail: smart@ridesmart.com www.ridesmart.com</p> <p>South Waterfront Community Relations (503) 972-2830 E-mail: communityrelations@thesouthwaterfront.com www.southwaterfront.com</p> <p>Westside Transportation Alliance (503) 489-8520 E-mail: wta@wta-tma.org www.wta-tma.org</p>
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