



The UTC and Energy Regulation

Ann Rendahl, Commissioner

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- Agency established by the Legislature in 1905 as the Railroad Commission.
- The UTC protects consumers by ensuring that utility and transportation services are fairly priced, available, reliable, and safe.
- **Economic regulation**
 - Regulate private investor-owned monopolies
 - Authorize changes in rates, terms and service
 - Enforce statutes and rules, assess penalties
- **Public safety**
 - Inspect rail crossings, pipeline and motor carriers for safety
 - Monitor insurance and register motor carriers
- **Consumer Protection**
 - Resolve customer complaints and disputes
 - Investigate unfair business practices by companies
 - Educate consumers to make good choices

- **Three commissioners**

- Staggered 6-year terms
- Law requires political balance
- Appointed by Governor
- Confirmed by Senate
- Governor appoints Chair

- **165 Staff**

- Accountants
- Economists
- Engineers
- Investigators
- Safety Inspectors
- Attorneys and Administrative Law Judges
- Consumer Specialists
- Support and Clerical Staff

3 Electric Companies (45% of state electric customers)

- Puget Sound Energy (Western WA)
- Avista Corporation (Eastern WA)
- PacifiCorp d/b/a Pacific Power and Light (Southeastern WA)

4 Natural Gas Companies (About 1 M customers statewide)

- Puget Sound Energy (Western WA)
- Avista Corporation (Eastern WA)
- Cascade Natural Gas (Across WA)
- Northwest Natural Gas (Southeastern WA)

The UTC does not regulate publicly owned electric utilities:

- Municipal utilities, e.g., Seattle City Light, Tacoma Power
- Public Utility Districts, e.g., Snohomish PUD
- Rural Electric Cooperatives

Other Industries UTC Regulates

- **Telecommunications Companies**

- 400+ registered telecommunications companies
- UTC does not regulate cable or wireless service

- **Private Water Companies**

- 100 or more customers or
- Receive \$570> avg. annual revenue per customers

- **Solid Waste Collection Companies**

- **Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Site Operator**
- **Oil Pipeline & Pipeline Companies**

- **Railroads & Railroad Crossings**

- **Household Goods Movers**

- **Bus and Airporter Operations**

- **Commercial Ferries**

- **Common Carriers**

- Federal government has jurisdiction over wholesale energy sales and interstate transmission.
- State governments have jurisdiction over retail sales, distribution, and power produced by a utility for its own retail customers.

- **Rate Cases & Filings**

- Avista General Rate Case
- Pacific Power General Rate Case
- Cascade Natural Gas General Rate Case
- PSE General Rate Case – planned for January 2017
- PSE LNG Plant & Storage Facility
- Electric Vehicle Pilots
- Etc.

- **Rulemakings**

- Reliability, possible Interconnection rules

- **Participation in:**

- Clean Power Plan – coordinating with Commerce, Ecology
- State Clean Air Rule
- CA Independent System Operator
 - Energy Imbalance Market
 - Regional Transmission Operator