

# Fulfill our Clean Energy Initiative

## What is it?

Washington's Clean Energy Initiative (also known as I-937) was passed by voters in November 2006 and requires the state's major electric utilities<sup>1</sup> to gradually increase the amount of *new* renewable resources in their electricity supply to 15% by 2020. Washington is one of 29 states across the country that have adopted and implemented some form of a clean energy acquisition standard. California, Colorado and Texas are among the states that have increased their renewable energy targets.

The law also required these utilities, beginning in 2010, to capture all cost-effective energy efficiency resources in their service territories. "Cost effective" means as cheap or cheaper than getting an equal amount of new power generation.

## The purposes of the Clean Energy Initiative

- To create jobs and boost local economies by encouraging investments in new renewable resources and locally delivered energy efficiency.
- To save consumers money on their electric bills by getting all the cost-effective conservation available.
- To protect against future price shocks from rising fuel, infrastructure or carbon costs by developing both energy efficiency and fossil fuel-free power resources.
- To diversify our renewable energy resource mix, build on the state's clean energy heritage and make sure our future power is as clean as today's. Renewable hydropower now provides more than 2/3 of our electricity.
- To avoid the air pollution and greenhouse-gas emissions from fossil-fueled power plants.

## The Initiative so far

Most of the 17 qualifying utilities are meeting - or *exceeding* -- their targets for both renewable resources and cost-effective energy efficiency. Communities and businesses across the state and region are reaping the benefits of the new clean energy sector investments and jobs engendered by the initiative.

### Energy efficiency

- After just one year (energy efficiency tracking started in 2010), the state's conservation achievements are at an all-time high.
- Utilities saved a total of about 120 average megawatts in 2010 through energy efficiency *alone* -- enough to power more than 72,000 Washington homes.
- Tacoma Power, Snohomish PUD, Puget Sound Energy, Avista Utilities and Seattle City Light report they exceeded their first-year targets by 4% to 36%.

### Renewable energy

- The Initiative has spurred nearly \$7.5 billion of new investment in renewable energy resources in Washington, creating 5,000 construction and 2,200 permanent jobs across the region.
- New renewable energy generators already have contributed more than \$40 million in new revenues to local governments and the state.
- I-937's first benchmark (for 2012) has resulted in 650 average megawatts of new renewables, enough to power more than half a million homes. All utilities will comply with the first benchmark.

## **The message is simple: The Clean Energy Initiative is working!**

- The Clean Energy Initiative has generated about \$7.5 billion in renewable energy investments in this state, especially in our struggling rural communities, and all-time-record efficiency savings for energy consumers. More investments, more savings and more jobs will come to us as long as we keep the pathway open.
- The initiative reduces our reliance on fossil fuels, protecting us from pollution and volatile prices, and remains the No. 1 practical means for meeting the state's official climate limits. We must continue its success in protecting our environment and the health of our families.
- In these challenging economic times, The Clean Energy Initiative is delivering real economic development through energy efficiency and new renewable energy, along with the health and environmental benefits that come with those solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> The law applies to 17 of the state's 63 electric utilities, comprising approximately 91% of Washington retail electricity consumers and 88% of electricity consumed. Qualifying utilities include three investor-owned utilities, 10 public utility districts, two municipalities and two electric cooperatives, each with more than 25,000 customers.