Service Date: April 7, 2026

STATE OF WASHINGTON

UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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April 7, 2026

NOTICE OF HYBRID TECHNICAL CONFERENCE
(set for Monday, April 27, 2026, at 9 a.m.)

Phone: (253) 215-8782 • Meeting ID: 850 3551 0092# • Passcode: 075676#
Zoom: Click here to join meeting[1]

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission or UTC) has opened Docket UE-260162 to proactively explore the effects of emerging large loads on electric utilities. Investor-owned utilities regulated by the Commission have not yet brought on significant large load customers in their service territories. However, consistent with the UTC's mission to protect the people of Washington by making sure investor-owned utility services are safe, equitable, available, reliable, and fairly priced, the Commission will use this docket to prepare for any future large load customers in electric service territories regulated by the Commission.

Large load customers pose unique risks and opportunities for the traditional business models and regulatory environments of electric utilities, especially in the constrained power system of the Pacific Northwest. In this docket, the Commission will focus on developing principles and policies related to large loads seeking service from and interconnection with investor-owned electric utilities (electric IOUs) subject to the Commission's jurisdiction.

Through Docket UE-260162, the Commission plans to engage interested persons to identify key issues related to the interconnection of large load customers with electric IOUs. The Commission will convene at least one technical conference, followed by additional technical conferences and workshops as needed. The Commissioners will not attend the technical conferences, but will be present at the workshops. The Commission will offer ample opportunities for written comment throughout the process. Ultimately, the Commission plans to release a policy statement that offers principles and policies regarding large load interconnection with electric IOUs, including guidance for ratepayer protections and risk mitigation.

[1] https://utc-wa-gov.zoom.us/j/85035510092?pwd=tdaz1rYovufx8LFL0aRAiHan6if6KN.1.

There are significant emerging impacts and effects of large loads on public infrastructure including but not limited to water availability, waste generation, air permitting, tax incentives, and cybersecurity. This docket will not cover the effects of large loads that are not directly related to electric IOU operations. The Commission acknowledges that large loads create other effects on public infrastructure but recognizes that these issues are largely outside of the Commission's jurisdiction. Although water rates for regulated companies do fall under Commission jurisdiction, the Commission declines to address water usage in this docket. Should it become necessary to address the issue of water usage the Commission will either expand the scope of this docket or create a new docket.

BACKGROUND

Large load interconnections and demand for electricity are rapidly growing across the United States and the Western Interconnection. This growth is fueled in part by large loads, which include data centers, manufacturing facilities, hydrogen production, as well as aggregate loads from heating, cooling, and electrification, including EV charging.[2]

In 2025, Washington Governor Bob Ferguson issued Executive Order 25-05, which created the Data Center Workgroup (DCWG). UTC Chair Rybarik participated in the DCWG as the representative of the Commission. In the preliminary report published by the Department of Revenue, the DCWG specifically recommends that the Commission work to strengthen ratepayer protections and improve resource forecasting with respect to new large loads. The DCWG also recommended that state agencies incentivize flexibility and energy efficiency while accelerating the siting and permitting of clean energy generators and transmission.[3] The legislature contemplated regulation of "emerging large energy use facilities" during the 2025-2026 legislative session, including HB 2515, which ultimately did not pass.[4]

The Commission believes that it has sufficient jurisdiction to examine these issues concerning electric IOUs through a policy docket. Under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 34.05.230(1), agencies are "encouraged to advise the public of its current opinions, approaches, and likely courses of action by means of interpretive or policy statements."

NOTICE OF TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

The Commission will convene a hybrid technical conference on April 27, 2026, beginning at 9:00 AM. The Commissioners will not be in attendance, and the conference will be recorded. The recording will be shared in the docket following the conference.

The Commission will hold the conference in-person with the option to participate virtually. Commission headquarters will be open to the public for in-person participation. Interested

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[2] Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC), *An Assessment of Large Load Interconnection Risks in the Western Interconnection*, Page 5.

[3] Washington State Department of Revenue, *Data Center Workgroup: Preliminary Report*.

[4] HB 2515, Washington State Legislature

persons may listen to the meeting via Zoom by calling (253) 215-8782 and using Meeting ID 850 3551 0092# and the Passcode 075676#. To participate in the meeting using Zoom on a computer or mobile device, click here to join the conference.[5] If you wish to be placed on the interested parties contact list, please submit your request to the Commission's Records Center at records@utc.wa.gov.

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN COMMENT

The Commission asks that interested persons submit written comments in response to the following questions by April 21, 2026, at 5 p.m. for the technical conference on April 27, 2026. Comments submitted after April 21, 2026, will be considered but may not be included in the presentation slides. Answers to these questions and the discussion at the technical conference will be used to inform the future direction for engagement in this docket.

At this technical conference, the Commission would like to clarify technical details related to the relationship between large loads and electric IOUs including the definition of a "large load." Some of the questions relate to how the electric IOUs and the Commission will track and share information on large loads.

In general, the Commission poses these questions to set the stage for future discussions in this docket. Space will be left at the end of the technical conference agenda for staff and participants to explore other concerns related to large loads. Future topics for this docket will be informed by the comments submitted and the conversations shared at this technical conference.

1. How should the Commission and electric IOUs define "large loads?" Should it be based on a specific MW threshold, characteristics of the load itself, end use, current utility definitions, or a combination of those criteria?[6]

2. When large loads interconnect to a utility system, there are usually resulting costs to accomplish the interconnection. These costs can be direct, such as generation required to serve load or site-specific transmission upgrades, and indirect, such as increased demand for resources in the broader power market or other supply chain and resource adequacy constraints.[7]

    a. What are particular costs (or benefits) related to large loads that the Commission and electric IOUs should quantify and track?

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[5] https://utc-wa-gov.zoom.us/j/85035510092?pwd=tdaz1rYovufx8LFL0aRAiHan6if6KN.1.

[6] HB 2515 defined "emerging large energy use facilities as being over 20 MW and listed under 518210 of North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The federal Northwest Power Act defines "New Large Single Loads" as one that results in an increase in power requirements of ten average MW or more in any 12-month period. The DCWG did not define large loads but recommends that the Commission and Commerce identify a MW threshold for large loads and specify their characteristics.

[7] 2025 Large Load Literature Review | Energy Markets & Planning, 2026 Large Load Literature Review and Data Sources | Energy Markets & Planning

b. Would tracking the costs related to large loads require different approaches than the Commission's and electric IOU's existing practices?

3. What data do the Commission, electric IOUs, and interested persons require to assess the effects of large loads in an IOU service territory? Is that data publicly accessible or otherwise available through existing UTC processes? Are there third-party sources of data that could be used when assessing large loads in a utility setting?

    a. In line with the DCWG recommendations, what data is needed to incentivize greater demand flexibility and energy efficiency that allows for interconnection of new large loads?[8]

4. Industry expertise suggests that more uniform forecasting frameworks and modeling methodologies are needed to accurately forecast large loads and protect customers from risk.[9]
    a. How should electric IOUs evaluate requests for interconnection from large load customers?
    b. How should electric IOUs forecast large load demand within their service territories, or otherwise consider large load demand in their forecasts and planning processes?
    c. Are current electric IOU practices related to resource adequacy metrics sufficient for large loads? Why or why not?[10]
    d. What steps should be taken by electric IOUs or the Commission to manage changing conditions for the arrival, departure, or overall demand of a large load?

5. What mechanisms, in WA or elsewhere, could be used to protect ratepayers from bearing additional cost burden from large load interconnections and operations?

In addition to the questions for interested persons, the Commission has specific questions on current utility processes. While we mainly seek answers related to these current practices from utilities, we also seek feedback from other interested persons on what utilities should do related to these practices.

1. What is your company's current process for large load interconnections? What existing industry research and literature does your company use to guide its interconnection process?

2. How many requests for large load customers are currently in your company's interconnection queue?

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[8] Washington State Department of Revenue, *Data Center Workgroup: Preliminary Report*, page 22.

[9] Forecasting Large Loads in the Age of AI and Data Centers - E3, Large Load Modeling for Dynamic Studies: Current Practices and Recommendations | ESIG.

[10] WAC 480-100-620 says that an integrated resource plan must include an assessment and determination of resource adequacy metrics. It must also identify an appropriate resource adequacy requirement and measurement metrics consistent with RCW 19.405.030 through 19.405.050.

3. What tariff schedules currently serve large load customers? Does your company currently have any special contracts with large load customers? If so, please identify these contracts.

4. How does your company currently consider large loads in load forecasting and integrated resource planning practices? What existing industry research and literature does your company use to guide its forecasting process?[11]

Information related to this proceeding, including comments filed by interested persons, will be posted on the Commission's website as it becomes available. Persons filing comments will receive future communications the Commission issues in this docket. If you do not file comments but wish to receive such information you may contact the Commission's Records Center by telephone at (360) 664-1234 or by email at records@utc.wa.gov and ask to be including on the mailing list for Docket UE-260162.

If you have any questions regarding this docket, you may contact Charlie Inman, Energy Policy Advisor, by email at charlie.inman@utc.wa.gov.

Jeff Killip
Digitally signed by Jeff Killip
Date: 2026.04.07 15:04:07 -07'00'

JEFF KILLIP
Executive Director and Secretary

[11] Examples include Forecasting Large Loads in the Age of AI and Data Centers - E3, Large Load Modeling for Dynamic Studies: Current Practices and Recommendations | ESIG.