



PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY

CR-101 (October 2017) (Implements RCW 34.05.310)

Do NOT use for expedited rule making

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: December 13, 2023

TIME: 8:19 AM

WSR 24-01-063

Agency: Utilities and Transportation Commission

Subject of possible rule making: The purpose of this rulemaking is to make permanent exemptions to the odorization requirements of WAC 480-93-015 for operators of class 1 and 2 renewable natural gas (RNG) transmission facilities (pipelines) with hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) present in the gas. These exemptions were added by emergency rulemaking at WSR 23-23-059. WAC 480-93-015(2) previously required all gas pipeline operators, without exception, to odorize their lines and perform a sniff test to detect odorization. Because H₂S is toxic to humans, class 1 and 2 transmission pipelines where H₂S is present should be exempt from the odorization and sniff test requirements to prevent injuries that would be incurred by meeting the sniff test requirement.

Statutes authorizing the agency to adopt rules on this subject: RCW 80.01.040, RCW 81.01.010, RCW 81.04.160, and RCW 80.24.020

Reasons why rules on this subject may be needed and what they might accomplish: To meet the odorization requirements of WAC 480-93-015 prior to the emergency rule amendment, operators of class 1 and 2 RNG transmission pipeline facilities were required to put employees at significant risk of injury. Performing a sniff test when H₂S is present in the pipeline exposes the tester to a substance that is toxic and hazardous. Exempting odorization of these lines, in addition to exempting the sniff test, is necessary because the addition of odor without confirmation via a sniff test makes the effectiveness of odorization questionable. Additionally, if odorization is not being checked via a sniff test, this may result in under-odorization which could cause leaks to go unnoticed. Unodorized lines are required under the WAC to be checked each month via a gas leak survey. The proposed permanent revisions include the requirement that under the exempted circumstances, operators must be able to otherwise demonstrate impurity levels.

Identify other federal and state agencies that regulate this subject and the process coordinating the rule with these agencies: N/A

Process for developing new rule (check all that apply):


- Negotiated rule making
- Pilot rule making
- Agency study

Other (describe) The UTC utilizes a collaborative rulemaking process that includes stakeholder workshops, formal comments, and draft rules.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting:

	(If necessary)
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Additional comments:

Date: December 13, 2023	Signature: 
Name: Kathy Hunter	
Title: Acting Executive Director and Secretary	