



1.0 Purpose and Objective:

Pierce County is committed to reducing fossil fuel use by 20 percent by the year 2020. Burning less fossil fuel will improve the health of the employees and residents of Pierce County through cleaner air and water.

Electric vehicles and equipment play a crucial role in our effort to protect our environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions while increasing our energy independence. The purpose of this policy is to promote the use of electric vehicles and electric equipment in Pierce County operations.

Electric vehicles and equipment can help improve local air quality and limit the potential for oil runoff into our rivers, lakes and Puget Sound. In addition, electric vehicles and equipment can save taxpayer dollars by lowering fuel costs and reducing maintenance. By instituting and following the Electric First Policy, Pierce County will also set the right example for county residents and businesses.

2.0 Policy:

Purchase of electric cars and equipment should be considered first when new or replacement vehicles and equipment is required, provided the electric option:

- Provides the same or better capability, longevity, and operation and maintenance;
- Is financially reasonable when evaluated on a total cost of ownership basis; and
- Does not require the County and its departments to make unreasonable accommodations to charge the vehicle or equipment.

This Electric First policy is necessary to achieve the goals of the Sustainability 2020 plan ([Resolution R2016-56](#)) as passed by the Pierce County Council in 2016. This policy will help Pierce County meet six of the fifteen Sustainability 2020 Goals.

3.0 Scope:

This policy applies to all Pierce County departments.

4.0 Definitions:

4.1 Electric Vehicle

A car or truck using one or more electric motors or traction motors for propulsion (Battery Electric Vehicle BEV). Some electric vehicles will also have a (PHEV) gas engine.

4.2 Electric Equipment

Equipment used for maintenance of County facilities for which there is an electric option such as chainsaws, edgers, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, and hand pushed lawn mowers.

4.3 Sustainability Purchasing Board

A group made up of the County purchasing agent, Budget and Finance leadership, the Sustainability Manager, the Facilities Director (or designee), Public Works Director (or designee), and Parks Director (or designee) will meet at least annually to oversee implementation, consider revisions, and mark progress toward Sustainability 2020 Goals. This board will also be critical in finding resources to install charging infrastructure at appropriate facilities. This board will facilitate the sharing of best practices on electric equipment.

5.0 Responsibilities:

Pierce County departments have the responsibility to follow this policy as long as there is a commercially and economically reasonable option to replace a current fossil fuel product. The policy applies to purchases of vehicles and equipment that reach their usual end of life, and to those resulting from expanded service requirements.

It is the responsibility of employees, department buyers and department directors to meet the policy goals. Final arbitration of any dispute will be handled by the Deputy County Executive or the County Executive.

Within 90 days of adoption of this policy, each department with gasoline equipment (Parks, Public Works and Facilities) will provide the Board with:

- An inventory of their equipment along with a replacement schedule;
- Designation of equipment they consider to be replaceable with safe, commercially viable and cost-effective non-fossil fuel alternatives; and
- An assessment of future opportunities to replace additional equipment.

6.0 Policy Exemptions:

The policy does not apply to the following vehicles, equipment or circumstances.

6.1 Sheriff patrol vehicles are exempt until an electric car can meet the varied needs of law enforcement officials.

6.2 Certain emergency management and public works vehicles that may need to remain fossil fuel powered in the event of a prolonged power outage; and

6.3 If department officials demonstrate that electric vehicle or equipment alternatives are not economically viable; are not capable of providing the necessary level of service; or require an unreasonable investment in facility additions or modifications to provide charging capabilities.

7.0 Oversight and Evaluation:

Biannual evaluation of the policy will be conducted by the Sustainability Purchasing Board to ensure Pierce County is moving towards our stated Sustainability 2020 goals.