



PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY

CR-101 (June 2004)
(Implements RCW 34.05.310)
Do NOT use for expedited rule making

Agency: Department of Revenue

Subject of possible rule making: WAC 458-20-179 Public utility tax, WAC 458-20-17901 Public utility tax – Energy conservation and cogeneration deductions, and WAC 458-20-180 Motor transportation, urban transportation.

Statutes authorizing the agency to adopt rules on this subject: RCW 82.32.300 and 82.01.060(2)

Reasons why rules on this subject may be needed and what they might accomplish: Chapter 82.16 RCW imposes a public utility tax on the act or privilege of engaging in certain public service and transportation businesses within this state. These rules provide information about this tax, including who is liable for the tax and available exemptions and deductions. The Department is considering amendments that:

- incorporate SSB 6614 (chapter 295, Laws of 2010) into Rule 179,
- incorporate relevant deduction information from Rule 17901 into Rule 179 and repeal Rule 17901,
- remove Rule 179 examples on log hauling that were previously incorporated into Rule 13501 *Timber harvest operations*,
- move deduction information specific to motor carriers from Rule 179 to Rule 180,
- generally update and reorganize information in Rules 179 & 180.

Identify other federal and state agencies that regulate this subject and the process coordinating the rule with these agencies: None.

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

- Negotiated rule making
- Pilot rule making
- Agency study
- Other (describe) Parties interested in this rule making may contact the individual listed below. The public may also participate by providing written comments throughout this rule making or giving oral testimony at the public meeting or public hearing.

How interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication:

Written comments may be submitted by mail, fax, or at the public meeting. Oral comments will be accepted at the public meeting. A preliminary draft of possible rule changes is available for viewing and printing on our website at: <http://dor.wa.gov/content/FindALawOrRule/RuleMaking/agenda.aspx> . Written comments on and/or requests for copies of the rule may be directed to: Gayle Carlson, Interpretations and Technical Advice Division, P. O. Box 47453, Olympia, WA 98504-7453; e-mail: GayleC@dor.wa.gov; phone: 360-570-6126.

Public meeting location:

Capitol Plaza Building
4th Floor Large L&P Conference Room
1025 Union Avenue SE
Olympia, Washington

Assistance for persons with disabilities:

Contact Martha Thomas no later than 10 days before the meeting date. TTY 1-800-451-7985 or (360) 725-7497.

Date: October 5, 2010 **Time:** 10:00 a.m.

Date

August 25, 2010

Name (type or print)

Alan R. Lynn

Signature

Title

Rules Coordinator

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OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: August 25, 2010

TIME: 9:55 AM

WSR 10-18-033

This draft is provided for discussion purposes only to determine what topics a possible proposed rule might address. This discussion draft is under no circumstances to be used to determine a tax liability and/or eligibility for tax exemptions.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 94-13-034, filed 6/6/94, effective 7/7/94)

WAC 458-20-179 Public utility tax. (~~((1) Introduction. Persons engaged in certain public service businesses are taxable under the public utility tax. (See chapter 82.16 RCW.) These businesses are exempt from the business and occupation tax on the gross receipts which are subject to the public utility tax. (See RCW 82.04.310.) However, many persons taxable under the public utility tax are also engaged in some other business activity which is taxable under the business and occupation (B&O) tax. For example, a gas distribution company engaged in operating a plant or system for distribution of natural gas for sale, may also be engaged in selling at retail various gas appliances. Such a company would be taxable under the public utility tax with respect to its distribution of natural gas to consumers, and also taxable under the business and occupation tax with respect to its sale of gas appliances. It should also be noted that some services which generally are taxable under the public utility tax are taxable under the B&O tax if the service is performed for a new customer, prior to receipt of regular utility services by the customer.~~

~~(2) **Definitions.** The following definitions apply to this section:~~

~~(a) The term "gross income" means the value proceeding or accruing from the performance of the particular public service or transportation businesses involved. It includes operations incidental to the public utility activity, but without any deduction on account of the cost of the commodity furnished or sold, the cost of materials used, labor costs, interest, discount, delivery costs, taxes, or any other expense whatsoever paid or accrued and without any deduction on account of losses.~~

~~(b) The term "service charge" means those specific charges made to a customer for providing a specific service. The term includes the actual charge to a customer for the sale or distribution of water, gas, or electricity. This term does not include utility local improvement district assessments (ULID) or local improvement district assessments (LID).~~

~~(c) The term "subject to control by the state" means control by the utilities and transportation commission or any other state department required by law to exercise control of a business of a public service nature as to rates charged or services rendered.~~

~~(3) Persons taxable under the public utility tax.~~ The term "public service businesses" includes any of the businesses defined in RCW 82.16.010 (1) through (9), and (11). It also includes any business subject to control by the state, or having the powers of eminent domain, or any business declared by the legislature to be of a public service nature, irrespective of whether the business has the powers of eminent domain or the state exercises its control over the business. It includes, among others, without limiting the scope thereof: Railroad, express, railroad car, water distribution, sewerage collection, light and power, telegraph, gas distribution, urban transportation and common carrier vessels under sixty-five feet in length, motor transportation, tugboat businesses, certain airplane transportation, boom, dock, ferry, pipe line, toll bridge, toll logging road, and wharf businesses. (See WAC 458-20-251 for sewerage collection.) Persons engaged in these business activities are subject to the public utility tax even if they are not publicly recognized as providing that type of service or the amount of income from these activities is not substantial.

~~(a) "Light and power business" includes charges made for the "wheeling" of electricity for others. "Wheeling" is the activity of delivering or distributing electricity owned by others using power lines and equipment of the person doing the wheeling.~~

~~(b) Persons engaged in hauling for hire by motor vehicle should also refer to WAC 458-20-180.~~

~~(c) Persons hauling property, other than U.S. mail, by air transportation equipment are taxable under the other public service public utility tax. Income from the hauling of U.S. mail or passengers is not subject to the public utility tax because of specific federal law. (See 49 U.S.C. section 1301 and section 1513(a).)~~

~~(d) Persons engaged in hauling persons or property for hire by watercraft between points in Washington are taxable under the public utility tax. Income from operating tugboats of any size and income from the sale of transportation services by vessels over sixty five feet is taxable under the public service utility tax classification. Income from the sale of transportation services using vessels under sixty-five feet, other than tugboats, is taxable under "vessels under sixty-five feet" public utility tax classification. These classifications include businesses engaged in chartering or transporting persons by water from one location in Washington to another location within this state. This does not include sightseeing tours or activities which are in the nature of guided tours where the tour may include some water transportation. Persons engaged in providing tours should refer to WAC 458-20-258.~~

~~(e) Income from activities which are incidental to a public~~

utility activity are generally taxable under the public utility tax when performed for an existing customer. This includes charges for line extensions, connection fees, line drop charges, start up fees, pole replacements, testing, replacing meters, line repairs, line raisings, pole contact charges, load factor charges, meter reading fees, etc. However, if any of these services are performed for a customer prior to sale of a public utility service to the customer, the income is taxable under the business and occupation tax. (See subsection (4) of this section.)

~~(4) **Business and occupation tax.** As indicated above, services which are incidental to a public utility activity are generally subject to the public utility tax. However, these types of charges are taxable under the service and other business activities B&O tax classification if performed for a customer prior to receipt of the utility services (gas, water, electricity) by a new customer. A "new customer" is a customer who previously has not received utility services, such as water, gas, or electricity, at the location where the charge for a specific service was provided. For example, a customer of a water supplier who currently receives water at a residence constructs a new residence a short distance from the first location. This customer will be considered a "new customer" with respect to any charges for services performed at the new location until the customer actually receives water at the new location, even though this customer may be receiving services at a different location. The charge for installing a meter or a connection charge for this customer at the new location would be taxable under the service and other activities B&O tax classification.~~

Amounts charged to customers as interest or penalties are generally taxable under the service and other business activities B&O tax classification. This includes interest charged for failure to timely pay for utility services or for special services which were performed prior to the customer receiving services, such as connection charges. However, any interest and/or penalty charged because of the failure to timely pay a LID or ULID assessment will not be taxable for the public utility tax or the B&O tax.

~~(5) **Tax rates.** The rates of tax for each business activity are imposed under RCW 82.16.020 and set forth on appropriate lines of the combined excise tax return forms.~~

~~(6) **Uniform system of accounts.** In distinguishing gross income taxable under the public utility tax from gross income taxable under the business and occupation tax, the department of revenue will be guided by the uniform system of accounts established for the specific type of utility concerned. However, because of differences in the uniform systems of accounts established for various types of utility businesses,~~

such guides will not be deemed controlling for the purposes of classifying revenue under the Revenue Act.

~~(7) Volume exemption.~~ Persons subject to the public utility tax are exempt from the payment of this tax if the taxable income from utility activities does not meet a minimum threshold. Prior to July 1, 1994, there was a similar exemption for the business and occupation tax with different threshold amounts. Beginning July 1, 1994, the law provides for a B&O tax credit for taxpayers who have a minimal B&O tax liability. (See WAC 458-20-104.) The volume exemption for the public utility tax applies independently of the business and occupation tax credit or exemption. The volume exemption for the public utility tax applies for any reporting period in which taxable income reported under the combined total of all public utility tax classifications does not equal or exceed the minimum taxable amount for the reporting periods assigned to such persons according to the following schedule:

Monthly reporting basis—	\$500 per month
Quarterly reporting basis—	\$1500 per quarter
Annual reporting basis—	\$6000 per annum

~~(8) Exemption of amounts or value paid or contributed to any county, city, town, political subdivision, or municipal corporation for capital facilities.~~ RCW 82.04.417 previously provided an exemption from the public utility tax and the business and occupation tax for amounts received by cities, counties, towns, political subdivisions, or municipal corporations representing contributions for capital facilities. These contributions are often referred to as "contributions in aid of construction." This law was repealed effective July 1, 1993, and this exemption is no longer available after that date. (See chapter 25, Laws of 1993 sp.s.) However, contributions in the form of equipment or facilities will not be considered as taxable income. For example, if an industrial customer purchases and installs transformers which it donates to a public utility district as a condition of receiving future service, the public utility district will not be subject to the public utility tax or B&O tax on the receipt of the donated transformers. For a water or sewerage collection business, the value of pipe, valves, pumps, or similar items donated by a developer to the utility business would not be taxable income to the utility business. Monetary payments are considered to be payments for installation of facilities so that a customer may receive the public utility commodity or service. When the facilities are installed or constructed by the customer and subsequently given to the utility business, there is no payment

~~for installation of the facilities.~~

~~(9) **Specific deductions.** Amounts derived from the following sources may be deducted from the gross income under the public utility tax if included in the gross amounts reported:~~

~~(a) Amounts derived by municipally owned or operated public services businesses directly from taxes levied for the support thereof, but not including service charges which are spread on the property tax rolls and collected as taxes. LID and ULID assessments, including interest and penalties on such assessments, will not be considered part of the taxable income because they are exercises of the jurisdiction's taxing authority. These assessments may be composed of a share of the costs of capital facilities, installation labor, connection fees, etc. A deduction may be taken for these amounts if they are included in the LID or ULID assessments.~~

~~(b) Amounts derived from the sale of commodities to persons in the same public service business as the seller, for resale as such within this state. This deduction is allowed only with respect to water distribution, light and power, gas distribution or other public service businesses which furnish water, electrical energy, gas or any other commodity in the performance of a public service business.~~

~~(c) Amounts actually paid by a taxpayer to another person taxable under chapter 82.16 RCW as the latter's portion of the consideration due for services jointly furnished by both. This includes the amount paid to a ferry company for the transportation of a vehicle and its contents (but not amounts paid to state owned or operated ferries) when such vehicle is carrying freight or passengers for hire and is being operated by a person engaged in the business of urban transportation or motor transportation. It does not include amounts paid for the privilege of moving such vehicles over toll bridges. However, this deduction applies only to the purchases of services and does not include the purchase of commodities. The following examples show how this deduction and the deduction for sales of commodities would apply:~~

~~(i) CITY Water Department purchases water from Neighboring City Water Department. CITY sells the water to its customers. Neighboring City Water Department may take a deduction for its sales of water to CITY since this is a sale of water (commodities) to a person in the same public service business. CITY may not take a deduction for its payment to Neighboring City Water as "services jointly furnished." The service or sale of water to the end consumers was made solely by CITY and was not a jointly furnished service.~~

~~(ii) Customer A hires ABC Transport to haul goods from Tacoma, Washington to a manufacturing facility at Bellingham. ABC Transport subcontracts part of the haul to XYZ Transport and~~

~~has XYZ haul the goods from Tacoma to Everett where the goods are loaded into ABC's truck. ABC may deduct the payments it makes to XYZ as a "jointly furnished service."~~

~~(d) Amounts derived from the distribution of water through an irrigation system, solely for irrigation purposes.~~

~~(e) Amounts derived from the transportation of commodities from points of origin in this state to final destination outside this state, or from points of origin outside this state to final destination in this state with respect to which the carrier grants to the shipper the privilege of stopping the shipment in transit at some point in this state for the purpose of storing, manufacturing, milling, or other processing, and thereafter forwards the same commodity, or its equivalent, in the same or converted form, under a through freight rate from point of origin to final destination.~~

~~(f) Amounts derived from the transportation of commodities from points of origin in the state to an export elevator, wharf, dock or shipside on tidewater or navigable tributaries thereto from which such commodities are forwarded, without intervening transportation, by vessel, in their original form, to an interstate or foreign destination: Provided, That no deduction will be allowed when the point of origin and the point of delivery to such export elevator, wharf, dock, or shipside are located within the corporate limits of the same city or town. The following examples show how this deduction applies:~~

~~(i) ABC Trucking delivers logs to a storage area which is adjacent to the dock from where shipments are made by vessel to a foreign country. The logs go through a peeling process at the storage area prior to being placed on the vessel. The peeling process changes the form of the original log. Because the form of the log is changed, ABC Trucking may not take a deduction for the haul to the storage area. It is immaterial that the trucker may be paid based on an "export" rate.~~

~~(ii) ABC Trucking hauls logs from the woods to a log storage area which is adjacent to the dock. The logs will be sorted prior to being placed in the hold of the vessel, but no further processing will be performed. The storage area is quite large and the logs will be moved by log stacker and will be placed alongside the ship. The logs are loaded using the ship's tackle and then transported to a foreign country. ABC Trucking may take a deduction for the amounts received for transporting the logs from the woods to the log storage area. The movement of the logs within the log storage area is not considered to be "intervening transportation," but is part of the stevedoring activity.~~

~~(iii) ABC Trucking hauls logs from the woods to a "staging area" where the logs are sorted. After sorting, XY Hauling will transport some of the logs from the staging area to local mills for lumber manufacturing and other logs to the dock which is~~

~~located approximately five miles from the staging area where the logs immediately are loaded on a vessel for shipment to Japan. The dock and staging area are not within the corporate city limits of the same city. ABC Trucking may not take a deduction for amounts received for hauling logs to the staging area. Even though some of these logs ultimately will be exported, ABC Trucking is not delivering the logs directly to the dock where the logs will be loaded on a vessel.~~

~~However, XY Hauling may take a deduction for the income from hauls to the dock. Its haul was the final transportation prior to the logs being placed on the vessel for shipment to Japan. The logs remained in their original form with no additional processing. The haul also did not originate or terminate within the corporate city limits of the same city or town. All the conditions were met for XY Hauling to claim the deduction.~~

~~(g) Amounts derived from the distribution of water by a nonprofit water association which are used for capital improvements by that association.~~

~~(h) Amounts received from sales of power which is delivered by the seller out of state. A deduction may also be taken for the sale of power to a person who will resell the power outside Washington where the power is delivered in Washington. These sales of power are also not subject to the manufacturing B&O tax.~~

~~(i) Amounts received for providing commuter share riding or ride sharing for the elderly and the handicapped in accordance with RCW 46.74.010.~~

~~(j) Amounts expended to improve consumers' efficiency of energy end use or to otherwise reduce the use of electrical energy or gas by the consumer. (For details see WAC 458-20-17901.)~~

~~(k) Income from transporting persons or property by air, rail, water, or by motor transportation equipment where either the origin or destination of the haul is outside the state of Washington.~~

~~(10) **Other deductions.** In addition to the deductions discussed above there also may be deducted from the reported gross income (if included within the gross), the following:~~

~~(a) The amount of cash discount actually taken by the purchaser or customer.~~

~~(b) The amount of credit losses actually sustained.~~

~~(c) Amounts received from insurance companies in payment of losses.~~

~~(d) Amounts received from individuals and others in payment of damages caused by them to the utility's plant or equipment.~~

~~(11) **Exchanges by light and power businesses.** There is no specific exemption which applies to an "exchange" of electrical energy or the rights thereto. However, exchanges of electrical~~

~~energy between light and power businesses do qualify for deduction in computing the public utility tax as being sales of power to another light and power business for resale. An exchange is a transaction which is considered to be a sale and involves a delivery or transfer of energy or the rights thereto by one party to another for which the second party agrees, subject to the terms and conditions of the agreement, to deliver electrical energy at the same or another time. Examples of deductible exchange transactions include, but are not limited to, the following:~~

~~(a) The exchange of electric power for electric power between one light and power business and another light and power business;~~

~~(b) The transmission or transfer of electric power by one light and power business to another light and power business pursuant to the agreement for coordination of operations among power systems of the Pacific Northwest executed as of September 15, 1964;~~

~~(c) The Bonneville Power Administration's acquisition of electric power for resale to its Washington customers in the light and power business;~~

~~(d) The residential exchange of electric power entered into between a light and power business and the administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act, P.L. 96-501, Sec. 5(c), 16 U.S.C. 839(c) (Supp. 1982). In some cases, power is not physically transferred, but the purpose of the residential exchange is for BPA to pay a "subsidy" to the exchanging utilities. For public utility tax reporting purposes, these subsidies will be treated as a nontaxable adjustment (rebate or discount) for purchases of power from BPA.~~

~~(12) **Customer billing information.** RCW 82.16.090 requires that customer billings issued by light or power businesses or gas distribution businesses serving more than twenty thousand customers shall include the following information:~~

~~(a) The rates and amounts of taxes paid directly by the customer upon products or services rendered by such businesses; and~~

~~(b) The rate, origin and approximate amount of each tax levied upon the revenue of such businesses which has been added as a component of the amount charged to the customer. This does not include taxes levied by the federal government or taxes levied under chapters 54.28, 80.24, or 82.04 RCW.~~

~~(13) **Motor or urban transportation.** For specific rules pertaining to the classifications of "urban transportation" and "motor transportation," see WAC 458-20-180.)~~ (1) **Introduction.** This section explains the public utility tax imposed by chapter 82.16 RCW. The public utility tax is a tax on engaging in certain public service and transportation businesses within this

state.

The department of revenue (department) adopted other sections that relate to the application of public utility tax. Readers may want to refer to the following sections:

(a) WAC 458-20-104, Small business tax relief based on income of business;

(b) WAC 458-20-121, Sales of heat or steam--Including production by cogeneration;

(c) WAC 458-20-13501, Timber harvest operations, which provides guidance regarding hauling of logs;

(d) WAC 458-20-13601, Manufacturers and processors for hire--Sales and use tax exemption for machinery and equipment;

(e) WAC 458-20-175, Persons engaged in the business of operating as a private or common carrier by air, rail or water in interstate or foreign commerce;

(f) WAC 458-20-180, Motor carriers;

(g) WAC 458-20-192, Indians--Indian country;

(h) WAC 458-20-193D, Transportation, communication, public utility activities, or other services in interstate or foreign commerce;

(i) WAC 458-20-251, Sewerage collection and other related activities; and

(j) WAC 458-20-263, Fuel cell, wind, landfill gas, and solar energy electric generating facilities sales and use tax exemption.

This section contains examples which identify a number of facts and then state a conclusion. The examples should be used only as a general guide. The tax results of other situations must be determined after a review of all of the facts and circumstances.

(2) Persons subject to the public utility tax - general information. The public utility tax is imposed by RCW 82.16.020 on certain public service and transportation businesses including railroad, express, railroad car, water distribution, sewerage collection, light and power, telegraph, gas distribution, motor transportation, urban transportation, vessels under sixty-five feet in length operating upon the waters within the state of Washington, and tugboat businesses.

Persons engaged in hauling persons or property for hire by watercraft between points in Washington are subject to the public utility tax. Income from operating tugboats of any size and income from the sale of transportation services by vessels sixty-five feet and over is taxable under the "other public service business" public utility tax classification. Income from the sale of transportation services using vessels under sixty-five feet, other than tugboats, is subject to tax under the "vessels under sixty-five feet" public utility tax classification. These classifications include businesses engaged in chartering or transporting persons by water from one

location in Washington to another location within this state. This does not include sightseeing tours or activities which are in the nature of guided tours where the tour may include some water transportation. Persons engaged in providing tours should refer to WAC 458-20-258, Travel agents and tour operators.

(a) Are there other businesses subject to the public utility tax? The public utility tax also applies to any other public service business subject to control by the state, or having the powers of eminent domain, or any business declared by the legislature to be of a public service nature, unless the activity is subject to tax under chapter 82.04 RCW, Business and occupation tax (B&O tax). The phrase "subject to control by the state" means control by the utilities and transportation commission or any other state agency required by law to exercise control of a business of a public service nature regarding rates charged or services rendered. Examples of other public service businesses include, but are not limited to: Airplane transportation, boom, dock, ferry, pipeline, toll bridge, water transportation, and wharf businesses. RCW 82.16.010.

Persons engaged in the same business activities as the businesses described above are subject to the public utility tax even if they are not publicly recognized as providing that type of service or the amount of income from these activities is not substantial. For example, an industrial manufacturing company that owns and operates a well, and that sells a relatively small amount of water to its wholly owned subsidiary, is subject to the public utility tax as a water distribution business on its sales of water.

(b) Are amounts derived from interest and penalties taxable? Amounts charged to customers as interest or penalties are generally subject to the service and other activities B&O tax. This includes interest charged for failure to timely pay for utility services or for incidental services. Incidental services include for example meter installation or other activities which are performed prior to the customer receiving utility services. Any interest or penalty resulting from the failure to timely pay a local improvement district or utility local improvement district assessment is not subject to public utility or B&O taxes.

(c) Are insurance proceeds and amounts received as payment of damages taxable? Amounts received from insurance companies in payment of losses and amounts received from individuals and others in payment of damages caused by them to the utility's plant or equipment are not subject to public utility or B&O taxes.

(d) How is income received due to eminent domain proceedings or governmental action taxed? Income received as the result of the forced movement of the facilities of a public utility are considered liquidated damages and are not subject to

either public utility or B&O taxes.

(e) **What information is required on customer statements from light, power, and gas businesses?** RCW 82.16.090 requires that customer billings issued by light or power businesses or gas distribution businesses serving more than twenty thousand customers include the following information:

(i) The rates and amounts of taxes paid directly by the customer upon products or services rendered by such business; and

(ii) The rate, origin, and approximate amount of each tax levied upon the revenue of such business which has been added as a component of the amount charged to the customer. This does not include taxes levied by the federal government or taxes levied under chapters 54.28, 80.24, or 82.04 RCW.

(3) **Tax rates and measure of tax.** The rates of tax for each business activity subject to the public utility tax are imposed under RCW 82.16.020 and set forth on appropriate lines of the state public utility tax addendum for the excise tax return. The measure of the public utility tax is the gross income of the business. The term "gross income" means the value proceeding or accruing from the performance of the particular public service or transportation business involved, including operations incidental to that business. No deduction may be taken on account of the cost of the commodity furnished or sold, the cost of materials used, labor costs, interest, discounts, delivery costs, taxes, or any other expense whatsoever paid or accrued, nor on account of losses. RCW 82.16.010(12).

(4) **Persons subject to public utility tax may also be subject to B&O tax.** The B&O tax does not apply to any business activities for which public utility tax is specifically imposed, including amounts derived from activities for which a deduction from the public utility tax is available under RCW 82.16.050. RCW 82.04.310(1). However, many persons engaged in business activities subject to the public utility tax are also engaged in other business activities subject to B&O tax.

For example, a gas distribution company operating a plant or system for the production and sale of natural gas may also make retail sales of gas appliances. The gas distribution company is subject to the public utility tax on its distribution of natural gas to consumers. However, it is also subject to retailing B&O tax and must collect and remit retail sales tax on its retail sales of gas appliances. Repairs of customer owned appliances would also be considered retailing and subject to retail sales tax.

In distinguishing gross income taxable under the public utility tax from gross income taxable under the B&O tax, the department is guided by the uniform system of accounts established for the specific type of utility concerned. Because of differences in the uniform systems of accounts established

for various types of utility businesses, such guides are not controlling for the purposes of classifying revenue under the Revenue Act.

(a) Charges for service connections, line extensions, and other similar services.

(i) For existing customers, amounts derived from services that are incidental to a public utility activity are subject to public utility tax. Thus, amounts received for the following are subject to public utility tax:

(A) Service connection, start-up, and testing fees;

(B) Charges for line extensions, repairs, raisings, and/or drops;

(C) Meter or pole replacement;

(D) Meter reading or load factor charges; and

(E) Connecting or disconnecting.

(ii) For new customers, amounts received for any of the services noted above in subsection (4)(a)(i) of this section are subject to service and other activities B&O tax.

A "new customer" is a customer who previously has not received utility services, such as water, sewer, gas, or electricity, at the location where the charge for a specific service was provided. For example, a customer of a water supplier who currently receives water at a residence and constructs a new residence at a different location is considered a "new customer" with respect to any charges for services performed at the new location until the customer actually receives water at the new location. It is immaterial that this customer may be receiving utility services at the old residence. The charge for installing a meter or a connection charge for this customer at the new location is subject to service and other activities B&O tax.

(b) Contributions in the form of money, equipment, or facilities. Monetary payments to a utility business for the installation of equipment or facilities so that a customer may receive a utility service are income to the utility business and subject to tax. Whether the income is subject to public utility tax, or service and other activities B&O tax, depends on if the service will be provided to a new or existing customer.

Contributions to a utility business in the form of equipment or facilities are not considered income to the utility business. For example, if an industrial customer purchases and installs transformers that it donates to a public utility district as a condition of receiving future service, the public utility district is not subject to the public utility tax or B&O tax on the receipt of the donated transformers. The value of pipe, valves, pumps, or similar items donated by a developer to a water or sewerage collection business for purposes of servicing the developed area is likewise not subject to tax.

(5) Exemptions. This subsection describes public utility

tax exemptions. Also see subsections in this section that discuss specific utilities.

(a) **Income exemption.** Persons subject to the public utility tax are exempt from the payment of the tax if their taxable income from utility activities does not meet a minimum threshold. RCW 82.16.040. For detailed information about this exemption, refer to WAC 458-20-104, Small business tax relief based on income of business.

(b) **Ride sharing.** RCW 82.16.047 exempts amounts received in the course of commuter ride sharing or ride sharing for persons with special transportation needs in accordance with RCW 46.74.010. For detailed information about this exemption, refer to WAC 458-20-261, Exemptions and credits for ride sharing, public transportation, and nonmotorized commuting.

(c) **State route number 16.** RCW 82.16.046 exempts amounts received from operating state route number 16 corridor transportation systems and facilities constructed and operated under chapter 47.46 RCW.

(6) **Deductions.** This subsection provides information about a number of public utility tax deductions. The deductible amounts should be included in the gross income reported on the state public utility tax addendum for the excise tax return and then deducted on the deduction detail page to determine the amount of taxable income. Deductions taken but not identified on the appropriate deduction detail page may be disallowed. Also see subsections (7), (8), and (9) of this section, Electricity, Gas distribution, and Water distribution, respectively that discuss specific utilities.

(a) **Cash discounts.** The amount of cash discount actually taken by the purchaser or customer is deductible under RCW 82.16.050(4).

(b) **Credit losses.** The amount of credit losses actually sustained by taxpayers whose regular books of account are kept on an accrual basis is deductible under RCW 82.16.050(5). For additional information regarding credit losses see WAC 458-20-196, Credit losses, bad debts, recoveries.

(c) **Taxes.** Amounts derived by municipally owned or operated public service businesses directly from taxes levied for their support are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(1). However, service charges that are spread on the property tax rolls and collected as taxes are not deductible.

Local improvement district and utility local improvement district assessments, including interest and penalties on such assessments, are not income because they are exercises of the jurisdiction's taxing authority. These assessments may be composed of a share of the costs of capital facilities, installation labor, connection fees, etc.

(d) **Prohibitions imposed by federal law or the state or federal constitutions.** Amounts derived from business that the

state is prohibited from taxing under federal law or the state or federal constitutions are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(6). For example, the imposition of gross receipts taxes on the intrastate or interstate transportation of passengers by aircraft is prohibited by federal law. (See 49 U.S.C. Sec. 40116(b).)

(e) **Sales of commodities for resale.** Amounts derived from the sale of commodities to persons in the same public service business as the seller for resale within this state are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(2). This deduction is allowed only with respect to water distribution, gas distribution, or other public service businesses that furnish water, gas, or any other commodity in the performance of a public service business. For example, income from the sale of natural gas by a gas distributing company to natural gas companies located in Washington who resell the gas to their customers is deductible from the taxpayer's gross income.

(f) **Jointly furnished services.** Amounts actually paid by a taxpayer to another person subject to the public utility tax as the latter's portion of the consideration due for services jointly furnished are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(3), provided the full amounts received by the taxpayer are reported under gross income. This deduction applies only to the purchase of services and does not include the purchase of commodities.

Example. City A's water department purchases water from City B's water department. City A sells the water to its customers. City A may not take a deduction for its payment to City B's water department as a jointly furnished service. The service or sale of water to the end consumers was made solely by City A and was not a jointly furnished service. City B, however, may take a deduction for its sales of water to City A since this is a sale of commodities to a person in the same public service business, for resale within this state. (See subsection (6)(e) of this section for information on the deduction applicable to sales of commodities for resale.)

(7) **Electricity.** Public utility tax is imposed by RCW 82.16.020 on gross income from providing light and power services. Light and power business means the business of operating a plant or system for the generation, production or distribution of electrical energy for hire or sale and/or for the wheeling of electricity for others. RCW 82.16.010. See subsection (2) of this section.

(a) **Income for moving facilities.** When a public utility, such as a power and light business, moves its facilities at the request of a business or individual, whether a temporary or a permanent relocation, the income received is subject to service and other activities B&O tax. For example, if residents of a housing area contract with a power company to convert overhead wiring currently servicing their homes to underground for

aesthetic purposes, the income to the power company would be taxable under service and other activities B&O tax.

When a public utility district enhances their service capability for and at the request of a business or individual, income received for the enhancement and any movement of facilities would be taxable under public utility tax. For example, if a business requested their power lines be upgraded and relocated from single-phase to three-phase, the income from the business would be taxable under public utility tax.

For income received due to eminent domain proceedings or governmental action see subsection (2)(d) of this section.

(b) **Wheeling of electricity.** Wheeling of electricity for others is a light and power business activity. "Wheeling of electricity" is the activity of delivering or distributing electricity owned by others using power lines and equipment of the person doing the wheeling. Wholesale wheeling is when the transmission of electricity is to a utility, which in turn will sell to the end consumer of the electricity. Retail wheeling is when the electricity is wheeled over transmission or distribution lines owned by another to a home or business. Amounts received by light and power businesses for the wheeling of electricity for others within the state are transmission charges and subject to public utility tax. Wheeling into or out-of-state is deductible. (See WAC 458-20-193D.)

(c) **Exchanges of electricity by light and power businesses.** There is no specific exemption that applies to an "exchange" of electrical energy or its rights. However, exchanges of electrical energy between light and power businesses do qualify for deduction in computing the public utility tax as being sales of power to another light and power business for resale. An exchange is a transaction that is considered to be a sale and involves a delivery or transfer of energy or its rights by one party to another for which the second party agrees, subject to the terms and conditions of the agreement, to deliver electrical energy at the same or another time. Examples of deductible exchange transactions include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) The exchange of electric power for electric power between one light and power business and another light and power business;

(ii) The transmission of electric power by one light and power business to another light and power business pursuant to the agreement for coordination of operations among power systems of the Pacific Northwest executed as of September 15, 1964;

(iii) The acquisition of electric power by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for resale to its Washington customers in the light and power business;

(iv) The residential exchange of electric power entered into between a light and power business and the administrator of

the BPA pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act, P.L. 96-501, Sec. 5(c), 16 U.S.C. § 839c. In some cases, power is not physically transferred, but the purpose of the residential exchange is for BPA to pay a "subsidy" to the exchanging utilities. For public utility tax reporting purposes, these subsidies will be treated as a nontaxable adjustment (rebate or discount) for purchases of power from BPA.

(d) Exemptions. The following exemptions are available for sales of electricity in addition to applicable exemptions found in subsection (5) of this section.

(i) Sales of electricity to an electrolytic processor.

RCW 82.16.0421 provides an exemption for sales of electricity made by light and power businesses to chlor-alkali electrolytic processing businesses or sodium chlorate electrolytic processing businesses for the electrolytic process. This exemption was effective July 1, 2004. The exemption does not apply to amounts received from the remarketing or resale of electricity originally obtained by contract for the electrolytic process. In order to claim the exemption, the chlor-alkali electrolytic processing business or the sodium chlorate electrolytic processing business must provide the light and power business with an exemption certificate. A certificate can be obtained from the department's internet site at <http://dor.wa.gov>. Effective June 10, 2010, chapter 114, Laws of 2010, (SHB 3066) requires taxpayers receiving the benefit of this tax preference to file an annual report by April 30th of the year following any calendar year in which a taxpayer becomes eligible to claim the tax preference. Prior to June 10, 2010, annual reports were due by March 31st of each year. This exemption, which expires June 30, 2019, applies to sales of electricity made by December 31, 2018.

To qualify all the following requirements must be met:

(A) The electricity used in the electrolytic process must be separately metered from the electricity used for the general operations of the business;

(B) The price charged for the electricity used in the electrolytic process must be reduced by an amount equal to the tax exemption available to the light and power business; and

(C) Disallowance of all or part of the exemption is a breach of contract and the damages to be paid by the chlor-alkali electrolytic processing business or the sodium chlorate electrolytic processing business is the amount of the tax exemption disallowed.

(ii) Sales of electricity to aluminum smelters. RCW 82.16.0498 provides an exemption to be taken in the form of a credit. The credit is allowed if the contract for sale of electricity to an aluminum smelter specifies that the price charged for the electricity will be reduced by an amount equal

to the credit. The exemption does not apply to amounts received from the remarketing or resale of electricity originally obtained by contract for the smelting process. The credit allowed is the same amount as the utility tax that would otherwise have been due under RCW 82.16.020.

(iii) **BPA credits or funds.** Chapter 295, Laws of 2010, (SSB 6614) ~~clarifies that exempts~~ credits or payments received by utilities from the BPA, for the purpose of implementing energy conservation programs or demand-side management programs are exempt from the B&O tax. This exemption expires June 30, 2015. RCW 82.04.310.

(e) **Deductions.** The following deductions are available for sales of electricity in addition to applicable deductions found in subsection (6) of this section.

(i) **Sales of electricity for resale or for consumption outside Washington.** Amounts derived from the production, sale, or transfer of electrical energy for resale within or outside the state of Washington or for consumption outside the state are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(11). These sales of electricity are also not subject to the manufacturing B&O tax. RCW 82.04.310.

(ii) **Low density light and power businesses.** RCW 82.16.053 provides a deduction for light and power businesses having seventeen or fewer customers per mile of distribution power lines with retail power rates that exceed the state average power rate. The statute requires the department to determine the state average electric power rate each year and make this rate available to these businesses. This rate and additional information regarding this deduction are provided in Excise Tax Advisory 3043.2009, Low-density light and utility deduction, and can be found via the department's internet site at <http://dor.wa.gov>. The information may also be obtained by contacting the department's telephone information center at 1-800-647-7706, or by writing the department at:

Taxpayer Information and Education
Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 47478
Olympia, WA 98504-7478

(iii) **Conservation - electrical energy and gas.** RCW 82.16.055 provides deductions relating to the production or generation of energy from cogeneration or renewable resources, and for measures to improve the efficiency of energy end-use. The below mentioned deductions apply only to new facilities for the production or generation of energy from cogeneration or renewable energy resources or measures to improve the efficiency of energy end-use on which construction or installation was begun after June 12, 1980, and before January 1, 1990. In addition, the measures or projects must be, at the time they are placed in service, reasonably expected to save, produce, or

generate energy at a total incremental system cost per unit of energy delivered to end-use which is less than or equal to the incremental system cost per unit of energy delivered to end-use from similarly available conventional energy resources that utilize nuclear energy or fossil fuels and that the gas or electric utility could acquire to meet energy demand in the same time period. The deductions may be taken for a period not exceeding thirty years after the project is placed in operation. Any recurring costs determined to be eligible for deduction under this section will cease to be eligible in whole or part at the time of termination of any energy conservation measure or project that originally authorized the deduction under RCW 82.16.055. The following may be deducted from a taxpayer's gross income:

(A) Amounts equal to the cost of production at the plant for consumption within the state of Washington of electrical energy produced or generated from cogeneration as defined in RCW 82.08.02565;

(B) Amounts equal to the cost of production at the plant for consumption within the state of Washington of electrical energy or gas produced or generated from renewable energy resources such as solar energy, wind energy, hydroelectric energy, geothermal energy, wood, wood wastes, municipal wastes, agricultural products and wastes, and end-use waste heat;

(C) Amounts expended to improve consumers' efficiency of energy end-use or to otherwise reduce the use of electrical energy or gas by the consumer;

(D) Amounts received by a utility as a contribution for the installation of service, and later refunded to the customer, are deductible from gross income at the time the amounts are refunded.

(f) **Credits.** Credit is available to light and power businesses that make contributions to an electric utility rural economic development revolving fund. Light and power businesses may take a credit up to twenty-five thousand dollars, not to exceed the public utility tax that would normally be due, against their public utility tax liability each fiscal year for contributions made. The credit is equal to fifty percent of contributions made during a fiscal year to an electric utility rural economic development revolving fund. (Prior to July 1, 2004, credits could be taken per calendar year.) Expenditures from the electric utility rural economic development revolving fund must be made solely on qualifying projects, in a designated qualifying rural area. For additional information see RCW 82.16.0491. The total amount of credits available statewide on a fiscal year basis for all qualified businesses is three hundred fifty thousand dollars. The department will allow earned credits on a first-come, first-served basis. Tax credits can be earned up to June 30, 2011. Unused earned credits may be

carried forward to subsequent years provided the department has given prior approval. Information pertaining to carrying forward credit may be obtained by contacting the department's taxpayer information center at 1-800-647-7706 or by writing the department at:

Taxpayer Account Administration/PUT Credits
Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 47476
Olympia, WA 98504-7476

(8) Gas distribution. Gross income received for the distribution of gas is taxable under public utility tax as provided by RCW 82.16.020. Gas distribution business means the business of operating a plant or system for the production or distribution for hire or sale of gas, whether manufactured or natural. RCW 82.16.010. See subsection (2) of this section.

(a) Sales of natural or manufactured gas to aluminum smelters. RCW 82.16.0498 provides an exemption to be taken in the form of a credit for sales of natural or manufactured gas to aluminum smelters. The credit is allowed if the contract for sale of gas to an aluminum smelter specifies that the price charged for the gas will be reduced by an amount equal to the credit. The credit allowed is the same amount as the utility tax that would otherwise have been due under RCW 82.16.020.

(b) Conservation - energy from gas. RCW 82.16.055 provides deductions for the production or generation of energy from cogeneration or renewable resources and for measures to improve the efficiency of energy end-use. See subsection (7)(e)(iii) of this section.

(9) Water distribution. Public utility tax is imposed on amounts derived from the distribution of water under RCW 82.16.020. Water distribution business means the business of operating a plant or system for the distribution of water for hire or sale. RCW 82.16.010. See subsection (2) of this section.

(a) Water distribution by a nonprofit water association. Amounts derived from the distribution of water by a nonprofit water association and used for capital improvements, related to the water distribution service, by that association are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(12).

(b) Distribution of irrigation water. Amounts derived from the distribution of water through an irrigation system, for irrigation purposes, are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(7). The phrase "for irrigation purposes" means water that is used solely for nourishing plant life. Thus, when a water distribution business supplies potable water and some of the water is segregated and separately supplied solely for the nourishing of plant life as opposed to water supplied for domestic, municipal, or industrial uses, charges for such separately supplied water may be deducted from gross income subject to public utility tax.

In order to meet the "irrigation system" requirement, a water distribution business must demonstrate that its distribution system has turnouts or similar connections for irrigation purposes that are separate from service hookups or similar connections for domestic, industrial, or municipal uses. Under the appropriate circumstances, the use of separate meters and cross-connection or back flow devices may be evidence of such separate connections.

(c) **Wheeling of water.** Wheeling of water for others is a water distribution activity. "Wheeling of water" is the activity of transferring water owned by others using a water system of the person doing the wheeling. Amounts received by water companies for the wheeling of water for others within the state are subject to the water distribution public utility tax classification. Wheeling into or out-of-state is deductible. (See WAC 458-20-193D.)

This draft is provided for discussion purposes only to determine what topics a possible proposed rule might address. This discussion draft is under no circumstances to be used to determine a tax liability and/or eligibility for tax exemptions.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order ET 83-16, filed 3/15/83)

WAC 458-20-180 Motor ((transportation, urban transportation)) carriers. ((The term "motor transportation business" means the business (except urban transportation business) of operating any motor propelled vehicle by which persons or property of others are conveyed for hire, and includes, but is not limited to the operation of any motor propelled vehicle as an auto transportation company (except urban transportation business), common carrier or contract carrier as defined by RCW 81.68.010 and 81.80.010.

It includes the business of hauling for hire any extracted or manufactured material, over the highways of the state and over private roads but does not include the transportation of logs or other forest products exclusively upon private roads.

It does not include the hauling of any earth or other substance excavated or extracted from or taken to the right of way of a publicly owned street, place, road or highway, by a person taxable under the classification of public road construction of the business and occupation tax. (See WAC 458-20-171.)

The term "urban transportation business" means the business of operating any vehicle for public use in the conveyance of persons or property for hire, insofar as (A) operating entirely within the corporate limits of any city or town, or within five miles of the corporate limits thereof, or (B) operating entirely within and between cities and towns whose corporate limits are not more than five miles apart or within five miles of the corporate limits of either thereof. Included herein, but without limiting the scope thereof, is the business of operating passenger vehicles of every type and also the business of operating cartage, pickup or delivery services, including in such services the collection and distribution of property arriving from or destined to a point within or without the state, whether or not such collection or distribution be made by the person performing a local or interstate line-haul of such property.

It does not include the business of operating any vehicle for the conveyance of persons or property for hire when such operating extends more than five miles beyond the corporate limits of any city (or contiguous cities) through which it passes. Thus an operation extending from a city to a point

~~which is more than five miles beyond its corporate limits does not constitute urban transportation, even though the route be through intermediate cities which enables the vehicle, at all times to be within five miles of the corporate limits of some city.~~

~~The terms "motor transportation" and "urban transportation" include the business of renting or leasing trucks, trailers, busses, automobiles and similar motor vehicles to others for use in the conveyance of persons or property when as an incident of the rental contract such motor vehicles are operated by the lessor or by an employee of the lessor. These terms include the business of operating taxicabs, armored cars, and contract mail delivery vehicles, but do not include the businesses of operating auto wreckers or towing vehicles (taxable as sales at retail or wholesale under RCW 82.04.050), school busses, ambulances, nor the collection and disposal of refuse and garbage (taxable under the business and occupation tax classification, service and other activities). Amounts received for providing commuter share riding or ride sharing for the elderly and the handicapped in accordance with RCW 46.74.010 are not subject to tax.~~

~~**Retail Sales Tax**~~

~~Persons engaged in the business of motor transportation or urban transportation are required to collect the retail sales tax upon gross retail sales of tangible personal property sold by them. The retail sales tax must also be collected upon retail sales of services defined as "sales" in RCW 82.04.040 and "sales at retail" in RCW 82.04.050, including charges for the rental of motor vehicles or other equipment without an operator.~~

~~Persons engaged in the business of motor transportation or urban transportation must pay the retail sales tax to their vendors when purchasing motor vehicles, trailers, equipment, tools, supplies and other tangible personal property for use in the conduct of such businesses. (See WAC 458-20-174 for limited exemptions allowed in the act for motor carriers operating in interstate or foreign commerce.) Persons buying motor vehicles, trailers and similar equipment solely for the purpose of renting or leasing the same without an operator are making purchases for resale and are not required to pay the retail sales tax to their vendors.~~

~~**Business and Occupation Tax**~~

~~**Retailing.** Persons engaged in either of said businesses are taxable under the retailing classification upon gross retail sales of tangible personal property sold by them and upon retail sales of services defined as "sales" in RCW 82.04.040 or "sales~~

at retail" in RCW 82.04.050.

~~**Service and other business activities.** Persons engaged in either of said businesses are taxable under the service and other activities classification upon gross income received from checking service, packing and crating, the mere loading or unloading for others, commissions on sales of tickets for other lines, travelers' checks and insurance, etc. and the transportation of logs and other forest products exclusively over private roads.~~

~~**Public Utility Tax**~~

~~Persons engaged in the business of urban transportation are taxable under the urban transportation classification upon the gross income from such business.~~

~~Persons engaged in the business of motor transportation are taxable under the motor transportation classification upon the gross income from such business.~~

~~Persons engaged in the business of both urban and motor transportation are taxable under the motor transportation classification upon gross income, unless a proper segregation of such revenue is shown by the books of account of such persons. (See WAC 458-20-193 for interstate and foreign commerce.)~~

~~**Introduction.** This section explains the tax reporting responsibilities of persons engaged in the business of transporting by motor vehicle persons or property for hire. It explains transportation business and the application of public utility (PUT), business and occupation (B&O), and retail sales taxes to persons engaged in the business. Carriers include businesses such as forwarder and other transportation providers who have contractual liability for transporting shipments between origin and destination.~~

~~(a) **Examples.** This section contains examples which identify a number of facts and then state a conclusion. The examples should be used only as a general guide. The tax results of other situations must be determined after a review of all of the facts and circumstances.~~

~~(b) **References to related sections.** The department of revenue (department) has adopted other sections that relate to the application of the PUT. Readers may want to refer to the following sections:~~

~~(i) WAC 458-20-104, Small business tax relief based on income of business;~~

~~(ii) WAC 458-20-13501, Timber harvest operations, which provides guidance regarding hauling of logs;~~

~~(iii) WAC 458-20-171, Building, repairing or improving streets, roads, etc., which are owned by a municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state or by the United States and which are used primarily for foot or vehicular traffic;~~

(iv) WAC 458-20-174, Sales of motor vehicles, trailers, and parts to motor carriers operating in interstate or foreign commerce;

(v) WAC 458-20-175, Persons engaged in the business of operating as a private or common carrier by air, rail or water in interstate or foreign commerce;

(vi) WAC 458-20-178, Use tax;

(vii) WAC 458-20-179, Public utility tax;

(viii) WAC 458-20-193D, Transportation, communication, public utility activities, or other services in interstate or foreign commerce.

(2) **What is a motor transportation business?** A "motor transportation business" is a business (except urban transportation business) operating any motor propelled vehicle transporting persons or property of others for hire and includes, but is not limited to, the operation of any motor propelled vehicle as an auto transportation company (except urban transportation business), common carrier, or contract carrier as defined by RCW 81.68.010 and 81.80.010. (See RCW 82.16.010.)

(a) It includes hauling for hire any extracted or manufactured material, over the state's highways and over private roads but does not include:

(i) The transportation of logs or other forest products exclusively upon private roads or private highways (which is subject to the service B&O tax, e.g., see WAC 458-20-13501, Timber harvest operations); and

(ii) Effective July 1, 2009, a log transportation business chapter 469, Laws of 2009 (ESSB 6170)).

(b) It does not include the hauling of any earth or other substance excavated or extracted from or taken to the right of way of a publicly owned street, place, road, or highway, by a person taxable under the public road construction B&O tax classification, regardless of whether or not the earth moving portion is separately stated. (See WAC 458-20-171.)

(3) **What is an urban transportation business?** An "urban transportation business" is a business operating any vehicle for public use in the transportation of persons or property for hire, when:

. Operating entirely within the corporate limits of any city or town, or within five miles of the corporate limits thereof; or

. Operating entirely within and between cities and towns whose corporate limits are not more than five miles apart or within five miles of the corporate limits of either thereof.

(a) **The five mile standard.** "Operating entirely within five miles of the corporate limits thereof" means the five-mile standard is applied on a straight line from the corporate limits and not based on road mileage. It is immaterial how many miles

the carrier travels from the origin to the termination of the haul as long as the origin and the termination of the haul are within five miles of the corporate limits. (See RCW 82.16.010.)

(b) What is included in urban transportation? Urban transportation includes, but is not limited to, the business of operating passenger vehicles of every type and also the business of operating cartage, pickup or delivery services, including the collection and distribution of property arriving from or destined to a point within or without the state, whether or not such collection or distribution be made by the person performing a local or interstate line-haul of such property. See subsection (6)(d) of this section for deduction information for interstate transportation of persons or property.

(c) What is not urban transportation? Urban transportation does not include the business of operating any vehicle for transporting persons or property for hire when the origin or termination is more than five miles beyond the corporate limits of any city (or contiguous cities) through which it passes. Thus an operation extending from a city to a point which is more than five miles beyond its corporate limits does not constitute urban transportation. This is true even if the route is through intermediate cities which enable the vehicle to always be within five miles of a city's corporate limits.

(4) What does "motor transportation" and "urban transportation" include? Motor and urban transportation include the business of renting or leasing trucks, trailers, busses, automobiles and similar motor vehicles being used in the transportation of persons or property. These terms include the business of operating taxicabs, armored cars, and contract mail delivery vehicles, but do not include the businesses of operating auto wreckers or towing vehicles (taxable as sales at retail under RCW 82.04.050), school busses, ambulances, nor the collection and disposal of solid waste (taxable under the service and other activities B&O tax classification).

(5) Why is the distinction between the motor and urban transportation classifications important? These tax classifications have different tax rates and it is important to segregate the gross income of each activity. Persons engaged in the business of motor transportation have their gross income taxed under the motor transportation PUT classification. Persons engaged in the business of urban transportation have their gross income taxed under the urban transportation PUT classification. Persons engaged in both urban and motor transportation have their gross income taxed under the motor transportation classification, unless the revenue is segregated as shown by their records.

(6) Are deductions available? Income, as described below, can be deducted from the taxable amounts reported, provided the amounts were originally included in the gross income. See WAC

458-20-179 for generally applicable deductions for PUT, such as bad debt and cash discount.

(a) **Fees and charges for public transportation services.** RCW 82.16.050(14) provides a deduction for amounts derived from fees or charges imposed on persons for transit services provided by a public transportation agency. Public transportation agencies must spend an amount equal to the tax reduction provided by this deduction solely to:

. Adjust routes to improve access for citizens using food banks and senior citizen services; or

. To extend or add new routes to assist low-income citizens and seniors. This deduction was effective June 7, 2006.

(b) **Services jointly provided.** Amounts paid by a motor or urban transportation business to another person taxable under this chapter as that person's consideration due for motor or urban transportation services jointly provided by both are deductible. (See RCW 82.16.050(3).) This includes the amount paid to a ferry company for the transportation of a vehicle and its contents (but not amounts paid to state owned or operated ferries) when the vehicle is carrying freight or passengers for hire and is being operated by a person engaged in the business of motor or urban transportation. This does not include amounts paid for transporting such vehicles over toll bridges.

Example: A customer hires ABC Transport (ABC) to haul goods from Tacoma to a manufacturing facility in Bellingham. ABC subcontracts part of the haul to XYZ Freight (XYZ) and has XYZ haul the goods from Tacoma to Everett where the goods are loaded into ABC's truck and transported to Bellingham. ABC may deduct the payments it makes to XYZ as a service jointly provided.

(c) **Transportation of commodities to export facilities.** Income received from transporting commodities from points of origin in this state to an export elevator, wharf, dock, or ship side on tidewater or its navigable tributaries is deductible under RCW 82.16.050(9), but only when the commodities are forwarded, without intervening transportation, by vessel, in their original form, to interstate or foreign destinations. This deduction is not available, however, when the point of origin and the point of delivery to the export elevator, wharf, dock, or ship side are located within the corporate limits of the same city or town.

(i) **Example 1:** AB Transport moves freight by tug and barge from points in Washington to terminal facilities at tidewater ports in Washington. The freight is subsequently shipped from the ports by vessel to interstate and foreign destinations. AB Transport may deduct the income from these shipments under RCW 82.16.050(9).

(ii) **Example 2:** ABC Trucking hauls widgets from the manufacturing plant to a storage area which is adjacent to the

dock. The storage area is quite large and the widgets are moved from the storage area to alongside the ship in time for loading. The widgets are loaded on the ship and then transported to a foreign country. ABC Trucking may take a deduction for the amounts received for transporting the widgets from the manufacturer to the storage area. The movement of the widgets within the storage area is not considered to be "intervening transportation," but is part of the stevedoring activity.

(iii) **Example 3:** ABC Trucking hauls several types of widgets from the manufacturing plant to a "staging area" where the widgets are sorted. After sorting, XY Hauling transports some of the widgets from the staging area to local buyers and other widgets to the dock which is located approximately five miles from the staging area where the widgets are immediately loaded on a vessel for shipment to Japan. The dock and staging area are not within the corporate city limits of the same city. ABC Trucking may not take a deduction for amounts received for hauling widgets to the staging area. Even though some of the widgets ultimately were exported, ABC Trucking did not deliver the widgets to the dock where the widgets were loaded on a vessel.

However, XY Hauling may take a deduction for the income for hauls from the staging area to the dock. The widgets were loaded on the vessel in their original form with no additional processing. The haul also did not originate or terminate within the corporate city limits of the same city or town. All the conditions were met for XY Hauling to claim the deduction.

(d) **Interstate transportation of persons or property.** Income received from transporting persons or property by motor transportation equipment where either the origin or destination of the haul is outside the state of Washington is deductible. The interstate movement originates or terminates at the point where the transport obligation of the interstate carrier begins or ends. See WAC 458-20-193D for additional information on interstate activities. Transportation provided within the state prior to the point of origin of the interstate movement or subsequent to the point of destination within this state is wholly intrastate and not deductible.

Example: Airport B Shuttle provides transportation to and from the airport for persons departing or arriving from destinations which may or may not be out of state. This service is not incidental to any interstate movement and thus gross income is taxable under either motor or urban transportation.

(e) **Interstate transportation of commodities.** Income received from the transportation of commodities from points of origin in this state to final destination outside this state, or from points of origin outside this state to final destination in this state are deductible under RCW 82.16.050(8) where the carrier grants to the shipper the privilege of stopping the

shipment in transit at some point in this state for the purpose of storing, manufacturing, milling, or other processing, and thereafter forwards the same commodity, or its equivalent, in the same or converted form, under a through freight rate from point of origin to final destination.

(f) **Transportation of agricultural commodities.** Income received from the transportation of agricultural commodities, not including manufactured substances or articles, from points of origin in the state to interim storage facilities in this state for transshipment, without intervening transportation, to an export elevator, wharf, dock, or ship side on tidewater or its navigable tributaries to be forwarded, without intervening transportation, by vessel, in their original form, to interstate or foreign destinations is deductible. If agricultural commodities are transshipped from interim storage facilities in this state to storage facilities at a port on tidewater or its navigable tributaries, the same agricultural commodity dealer must operate both the interim storage facilities and the storage facilities at the port. RCW 82.16.050(10).

(i) The deduction under this subsection is available only when the person claiming the deduction obtains a completed "Certificate of Agricultural Commodity Shipped to Interstate and Foreign Destinations" from the agricultural commodity dealer operating the interim storage facilities.

(ii) A blank certificate can be found via the department's Internet site at <http://dor.wa.gov>. The form may also be obtained by contacting the department's telephone information center at 1-800-647-7706, or by writing the department at:

Taxpayer Information and Education
Department of Revenue
P.O. Box 47478
Olympia, WA 98504-7478

(7) **Exemption for income from persons with special transportation needs.** RCW 82.16.047 provides an exemption from PUT for amounts received for providing commuter share riding or ride sharing for persons with special transportation needs in accordance with RCW 46.74.010. Transportation must be provided by a public social service agency or a private, nonprofit transportation provider as defined in RCW 81.66.010.

(8) **Business activities other than hauling.** Persons engaged in the business of motor or urban transportation may also receive income from other business activities. The tax consequences of this income is generally based on whether or not these services are performed as a part of or are incidental to the hauling activity, or are services where the taxpayer does not haul the shipment.

(a) **Handling and other services that are a part of or**

incidental to the hauling activity. When a person performs activities such as packing, crating, loading or unloading of goods that the person is hauling for the customer, those services are considered to be performed as a part of the hauling activity, or are services incidental to the haul itself. The income from those services is taxed in the same manner as the hauling activity, e.g., motor or urban transportation.

Example. Mary hires Luke's Packing & Hauling Co. (Luke's) to load, haul, and unload her belongings at a local storage facility just a couple of miles down the street from the city apartment she is vacating. Luke's will report his income from Mary under the urban transportation PUT classification.

(b) Handling and other services that are not a part of or incidental to the hauling activity.

(i) If a person engaged in hauling activities packs, crates, loads, or unloads goods that the person is not also hauling for the customer, the income from these activities will generally be subject to service and other activities B&O tax.

Example. James hires Luke's Packing & Hauling (Luke's) to wrap, pack, and crate his belongings in preparation for long-term storage. Luke's will not be hauling James' belongings as Haul and Storage Inc. has been hired to pick up the belongings and put them in their storage facility. Luke's will report his income for wrapping, packing, and crating James' belongings under the service and other activities B&O tax classification.

(ii) A person engaged in hauling activities may also perform services that are not a part of or are separate from the hauling activity. The income from these activities is not subject to the motor or urban transportation PUT, but is instead subject to tax based on the nature of the activity and other provisions of the law.

Example. Affordable Hauling and Storage (Affordable) hauls products for hire and also operates a warehouse. Big Manufacturing Company (Big) hires Affordable to pick-up and deliver products to and from Affordable's warehouse for long-term storage. Affordable charges Big for the hauling services as they occur and also separately invoices Big a monthly fee for storing the products. The income from the hauling services is subject to the motor transportation or urban transportation PUT classification, as the case may be. The monthly storage charges are subject to the warehousing B&O tax classification (see also WAC 458-20-182 for an explanation of the tax-reporting responsibilities of warehouse businesses).

(c) Sales, leases, or rentals of tangible personal property by motor carriers. Persons engaged in either motor or urban transportation may also sell, lease, or rent tangible personal property. Income from the sale, lease, or rental of tangible personal property without an operator, such as a forklift or trailer, to a consumer, is subject to retailing B&O and retail

sales taxes, unless a specific exemption applies. If the sale is a sale for resale, the sale is subject to the wholesaling B&O tax classification. (See WAC 458-20-211 for more information regarding the tax reporting responsibilities of persons that lease or rent tangible personal property.)

If the sale, lease, or rental of the property qualifies for one of the retail sales tax exemptions for equipment used in interstate commerce provided by RCW 82.08.0262 or 82.08.0263 (e.g., as may be the case with a trailer used in interstate commerce), the retailing of interstate transportation equipment B&O tax classification applies. (See WAC 458-20-174 for limited exemptions for motor carriers operating in interstate or foreign commerce.)

(9) **Purchases of tangible personal property.** Persons engaged in the business of motor or urban transportation must pay retail sales tax to their vendors when purchasing motor vehicles, trailers, parts, equipment, tools, supplies, and other tangible personal property for use in conducting their business. (See WAC 458-20-174 for limited exemptions for motor carriers operating in interstate or foreign commerce.)

(10) **Purchases made for rental or lease to others.** Persons buying motor vehicles, trailers and similar equipment solely for the purpose of renting or leasing the same without an operator are making purchases for resale. The seller must obtain a resale certificate for sales made before January 1, 2010, or a reseller permit for sales made on or after January 1, 2010, from the buyer to document the wholesale nature of any sale as provided in WAC 458-20-102A, Resale certificates and WAC 458-20-102, Reseller permits. Even though resale certificates are no longer used after December 31, 2009, they must be kept on file by the seller for five years from the date of last use or until December 31, 2014.