

NOTES FOR HISTORICAL STATE TAX COLLECTION TABLES

Major Tax Rate and Base Changes - Tables 2 and 21 A-D

NOTE: The data in these tables reflect fiscal years ending September 30 through 1929, ending March 31 through 1952 and June 30 thereafter. These tables include only taxes levied by the state, not local governments.

Retail Sales and Use Taxes

Tax of 2.0% enacted on sales or use of tangible personal property, 5/1/35. Rate changes: to 3.0%, 5/1/41; to 3.33%, 5/1/55; to 4.0%, 4/1/59; to 4.2%, 6/1/65; to 4.5%, 7/1/67; to 4.6%, 6/1/76; to 4.5%, 7/1/79; to 5.5% 12/4/81; to 5.4%, 5/1/82; and to 6.5%, 3/1/83. Certain services are taxable: tangible personal property in 1939, real property in 1941, hotel/motel accommodations in 1951 and amusement/recreation in 1961. Deferral of sales tax allowed for certain plant expansions by manufacturers: 1972-82 and starting again in 1985. Food for off-premises consumption exempted, 7/1/78 (taxable again from 5/1/82 to 6/30/83). Business and long distance telephone services made taxable in 1983. Exemption for trade-ins allowed in 1984. Tax extended to a variety of personal services, e.g., landscape maintenance, guided tours, physical fitness, 7/1/93. Tax deferral/exemption for high tech firms, 1994. Exemption for manufacturing machinery, 7/1/95. Statewide deferral for new manufacturers repealed, but deferral for distressed areas converted to exemption, 7/1/95. Effective 1/1/96, local sales tax of 0.017% applied to all taxable sales in King County to fund professional baseball stadium; amount is credited against state tax receipts. Remittance of state sales tax for warehouse and distribution facilities, 5/20/97. Local sales taxes credited against the state tax: professional football stadium, 0.016% (8/1/97) and for public facilities in rural counties, 0.04% (7/1/98), increased to 0.08% in 1999. Distressed area exemption/deferral changed to population density basis (rural county) in 1999. Local, state-credited tax of 0.033% for public facility districts in 1999. Additional statewide sales tax of 0.3% on motor vehicles, 7/1/2003. Major portions of the Streamlined Sales Tax Agreement adopted, making Washington's tax base more uniform with other states. Exemptions for construction of facilities and certain other expenditures for aerospace industry and semiconductor industry.

Motor Fuel Taxes

Gas tax enacted at 1 cent/gallon, 7/1/21. Rate changes: 2 cents, 7/1/29; 4 cents, 4/1/31; 5 cents, 4/1/33; 6.5 cents, 3/21/49; 7.5 cents, 4/1/61; 9 cents, 5/1/67; 11 cents, 7/1/77; 12 cents, 7/1/79; 13.5 cents, 7/1/81; 12 cents, 1/1/82; 16 cents, 7/1/83; 18 cents, 7/1/84; 22 cents, 4/1/90; 23 cents, 4/1/91; and 28 cents, 7/1/03. Constitutional amendment dedicated tax to road purposes, 1944. Related taxes enacted: special fuel tax in 1941, fuel importer tax in 1963 and aircraft fuel tax in 1967. Fuel importer tax repealed, 1995.

Beer and Wine Excise Taxes

Special excise taxes enacted: \$1.00/barrel for beer, 1/23/34 and 10 cents/gallon for wine, 6/17/35. Beer tax increase to \$1.50/barrel equivalent for can or bottles, 1965. Additional 26% tax for wine, 1969; replaced by 75 cents/gallon tax in 1973. Beer tax increased to \$2.60 and wine changed to 20.25 cents/liter, 7/1/81. Additional surtaxes in 1982 and 1983. Rate increases to fund drug programs, 6/1/89: wine, 22.92 cents/liter; strong wine, 45.36 cents/liter and beer \$4.78/barrel. Rate increased for beer tax to \$5.742, 7/1/93; to \$7.172, 7/1/95; and to \$9.562, 7/1/97. Beer tax reduced by \$1.48 to \$8.08/barrel, 7/1/97.

Liquor Sales Tax (Percentage)

Tax on hard liquor enacted at 10% of wholesale price, 5/1/35. Additional "war" liquor tax of 10% imposed, 1943-1949. Both taxes repealed in 1949 but 10% rate reinstated in 1951. Rate increased to 15% for sales to consumers; lower rate remains for bars that resell liquor by the drink. Surtaxes in 1982-1983 increase rates to 17.1% and 11.4%. Rate increased for health care to 18.7%, 7/1/93; to 19.7%, 7/1/95; and to 20.7%, 7/1/97.

Liquor Liter Tax (Volume)

Additional tax on hard liquor enacted at 1.1 cents/ounce, 4/15/61. Rate increased to 2 cents, 6/1/65, 4 cents, 7/1/71, and 5 cents, 7/1/81. Changed to metric basis at \$1.72/liter in 1981 and additional surtaxes in 1982 and 1983 increased rate to \$1.96/liter. Rate increased to \$2.03/liter, 7/1/90 and proceeds dedicated to drug programs. Rate increased for health care to \$2.23, 7/1/93; to \$2.33, 7/1/95; and to \$2.44, 7/1/97.

Cigarette Tax

Enacted at 1 cent/pack of 20 cigarettes, 5/1/35. Rate increases: to 2 cents, 5/1/39; to 4 cents, 11/28/49; to 5 cents, 4/1/55; to 6 cents, 6/11/59; to 7 cents, 4/15/61; to 11 cents, 6/1/65; to 16 cents, 6/1/71; to 20 cents, 7/1/81; to 20.8 cents, 5/1/82; to 23 cents, 8/1/82; to 31 cents, 4/1/86; to 34 cents, 6/1/89; to 54 cents, 7/1/93; to 56.5 cents, 7/1/94; to 81.5 cents, 7/1/95; to 82.5 cents, 7/1/96; and to \$1.425, 1/1/2002. Contracts with Indian Tribes authorized in 2001.

Tobacco Products Tax

Enacted on cigars, chewing tobacco, etc. at 25% of wholesale price, 7/1/59. Rate increases: to 30%, 6/1/65; to 45%, 6/1/71; to 46.8%, 5/1/82; to 48.15%, 8/1/82; to 64.9%, 4/1/86; to 74.9%, 7/1/93; and to 128.42%, 1/1/2002.

Convention Center Tax

State tax on hotel/motel accommodations at facilities with 60 or more units to finance the state convention center in Seattle, 4/1/82. Initial rates: 3.0% in Seattle and 2.0% throughout remainder of King County; increased to 5.0% in Seattle, 1/1/83; to 6.0% and 2.4%, 7/1/88 and to 7.0% and 2.8%, 1/1/93.

Replacement Tire Tax

Replacement vehicle tire subject to tax of 0.12% of gross sales in 1985. Changed to \$1.00/tire, 10/1/89. Tax expired, 9/30/94.

Refuse Collection Taxes

Garbage collection removed from public utility tax and subject to separate 3.6% tax, 6/11/86. Additional 1.0% tax on solid waste customers, 7/1/89 through 6/30/95.

Wood Stove Fee

New wood stove subject to \$5 fee, 1/1/88. Increased to \$15, 6/7/90 and to \$30, 1/1/92.

Brokered Natural Gas Tax

Special "use" tax of 3.852% on natural gas not subject to public utility tax, 7/1/90.

Rental Car Tax

MVET on rental vehicles eliminated but replaced by additional sales tax of 5.9% (in addition to existing state and local retail sales tax) levied on customers of rental car companies, 1/1/93. Also, local rental car taxes authorized.

Business and Occupation Tax

B&O tax enacted 5/1/35 on gross receipts of all businesses: 0.25% for most activities and 0.5% for services. (Replaced a similar business activities tax, imposed 3/21/33.) Surtaxes applied to all B&O rates: 20%, 11/1/51; increased to 60%, 5/1/55; and to 76%, 4/1/59. Surtax of 6%, 6/1/76 through 6/30/79. Surtax of 4%, 4/1/82; increased to 7%, 7/1/82. Resulting major rates: manufacturing/wholesaling, 0.484%; retailing, 0.471%; service, 1.5%. Tax extended to financial institutions, 1970. Credit for certain sales taxes paid by manufacturers. Credit for pollution control facilities, 1967. Credit for personal property taxes paid on business inventories: 1974-1984. Credit for manufacturing tax against wholesaling/retailing tax and credit for similar taxes paid in other states, 8/12/87. Tax extended to public and nonprofit hospitals with receipts dedicated to health care; initially at 0.75%, 7/1/93; increased to 1.5%, 7/1/95. Tax rates increased for all activities except retailing, effective 7/1/93; new classifications: business services, 2.5% and financial services, 1.7%. Permanent increase in rate for remaining services from 1.5% to 2.0%. Temporary surtax of 6.5% until 7/1/97 for most other activities except business services, financial services, public and nonprofit hospitals becomes 0.515% and services becomes 2.13%. Surtax reduced to 4.5%, 1/1/95. Minimum taxable amount of \$1,000/month replaced by small business credit against tax liability of \$35/month. Rate reduction for insurance to 0.55% (plus surtax), 7/1/95. Reduction in service rates, effective 1/1/96: business services to 2.0%; financial services to 1.6% and other services to 1.75% (1.829% with surtax until 7/1/97). Minimum gross receipts required to file tax returns established at \$24,000, 1996, and increased to \$28,000 in 1999. All service rates revert to 1.5%, 7/1/98. Tax on internal distributions repealed, 7/1/98. Consolidation of minor B&O tax rates eff. 7/1/98; reduces number of tax rates from 13 to 6. Tax rate reduction and new credits for aerospace industry and semiconductor industry.

Public Utility Tax

Tax enacted in lieu of B&O tax on gross operating receipts of public service companies, 5/1/35: railroad, express, electric power, telephone & telegraph, 3.0%; distribution of natural gas, 2.0%; urban transportation and tugboats, 0.5%; motor transportation (e.g., trucking) and all other activities, 1.5%. Surtax applied to all rates: 10%, 11/1/51; increased to 20%, 5/1/57. Surtax of 4%, 4/1/82; increased to 7%, 7/1/82. Water distribution increased to 5.029%, 7/1/85. Activities shifted from B&O tax: garbage collection, 5.029% and sewerage, 3.852%, 7/1/85. Electric power rate increased to 3.873%, 5/11/89. Activities removed from tax: telephone service in 1983, warehousing in 1986, and garbage collection in 1986. Rate for railroads and railcar companies reduced to 1.926%, 1996. Minimum gross receipts required for reporting increased to \$24,000, 1996. Deduction for wholesale sales of electric power, 6/8/2000. Tax credit for energy facilities to supply DSIs. Tax credit for billing discounts for low-income households.

Litter Tax

Tax of 0.015% on gross receipts of businesses whose products they handle relate to the litter problem, 5/21/71. Tax reported on each tax return, rather than annually, effective 1/1/99.

Insurance Premiums Tax

Tax enacted on gross premiums received by insurance companies at 2.0% rate, 4/1/1891. Retaliatory provision, providing higher rates for companies of other states depending on how they tax Washington companies, adopted in 1911. Rate of 1.0% for domestic companies in 1937 and 0.75% for ocean marine insurance in 1949. Rate increase of 0.16 and surtax of 4.0% in 1982. Domestic and foreign rate consolidated at 2.0% with ocean marine rate remaining at 0.95%, 7/1/86. Health maintenance organizations subject to tax of 2.0%, 1/1/94.

Parimutuel Tax

Tax of 5% on gross receipts of parimutuel betting machines at horse races, 3/3/33. Rates reduced in 1979, 1982, 1985 and 1991 and 1998. Current permanent rate schedule: 1.803% for races with annual receipts up to \$50 million; 1.3% for larger races; 1.0% for smaller, temporary races.

Boxing and Wrestling Tax

Tax of 5% on gross ticket sales of boxing and wrestling matches, 7/1/33.

State Property Tax

Data reflect levies until 1952; actual collections thereafter. Prior to adoption of the first 40 mill limit in 1932, the state levy ranged from 10 to 15 mills. It was lowered to 5 mills in 1933 and 2 mills in 1935, until it was increased to 4 mills in 1967. In 1974 the state levy was eliminated, but replaced in 1975 by a levy of \$3.60/1,000 of assessed value (adjusted to reflect market value). Subject to 106% limit in 1979. One-time reduction in levy rate of 4.7% for 1996 collections; extended to 1997 and then made permanent starting with 1998 collections. Assessed values frozen at 1995 levels for senior citizens and disabled homeowners with disposable income less than \$28,000, effective for taxes due in 1996. Annual growth limit reduced to rate of inflation in 1998. Exemption from state levy for farm machinery, effective CY 2003. Initiative 747 reduces annual growth rate of state and local regular levies to 1.0%, starting in CY 2002.

Vehicle Excise Taxes

Motor vehicle excise tax of 1.5% in lieu of personal property tax, 1/1/38. Aircraft excise tax of 1.0%, 6/8/49. House trailers taxed separately at 1.0%, 6/8/55. MVET increased to 2.0%, 4/1/59, and house trailer tax increased to 1.5%, 6/1/65. Aircraft tax changed from 1.0% to \$15 or \$25 (multi-engine) in 1967 and to a schedule ranging from \$20 to \$125 in 1983. Mobile homes excluded from house trailer tax in 1973 but subject to property tax. Campers included with travel trailers in the house trailer tax which was reduced to 1.0%, 5/23/72. MVET increased to 2.2%, 8/1/77, to 2.354%, in 1982 and to 2.454% in 1989. MVET rate reduced to 2.2% in 1991. Watercraft excise tax levied in 1983 at rate of 0.5% of fair market value (depreciated purchase price). Camper/travel trailer tax increased to 1.1%, 9/1/90. Tax credit of \$30 per vehicle, effective 7/1/99. The state motor vehicle excise tax and camper/travel trailer excise taxes were repealed and replaced by a \$30 per vehicle annual fee, effective 1/1/2000 (Initiative 695). Although I-695 was ruled unconstitutional in March 2000, the Legislature had enacted the same changes by statute.

PUD Privilege Tax

Tax of 2.0% of gross revenue of public utility districts in lieu of property tax, 3/25/41. Additional tax of 5% of first 4 mills added in 1959. Rates increased to 2.14% and 5.35% in 1982. Nuclear plant at Hanford subject to 1.5% tax in 1977.

Timber Excise Tax

Severance tax on stumpage value of timber harvested from private lands; rate phased in 1972-1974 to 6.5%. Public lands added in 1982. Rate phased down to 5.0%, 1984-1988. Currently the state tax is 1.0% for harvests on private lands and 5.0% for public lands (counties receive 4% for private lands). Tax credit for harvests impacted by salmon regulations in 1999, effectively reducing the tax rate from 5.0% to 4.2%. Data for this source in the tables reflects distributions, not collections. Starting in 2004 and running until 2013 the state tax on harvests on public lands is phased down from 5.0% to 1.0% with a commensurate transfer of the tax to counties.

Leasehold Excise Tax

Tax on the rental value of leases of publicly owned property (i.e. exempt from property taxes) levied 1/1/76 at 12%. Credit for local leasehold taxes up to 6%. Combined rate increased to 12.84% in 1982.

Estate Tax

Tax on inheritances levied 6/6/1901 with rates ranging from 1% - 12% depending upon the relationship of heir to decedent and the amount inherited. Gift tax with rates equal to 90% of inheritance tax levied 3/21/41. Both taxes repealed by the voters in 1981, effective 1/1/82. Remaining estate tax equal to the amount of credit for state taxes allowed under the federal tax (no additional tax to the estate). In 2001 the federal estate tax was repealed, to be phased out over a 10 year period. However, the state maintained that the tax was linked to the federal Internal Revenue Code as of 1/1/2001 prior to the amendments to the federal tax. On 2/3/2005, the State Supreme Court overturned this interpretation, ruling that the state estate tax must conform to the phase out in the federal tax.

Real Estate Excise Tax

Initially imposed as a county tax in 1951, the 1.0% tax on sales of real property was shifted to the state, effective 9/1/81. Rate was increased to 1.07% in 1982 and to 1.28% (to include the former conveyance tax), 5/18/87. An additional 0.06% rate was levied from 1987 to 1989. Tax extended to transfers of control of real property, 7/1/93, and to step transfers, 7/25/99.

Fish Tax

Tax on commercial possession of food fish or shellfish, effective 7/1/80. Initial rates ranged from 0.07 - 5.0%; with surtaxes in 1982 and 1994 they now range up to 5.62%. Anadromous game fish (steelhead) added in 1983. Current rates: chinook salmon and steelhead, 5.62%; pink and sockeye salmon, 3.37%; oysters, 0.086% and all other food fish and shellfish, 2.25%. Rate on sea urchins/cucumbers increased from 2.1 to 4.6%, 1/1/2000 until 1/1/2006.

Hazardous Substance Tax

Initial tax imposed 1/1/88 at 0.8% of wholesale value of designated substances which pose a threat to the environment. Current tax, adopted by initiative effective 3/1/89, is 0.7% but with a broader base.

Mobile Home Fee

Annual fee of \$1 on each occupied mobile home lot, collected in 1989 and 1990. Ruled unconstitutional, 8/6/90. Repealed in 1995.

Carbonated Beverage Tax

Tax on soft drinks, 1 cent/12 ounce container or 75 cents/gallon of concentrate; imposed 7/1/89 through 6/30/95. Carbonated beverage tax expired 7/1/95, but the "syrup" tax increased to \$1.00/gallon.

Petroleum Products Tax

Tax on first possession of petroleum products equal to 0.5% of wholesale value, 7/1/89. Tax suspended 7/1/92 as the maximum fund balance was reached. Tax was reimposed on 7/1/2003 for one year only. The entire tax was scheduled to expire on 6/1/2001 but was extended to 6/1/2007 in 2000.

Oil Spill Tax

Tax on petroleum products imported via navigable waters equal to 5 cents/42 gallon barrel, 10/1/91.

Hazardous Waste Fees

Annual fee of \$35 for generators of certain waste products, 7/31/90; plus an additional fee determined by the Department of Ecology, starting 7/31/91. Administration of the fee was transferred to DOE in 1995.

IMR Tax

Medicaid receipts of private and nonprofit hospitals subject to tax of 20%, 9/1/91. Intended to increase federal matching funds for Medicaid. The tax was disallowed by federal OMB, effective 10/1/92. Another tax of 15% levied on the income of intermediate residential (IMR) health care facilities for the mentally retarded, 4/1/92. Rate reduced to 6.0% subject to order of federal government.

Fuel Oil Tax

Tax of 0.25 cents/gallon levied 5/1/35; repealed 6/11/47.

Express Company Excise Tax

Tax of 5% of gross receipts levied on express (shipping) companies, 4/1/1907; repealed in 1945.

Mechanical Devices Tax

Tax of 10% or 20% of gross yield levied on certain gambling devices, 5/1/41. Rates doubled to 20% and 40%, 3/20/47. Slot machines ruled illegal by State Supreme Court in 1952, effectively eliminating the tax.

Conveyance Tax

Tax of 50 cents/\$500 of value imposed on transfers of real property, 5/1/35. Increased to 53.5 cents in 1982 and to \$1.00, 7/1/85. The tax as a separate source was repealed 5/18/87 but it was effectively incorporated into the real estate excise tax.

Admissions Tax

Tax of 1 cent per 20 cents of ticket price for admission to most events except public school activities, 5/1/35. Repealed as a state tax, 5/1/43, but local governments permitted to levy a 5% admissions tax.

Enhanced 911 Telephone Tax

State tax of 20 cents per switched telephone access line, effective 1/1/92. Collection of the tax shifted to Dept. of Revenue, 1/1/99. State tax extended to radio access (wireless) telephone lines effective 1/1/2003. Additional state taxes apply to switched telephone lines: telephone assistance tax of 14 cents per month and telecommunications relay service tax of 19 cents per month.

Nursing Home Fee

Nursing homes to pay a fee equal to \$6.50 per patient per day, effective 7/1/2003. DOR to collect the fee.