

Watercraft Excise Tax

RCW Chapter 82.49

Tax Base The purchase price or fair market value of noncommercial boats 16 feet and longer used on Washington waters.

The Department of Revenue prepares a depreciation schedule to be used in the determination of fair market value. The Department of Revenue may appraise boats which were not purchased, or whose purchase price does not represent fair market value.

Tax exemptions may reduce these taxes.

For more information, refer to the [Tax Exemption Study](#).

Tax Rate 0.5%, with a minimum of \$5.00

Recent Collections (\$000)

Fiscal Year	Collections	% Change	% of All State Taxes
2021	\$20,403	19.5%	0.1%
2020	\$17,073	6.5%	0.1%
2019	\$16,030	1.7%	0.1%
2018	\$15,769	8.3%	0.1%
2017	\$14,559	5.4%	0.1%
2016	\$13,809	1.2%	0.1%
2015	\$13,649	4.7%	0.1%
2014	\$13,039	4.6%	0.1%
2013	\$12,463	0.4%	0.1%
2012	\$12,418	-8.7%	0.1%

Source: Washington State Department of Licensing

Distribution of Receipts Receipts from this tax are deposited as follows:

- 75% to the State General Fund.
- 25% to the Derelict Vessel Removal Account.

Levied by State

Watercraft Excise Tax

Administration Department of Licensing

Watercraft owners pay the tax to the Department of Licensing and its agents, including county auditors and authorized private firms, when first registering the vessel and then each June 30.

The Department of Revenue collects unpaid taxes.

History

2022 Redirect 25% of the taxes to the Derelict Vessel Removal Account to provide funding for the removal of abandoned or derelict vessels from waterways.

2021 The Department of Revenue codified an administrative rule providing guidance and an overview of the watercraft excise tax and the watercraft depreciation schedule. The rule became effective January 1, 2022.

2014 Instituted new penalties for unregistered vessels.

1983 Adopted the watercraft excise tax. Prior to this, watercraft owner paid personal property tax.
