

2026 Supplemental Budget Request – Operating

Operating

9/11/2025 \$ in thousands - Biennialized FTEs

2025-27 Enacted Base Budget

2026 Supplemental Budget Request 9/11/2025					
	FTE	GF-State	MTCA ²	Other	Total
2025-27 Enacted Base Budget	2,281.5	67,558	379,422	626,790	1,073,770
Maintenance Level Changes					
1 Compensation for New 2025-27 FTEs	-	34	210	398	642
Policy Level Changes					
Prevent and Reduce Waste, Toxic Threats, and Pollution¹					
2 Laboratory Accreditation	5.8	(1,087)	-	2,102	1,015
Total Changes	5.8	(1,053)	210	2,500	1,657
Total Operating Budget	2,287.3	66,505	379,632	629,290	1,075,427

Notes:

¹ Goal in the Department of Ecology's 2025-30 Strategic Plan (<https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/strategic-plan/2025-30-strategic-plan>).

² Model Toxics Control Operating Account (23P-1, 23P-7), Model Toxics Control Stormwater Account (23R-1).

Protecting the Environment | Ensuring Public Health | Supporting Economic Growth & Jobs

As the state's lead environmental protection agency, Ecology is deeply committed to protecting, preserving, and enhancing Washington's environment for current and future generations. Through innovative partnerships, we protect and sustain healthy land, air, and water in harmony with a strong economy. And we take great care to develop strategic plans that have a broad and holistic approach to what we do and how we do it.

Ecology's strategic goals are:

1. Support and engage our communities, customers, and employees.
2. Reduce and prepare for climate impacts.
3. Prevent and reduce waste, toxic threats, and pollution.
4. Protect and manage our state's waters.

Our agency's deep commitment to environmental justice is tied to each of our strategic goals and guides our work to accomplish those goals.

The following summarizes Ecology's 2026 supplemental operating budget request. It recognizes the challenges of the state's current budget situation and continuing uncertainty around federal funding.

Maintenance Level

1. **Compensation for New 2025-27 FTEs. \$642,000.** The 2025–27 enacted operating budget includes funding for general wage increases and targeted job class increases per the state's collective bargaining agreements. This funding was based on Compensation Impact Model

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projections using May 2024 staffing data. However, for Ecology, the projections did not account for significant staffing increases included in the 2025-27 operating budget. As a result, current funding is insufficient to cover compensation adjustments for these new positions. Ecology is requesting a Maintenance Level adjustment to fully fund the required general wage and targeted job class increases for our newly authorized FTEs. (Multiple Funds)

Policy Level

Prevent and Reduce Waste, Toxic Threats, and Pollution

- 2. Laboratory Accreditation. \$1,015,292, 5.8 FTEs.** Ecology is responsible for auditing environmental and drinking water laboratories that conduct business in or with Washington State. These audits are a critical component of the state's accreditation process, ensuring that laboratories follow approved methods and produce high-quality, defensible data. This data underpins the state's environmental and public health decisions.

Over the past decade, Ecology's audit workload has significantly increased due to rising demand for technical assistance and the accreditation of new laboratories analyzing emerging and complex contaminants, such as 6PPD-quinone. In response to a 2021 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency audit finding, highlighting that 34 drinking water labs had not been audited within the federally mandated three-year cycle, Ecology received one-time bridge funding in the 2023–25 biennium to support five additional auditor positions.

In 2023, Ecology completed rulemaking to increase lab accreditation fees, enabling long-term support for increased staffing. This request provides the necessary expenditure and FTE authority to reestablish the five auditor positions permanently. Doing so ensures the state remains compliant with the Safe Drinking Water Act and that Ecology has the capacity to accredit laboratories analyzing both standard and emerging contaminants.

Additionally, this request supports Ecology's agency request legislation to create a dedicated account for lab accreditation fees and shifts base funding for this program to the new account, improving transparency and financial stability. This request is related to implementing the Governor's Salmon Strategy. (General Fund-State, NEW-Laboratory Accreditation Account)

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Capital

9/11/2025 \$ in thousands		2026 Supplemental Budget Request 9/11/2025			
		SBCA ²	MTCA ³	Other	Total
Prevent and Reduce Waste, Toxic Threats, and Pollution ¹					
1	Improving Air Quality in Overburdened Communities Grant Program			14,000,000	14,000,000
2	Landfill Methane Emissions Reduction Grant Program			15,000,000	15,000,000
3	Air Quality Volkswagen Program Expenditure Authority			19,000,000	19,000,000
4	Cleanup Settlement Account Projects			500,000	500,000
Total Capital Budget		-	-	48,500,000	48,500,000

Notes:

¹ Goal in the Department of Ecology's 2025-30 Strategic Plan (<https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/strategic-plan/2025-30-strategic-plan>).

² State Building Construction Account.

³ Model Toxics Control Capital Account (23N-1), Model Toxics Control Stormwater Account (23R-1) .

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The following summarizes Ecology's 2026 supplemental capital budget request. It recognizes the challenges of the state's current budget situation and continuing uncertainty around federal funding. Our request includes four projects that are exclusively supported by dedicated environmental and/or settlement funds.

These investments will provide economic and health benefits to our state by passing through almost all the funds to our communities and Tribes, with a strong emphasis on those that are overburdened and most impacted by environmental harm. These projects will:

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- Reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in our state.
- Address local environmental and public health priorities.
- Promote local economic development through cleaning up contaminated sites for redevelopment.

Capital Budget

Prevent and Reduce Waste, Toxic Threats, and Pollution

- 1. Improving Air Quality in Overburdened Communities Grant Program. \$14,000,000.** This request continues a successful grant program that funds Tribes and community-based organizations to identify, design, and implement projects that reduce criteria air pollution in overburdened communities. The program is a key tool for meeting the emission reduction requirements of Section 3 of the Climate Commitment Act.

In the first grant round in 2024, Ecology awarded funding to 24 organizations working in 12 communities and two Tribes. Projects range from community engagement and planning to on-the-ground actions like road paving, bike distribution, and diesel equipment replacement.

Additional funding will allow this work to continue, reducing air pollution, advancing environmental justice, and improving public health outcomes in communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution. This request is related to the Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation. (Air Quality and Health Disparities Improvement Account)

- 2. Landfill Methane Emissions Reduction Grant Program. \$15,000,000.** To support the state's 2050 greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, the 2023 Legislature enacted the Landfills – Methane Emissions Law (Chapter 70A.540 RCW), requiring municipal solid waste landfills to reduce methane emissions. Funding in the 2023–25 capital budget allowed Ecology to launch a new grant program to help landfills comply by offsetting costs for planning, monitoring, gas collection system upgrades, and control system installations. This request continues that successful grant program, ensuring landfills—many located near overburdened communities in both urban and rural areas—have the resources needed to reduce methane emissions and protect public health. This request is related to the Puget Sound Action Agenda implementation. (Climate Commitment Account)
- 3. Air Quality Volkswagen Program Expenditure Authority. \$19,000,000.** Ecology administers the Volkswagen Program to reduce harmful diesel emissions in Washington, using \$112.7 million from the VW Federal Settlement and state penalty awarded in 2018. Since then, approximately \$19 million in interest has accrued on these funds. This request seeks

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appropriation authority to use the accrued interest for additional grant opportunities, in alignment with the terms of the Settlement and Washington's emissions reduction goals. Utilizing these funds will allow Ecology to expand the program's impact and further reduce diesel pollution across the state. This request is related to the Puget Sound Action Agenda implementation. (General Fund - Private/Local)

4. **Cleanup Settlement Account Projects. \$500,000.** This request supports environmental monitoring at a toxic cleanup site formerly operated by the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) for the next six fiscal years. Funding will come from the Cleanup Settlement Account, established by the Legislature in 2008 as an interest-bearing account in the State Treasury. The account is used to receive funds from settlements or court orders, such as those related to bankruptcy, limited ability to pay, or natural resource damages, and to support cleanup activities or address environmental harm tied to those liabilities. This request ensures continued monitoring to protect human health and the environment and to meet long-term obligations tied to the ASARCO settlement. This request is related to the Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation. (Cleanup Settlement Account)

To request an ADA accommodation, contact us by phone at 564-200-3541 or email at Chrystal.Witham@ecy.wa.gov or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/ADA>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877- 833-6341.