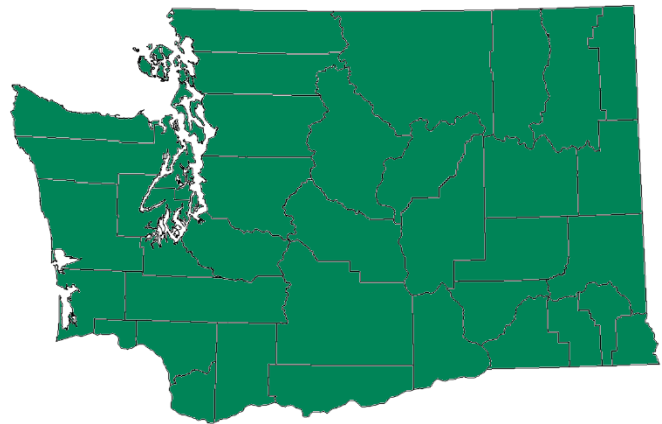




Washington State County Road Administration Board

So, you're the new County Engineer?



An Introduction to County Engineering
in the State of Washington

Foreword

You have just accepted a position with a county to perform the duties of the County Engineer. During the interview process, you were able to demonstrate that you were the most qualified individual for the job, that you possessed the necessary skills and required licenses to perform the duties of your new job. The Board of County Commissioners or the County Executive has offered you the opportunity to serve the citizens of the county and you have accepted the challenge!

Congratulations!! You are now one of 39 unique individuals in Washington State to possess the title of County Engineer...one per county. You are an engineering professional, engineering will be the easy part, but there is much more.

Your first days with the county are spent getting acquainted with your staff, finding your way around the offices, and familiarizing yourself with the daily operations.

Soon, you may have a number of nagging questions about what this job really involves:

- How do I fit into this county organization?
- Who can answer my questions about laws and regulations, policies and procedures?
- How do I answer the questions that will be asked of me if I've never had to deal with this subject before?
- Why didn't the last engineer leave me the 'instruction manual'?
- Who can I talk to about these issues?
- Where do I find this information?

The Washington State County Road Administration Board ([CRAB](#)) is here to assist you in answering those types of questions! As a part of CRAB's ongoing program to provide engineering, technical and administrative assistance to county engineers, public works directors and management staff, we have provided this short introduction to help you become more acquainted with your new position.

Blue highlighted text indicates an active hyperlink.

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The Board of County Commissioners or the County Council

It all starts with the people on Election Day. They periodically elect representatives whose function it becomes to serve as the legislative and/or executive body of their particular county. These representatives are called County Commissioners in all statutory counties. They are likely called something else in counties where the voters have approved home rule, a Charter, such as County Councilmember. King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Whatcom have chosen to divide the legislative-executive authority between an elected County Council (policy only) and an elected County Executive (executive management). Clark has an elected council and an appointed county manager. For the sake of simplicity, the legislative/executive authority in these pages will be referred to simply as the Board.

The Board has a wide spectrum of responsibilities. These range from county budget, personnel policy, public health, county roads, parks and recreation, emergency services, to planning, and more. This publication deals only with the Board's responsibilities and relationships with the road and public works departments.

Simply stated, under the laws of the State of Washington, the Board is the policy-setting body and the County Engineer is the manager and administrator of the road department. In its policy-setting role, the Board's primary functions are to adopt a capital improvement program; to adopt a county road budget sufficient to meet all capital, operational and administrative needs; to set a tax levy that will generate sufficient revenues; and to develop and adopt policies governing the operation of the department.

During the development of a Capital Improvement Plan (called a Six Year Transportation Improvement Program in the law), the Board receives specific recommendations from the Engineer, who provides the Board with the technical information on which their recommendations are based. The Board is required to go through a public hearing process and may ask for a planning department review relative to the recommended program. This gives the Board an opportunity to evaluate the plan's social implications and political ramifications. The Board, in due course, may revise the recommended program as it sees fit, but must adopt a final program that represents, as nearly as possible, the consensus of the Board.

The officially adopted program simply represents the Board's instructions to the Engineer, listing those projects to which the Engineer is to devote their attention, preferably in some order of priority. Having thus set forth its long-term objectives, the Board is required to adopt annual construction programs and to provide in the departmental budget sufficient funds for the Engineer to pursue the projects that have been listed for that year.

An important responsibility of the Board is to approve an organizational chart showing the structure of the department and fixing the staffing levels. The chart, in conjunction with a written personnel policy, represents the Board's instructions to the Engineer concerning command, control and position description within the department. These policies should be reviewed from time to time jointly by the Engineer and Board, especially after there has been a change in elected officials.

Having adopted a program, a budget, and overall policies, the Board's function is then to monitor actual performance. The County Engineer is given by law the responsibility of administering all the activities of the department and is the individual who must keep the members of the Board adequately informed. Members of the Board should resist the strong temptation to become involved in administrative details. To do so can seriously undermine the effectiveness of the individual charged with these administrative responsibilities. It is most important that the Board and the Engineer maintain mutually understood methods of communication. Specific opportunities must be provided for an exchange of ideas, complaints, and reports relating to the operation of the department.

The Board is where it all starts and, if all else fails it is also where it all ends. The commissioners must take action or give direction as a Board, they may not do so individually. It is the Engineer's responsibility to develop the best possible relationship with their Board to assure that the Board's stated policies are carried out to the greatest extent possible and with a minimum of controversy and confusion.

The Engineer

The County Engineer or County Road Engineer (statutory title, referred to here as the Engineer) is appointed by the Board and serves at its pleasure as constrained by State law. The Engineer may also be designated by the Board as Director of Public Works or, the positions of County Engineer and Director of Public Works may be held independently by separate individuals, or there may be no public works director. In the case of separate individuals, regardless of whether the PWD is a licensed engineer, the County Engineer retains all the legal responsibilities and authority assigned by statute and by appointment. *The exception may be Charter designated delegations.*

The Engineer, under the direction of the Board, supervises the establishment, laying out, construction, alteration, improvement, repair, and maintenance of all county roads. They are required by law to be a licensed professional civil engineer in the State of Washington. There are a vast variety of laws to be reckoned with by the Engineer in carrying out their obligations, some of which may be distasteful to the Board. The Engineer must execute the Board's instructions in a most diplomatic fashion within the legal requirements. The best resource in doing so is the Washington State Association of County Engineers adopted "Code of Ethics." This code is customarily on display in the office of each Engineer and sets forth the relationship that must exist between the Engineer, the Board, and the Public. The ten basic tenets of the code are:

1. The position of county engineer is one requiring high professional stature, and the individual occupying that position shall conduct themselves in a manner that shall be a credit to their profession and to their county.
2. The Engineer shall manage and administer the county road department and other departments lawfully under their jurisdiction, in accordance with the spirit and intent of the appropriate statute, and in a professional manner suggested by professional training, continual professional improvement, and professional guidance from state and national groups and professional organizations.
3. The Engineer shall gather and prepare factual data and reports and make professional recommendations to their Board as engineering support for the Board's policymaking decisions.

4. The Engineer shall use their professional engineering skills and knowledge to carry out the Board's decisions or policy.
5. The Engineer shall use their professional engineering ability to appraise results of actions and operations and, in a professional manner, take appropriate actions to have necessary items brought to the attention of the board with recommended policy changes.
6. The Engineer shall consult regularly with their Board to attain and ensure complete understanding of decisions made by the Board so that their professional actions as county engineer will result in compliance with policy decisions of the board.
7. The Engineer shall act at all times in the highest professional manner as a county engineer to maintain the dignity and honor of the position in the county and state.
8. The Engineer shall be professional in all aspects of conduct, in their professional duties, community activities, and personal conduct as a private citizen so that honor and respect shall be reflected on the engineering profession.
9. The Engineer shall stimulate professional attainment of qualified staff members and provide the opportunity for the advancement and development of every employee's skills.
10. The Engineer shall serve in the public interest and treat all citizens courteously, equitably and fairly.

In those counties where the Engineer also functions as the Director of Public Works, they may find themselves dealing with such things as operation of water and sewer systems, solid waste collection and/or disposal, stormwater division, airports and more. In that role, considerably expanded from running a road department to that of managing, directing, coordinating, and expediting these services, they must staff their organization with competent people and keep them trained for whatever their jobs may be.

The Engineer must keep in mind that they and the staff are first and foremost public employees performing for the convenience and common good of the public. It is imperative that all possible and proper measures be taken to assure the taxpayer that they are receiving full value for every dollar spent.

The Engineer must make certain delegations of authority and responsibility for the proper operation of their department. How much, of course, depends upon the size of the department and its programs. In all cases, each level must clearly understand the authority and policy limits within which it is to exercise its delegated responsibilities. The Engineer must assure themselves that all such delegations are being properly discharged and that the people to whom delegation is made are fully capable. It is essential that competent personnel be employed on their staff. *However, ultimately, it is the Engineer who is legally responsible for the actions taken on behalf of the department.*

Integrity, confidence, interest in the work, and *freedom from political interference* must prevail at all levels of the departments administered by the Engineer in order for the departments' services to be satisfactory and in the public's best interest.

The County Road Administration Board, through its staff, serves Engineers, county road departments, and Commissioners by keeping them up to date with changing times and conditions, rules and statutes (current and proposed), and regulatory requirements. This agency was created to improve road department administration through emphasis on development of policies and standardized modes of operation and standards of good practice, all from a compliance perspective. CRAB provides many training and technical services as its preferred methodology to ensure compliance. The Engineer should utilize CRAB resources.

An excellent way to keep and organize much of the information you may need to answer questions and fulfill your statutory duties is to prepare your own County Engineer's Reference Manual. Keep it with you. A suggested List of Contents for this manual can be found at the end of this document.

The Organization

Good leadership and good management are necessary for the department to be responsive to the overall needs of the county. They allow for planning and thoughtful response to avoid a haphazard reaction to issues as they arise.

The Board's Responsibilities

The Board cannot shift its ultimate responsibility. The Board members are the ones who must still face the taxpayers at each election. It is therefore the Commissioners' responsibility to develop broad policies that allow the Engineer the authority to organize and staff the departments under their jurisdiction in the best possible way to be efficient and effective.

Written Policies

It is to everybody's benefit to have written policies to cover situations that come up on a regular basis, or to cover problems or situations that the Board would like handled in a specific way. A well written policy will save time for the Board and for the Engineer. It will also serve to provide improved service to the public, since answers can be given to specific questions and services can be performed in specific ways, without having to try to remember, "How did we handle it last time?" Refer to the Section "Policies" for a discussion and policies necessary to meet CRAB's standards of good practice. CRAB's website is also an excellent resource for [model policies](#).

A policy can be a stumbling point if you don't follow it, or you do things differently now. Your policies should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Who Is Responsible?

Tasks are carried out best when everyone knows their job and when everyone knows who is responsible for what, and expectations have been clearly stated. This means that responsibilities must be assigned at each of several levels. To accomplish this, authority must be carefully delegated throughout the organization in accordance with approved policies.

The public elects Commissioners who set down the policies for getting the work done. The Engineer carries out those policies. The Engineer is delegated that responsibility, and the Board holds them responsible to see that all the functions of the departments under their jurisdiction are carried out in a timely, economical, and expeditious manner. The Engineer, in turn, must also delegate certain responsibilities to subordinates.

The best tool for assigning responsibility and keeping everyone informed is the use of an organization chart that has been adopted by the Board. Such a chart will help the Board to better understand the chain of command within the department.

Another responsibility that looms ever larger in the light of today's rules and regulations pertaining to equal employment opportunity, fair labor standards, etc., is the challenge of hiring the best person for the job. The best way to ensure this is to have a sound hiring procedure that is understood and approved by the Board, typically through the county's Human Resources department.

The hiring procedure should be an integral part of the county's written personnel policies and should be reviewed and updated periodically.

Along with county-wide personnel policies you will encounter collective bargaining agreements (CBA), representing various groups of employees, that add unique twists to management's relationship with that group of employees.

Training

Once hired, the employees need to be kept up-to-date with the latest techniques of their job. This can best be done through a training program that has been recommended by the Engineer, approved, and adopted by the Board, or addressed in a CBA. The training might range all the way from how to repair a pot hole, how to best operate a complicated piece of equipment, front line supervisory training for road supervisors and lead people, or professional development of engineering staff. It should include both temporary seasonal help and experienced employees. The training may range from formalized classroom training to "on the job" training or demonstrations. There is always a better way to do any job. Training must apply to everyone in the department.

Two benefits of adequate training are improved employee morale and better public relations. Nothing is more important to any organization than having everyone in it feel like a valued member of the team.

Communications

The Engineer and the Board of Commissioners are the team that is responsible for the management of the road department. In order to do so successfully, it is essential that they develop and maintain channels of communication, not only interpersonally but also with the public, within the department, and with other agencies.

Interpersonal

The Engineer should always arrange their schedule so that they can be available on all regular Board meeting dates. Ideally, the Engineer should have their own regularly scheduled meeting with the Board. They should be prepared to present action items, answer questions and to make recommendations. It is easy for the Engineer to become so wrapped up in their work that they begin to make important decisions without the Board's knowledge. The Engineer should be careful not to do so except in areas where they have clear authority.

Whether or not verbal progress reports are made to the Board, it is well worth the effort to prepare concise written progress reports on important topics. Personal contact between the Engineer and the Board members, individually and collectively, is very helpful to gain an understanding of particular areas of concern to them. The Engineer must be careful not to become the instrument of only one Board member. If one member does give instructions, it is wise to obtain direction from the whole Board so that the Engineer is not placed in the untenable position of working for only one member. Occasional opportunity should be taken for the Board and Engineer to review adopted policies pertinent to the operation of the department. This is especially important whenever there has been a change in Board members or Engineers.

The Public

Informing the public and/or receiving comments from the public are vital to the effective operation of the department. The public always deserves a sympathetic ear, and every complaint should receive a response. Every county is required to have a policy on handling of complaints and everyone in the department should be familiar with the policy and be required to follow it.

Whenever a Commissioner receives a complaint, request for additional services or new facilities, it is very important that they consult with their fellow board members and the Engineer before making any commitment. Equally important is that the Engineer consults with their Board before providing any new services other than in the case of emergencies or when previously covered by established policy.

It is very important, working under the current open meetings laws that all decisions are made in open meetings. Today's public demands they be informed of all activities, and their advice should be sought in developing projects that concern them. This can be accomplished through small conferences, video meetings, on-site meetings, advisory committees, public forums, social media, etc., to reach the many different segments of the public.

Newspapers, media, and smartphones are practical ways to convey information to the public. Journalists are usually exacting in their work. Their training is to probe for facts, and they are anxious to develop reliable news sources. They normally will welcome news stories once you have earned their confidence. They may need help in translating engineering terminology or explaining complicated problems. There will be times when they will report information not complimentary to your operation. It is important to be completely honest and to maintain good communications between county officials and the news media.

Radio and television broadcasters are required by law to spend some time on public interest programs and announcements. Getting to know the media people who are covering the Courthouse and road departments and, being on a first-name basis with them, will help in their accepting your news and reporting it in the best light. Using statistics is a poor method because to most people they are very boring. Any news releases should be kept simple, so that any layperson can understand them.

Web sites and social media for the county are excellent venues for dispensing information, updates, and alerts and can provide and receive public feedback in real time. For this information to be truly useful, frequent updates to the sites must be made. This can be time consuming and labor intensive if not done on a regular basis.

Interdepartmental

In small counties many instructions can be given verbally. As county personnel increases in number, an organizational chart becomes more important, and additional methods of communication must be developed. Interdepartmental memos and emails, policy guides, and employee manuals are some of the methods used. Weekly or monthly staff meetings can be very helpful for sharing information. Staff meetings should be kept short. Matters that need to be discussed between individuals should not take staff meeting time. Personal contact regardless of county size is essential. The communications from the bottom up are very important and must be encouraged to have a cohesive operation.

The Engineer is encouraged to foster an open-door environment but don't expect that to suffice. Take time to wander around your offices and satellite facilities, greet staff in their locations, allowing access to you and the opportunity to ask you questions and give you feedback.

Intergovernmental Relations

Effective communication between counties and state and federal agencies is necessary in improving and maintaining an efficient organization. The [Washington State Association of County Engineers](#) provides an excellent forum for sharing problems with other Engineers. The meetings are also an excellent source of information from state agencies that are frequently represented. Staff members should be encouraged to meet from time to time with their counterparts in other counties to share their experiences in developing solutions to common problems. Good communications with other counties, cities, and political subdivisions in your area can mean fewer conflicts, and many dollars saved through mutual assistance.

It is important to know and to communicate with all public agency and utility personnel who are involved with roads or public works functions. Many times, mutual aid can be given when open communications are maintained. Capital and maintenance programs should be coordinated with any agency affected.

There are many publications and resources available in the Engineers' office that report on problems others have faced and solved. An excellent source of more detailed information on communications can be found in the National Association of County Engineers Action Guide Series, Volume IX, entitled "Public Support."

Budget and Program

Budget

The Board has the responsibility of approving budgets for expenditures of all County Departments, and of levying that amount of taxes necessary to meet the estimated expenditures as finally determined.

Preliminary budgets in most counties are submitted to the County Auditor and in due course the Board holds a public hearing(s), after which final budgets are adopted.

The Engineer is responsible for submission of a preliminary budget, for each department/fund they manage, to the County Auditor. Budget forms may be available from the Auditor's office. Budgets are to be in accordance with the BARS (Budgeting, Accounting, and Reporting System) Manual, published by the State Auditor. The preliminary budget, in general, shows the actual expenditures for the preceding year, year-to-date of the current year, and the estimated expenditures for the proposed budget year. The same applies to estimated revenues. Budget balance and cash position should not be confused, although they are indirectly related. The County Auditor should keep the Board and the Engineer informed as to the implications of cash flow in the budgeting process.

The final budget for the ensuing calendar year shall not be altered or exceeded, except as provided by law. Internal transfers may be made by Board resolution, but any net increase can be authorized only by supplemental budget process.

The law requires that the Board must commence final budget hearings no later than the first Monday in December. All other dates affecting the budget process are subject to determination by resolution of the Board pursuant to RCW 36.40.071.

Program

The laws of the State mandate a programming process intended to assure that careful thought and preparation precede all major expenditures. This makes it important to have a long-range road program in which priorities are established by the Board, for without such a program it will be impossible for the Road Department to operate satisfactorily. The statutes require that the programming

process be divided into two segments, the long range and the annual: Six Year Transportation Improvement Program, and the Annual Construction Program, respectively.

The development of the Six Year Transportation Improvement Program provides the Board an opportunity to give long-range direction to the county's road development program. The Engineer is required to make specific recommendations and to provide background information on road and bridge conditions. It is the Board's responsibility, after having considered all available data and having invited public comment, to adopt a six-year program which the Engineer will then use as their planning document in scheduling the various steps in the actual design and construction process. Each year the Board has the opportunity to re-evaluate its long-range program and make whatever adjustments it deems appropriate.

Six Year Transportation Improvement Program ([RCW 36.81.121](#))
A priority array of arterial roads and all bridges ([WAC 136-14-040](#)).
County bridge and inspection report ([WAC 136-20-060](#)).

Revisions to the Six Year Transportation Improvement Program can be made at any time by a majority of the Board, but only after a public hearing thereon.

Annual Construction Program ([RCW 36.81.130](#)). The recommended Annual Construction Program, which should conform as nearly as practical to the first year of the Six Year Transportation Improvement Program, must be submitted to the Board prior to budget adoption, or at such other time as may be specified by the Board (RCW 36.40.071).

A list of all major equipment purchases and planned major equipment maintenance contemplated for the year with estimated cost thereof should be included. Total amounts should be approximately equal to the item of Equipment Purchases in the annual Equipment Rental and Revolving Fund budget. ER&R rates must be reviewed and approved annually by the Engineer as part of this process. Review and approval of the rates by the Board is suggested.

The Board may adopt the Annual Construction Program at any time prior to adoption of the budget. Any appropriations contained in the county road budget shall be void unless the county's Annual Construction Program was adopted prior to such appropriation ([RCW 36.81.130](#)).

After adoption, a copy of the Annual Construction Program and appropriate resolution shall be forwarded to the County Road Administration Board within 30 days, but not later than December 31 of each year.

The final Annual Construction Program for the fiscal year shall not thereafter be changed except by unanimous vote of the Board and, shall be by resolution and require the same information as the original program.

Maintenance Management (WAC 136-11)

An increasingly important tool to getting more accomplished with the available funds is an effective management program for maintenance. This is a well-planned, well-publicized, and effectively carried out maintenance policy. There are many advantages. First, it will result in better service to the public, as maintenance activities will be carefully planned and scheduled. Secondly, it will reduce the number of calls and/or requests for action by the public. When people become accustomed to regular maintenance of certain key functions, as long as the level of maintenance is adequate, then they know when to expect service. Lastly, it ensures a consistent level of maintenance throughout the county. The overall effect should be a significant decrease in complaints from the public about road conditions and an overall better maintained road system at the most cost effective and time efficient level of service sustainable.

Policies

Personnel

An extremely important facet of management responsibilities is the preparation and implementation of effective personnel policies. Copies of the adopted personnel policies should be provided to all employees and additional copies of the policy should be kept in the office of the county engineer and in all road department shops so they are readily available to all road department employees and prospective employees.

More than likely there exist collective bargaining agreements (CBA's) negotiated specific to one or more groups of road department and/or public works employees. The Engineer must be as familiar with the CBA's as they are with the county personnel policies.

Additional Policies - required by CRAB under [WAC 136-50](#)

Organizational Chart. It is the duty of the county engineer to organize the road department in accordance with the policies of the county legislative authority, into such departments, divisions, districts, or units as may be necessary to meet statutory requirements and to perform such additional services as may be directed by policy of the legislative authority.

The county legislative authority adopts a written policy, including a chart or other pictorial representation, designating the interrelationships of all positions in the road department from the county legislative authority through all employees. The chart shall clearly show the complete chain of command throughout the entire organization. Copies must be retained in the office of the county engineer and in all road department shops so it is readily available to all road department employees and the general public.

Handling of Complaints. A policy regarding handling of complaints shall be adopted by the county legislative authority establishing the methods for handling complaints from the general public and others related to road department activities. The purpose of this policy is to assure that each county has an orderly procedure to ensure that citizen complaints receive prompt attention.

Work for Others. The county legislative authority must adopt a written policy regarding the approval of all work for other public agencies and county departments. The policy must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) A statement of intent indicating whether or not the legislative authority will accept requests for work from other public agencies or other county departments.
- (2) A statement indicating procedures to be followed in processing such requests in accordance with applicable statutes.
- (3) Statement indicating any delegation of authority in processing such requests.

County Road Standards. The county engineer shall propose and, the county legislative authority shall adopt and amend as needed, standards for all county roads, [RCW 36.86](#). The policy must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) Design Standards.
- (2) Construction Specifications.
- (3) Permitting work within the county road rights-of-ways.

Survey Monument Preservation. The county engineer shall propose and, the legislative authority shall adopt a policy regarding the preservation, maintenance, and restoration of survey monuments within the county road rights-of-way.

Many excellent examples of these policies have been compiled and developed into [model policies](#) by the County Road Administration Board. These model policies are available on CRAB's website.

It is important that once the policies are adopted, they should be periodically reviewed by the Engineer and updated as needed by the Board. These policies should be dynamic documents that reflect the changing environment of state and county government regulations. Do not let them collect dust on your bookshelf. Refer to them often and keep them updated for recent changes to statute and code.

The County Road Administration Board

[The County Road Administration Board](#) was created by the Legislature in 1965 in order to give the counties an opportunity to improve road department administrative practices from within their own ranks. The CRABoard is composed of six County Commissioners and three County Engineers who are appointed to staggered three-year terms by the Executive Committee of the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC). To assist the CRABoard in its work, the law provides for the employment of an Executive Director. The Executive Director hires staff to carry out statutory responsibilities and the directives of the Board that are developed during the quarterly meetings.

It is the CRABoard's obligation under the law to develop and adopt Standards of Good Practice to be applied in the administration of county road departments. The adopted Standards of Good Practice are listed below:

[WAC 136-11](#) -- Maintenance Management

[WAC 136-12](#) – Vacancy or Change in Position of County Engineer

[WAC 136-14](#) -- Priority Programming

[WAC 136-15](#) -- Procedures for Preparation of the 6-Year Transportation Program

[WAC 136-16](#) -- Annual Road Program, Annual Construction Report, and Construction by County Forces Limits

[WAC 136-18](#) – Construction by County Forces

[WAC 136-20](#) -- Inspection of Bridges on County Roads

[WAC 136-25](#) – Traffic Law Enforcement Expenditures

[WAC 136-28](#) -- Cooperative Procedures for Processing of County Road Accident Reports

[WAC 136-40](#) -- Accommodation of Utilities on County Roads

[WAC 136-50](#) -- County Road Department Administration

[WAC 136-60](#) -- Maintenance of County Road Logs (GIS-Mo)

[WAC 136-70](#) -- Pavement Management System Requirement for County Arterial Preservation Program Eligibility

The Standards of Good Practice are available on the CRABoard's web site in electronic form. As new standards are developed or old ones revised, they are distributed to all County Commissioners and County Engineers.

It is also the CRABoard's responsibility to ascertain that all county road departments are operating in accordance with the Standards of Good Practice adopted by the CRABoard and in accordance with statutes passed by the State Legislature. The Executive Director and the staff may make official county visits to the Engineer's offices to perform an appraisal of the compliance status of the road department. A report is developed after the visit to document the discussion of the visit and is sent to the Engineer and the Board of County Commissioners.

The CRABoard makes an annual report to the Legislative Transportation Committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate and the Department of Transportation. All County Commissioners and County Engineers receive a copy of this report.

The CRABoard administers three grant programs and one loan program for the counties: the [Rural Arterial Program](#), with a dispersal of \$22-25 million per year, the [County Arterial Preservation Program](#), with a dispersal of \$15-20 million per year, the [County Ferry Capital Improvement Program](#), and the [Emergency Loan Program](#).

The CRABoard provides and manages the road log framework for all the counties for the primary purpose of calculating and distributing [fuel tax](#) receipts among the counties, totaling approximately \$145 million per year.

The office of the County Road Administration Board also serves as a reliable information center for County Commissioners and Engineers in road department matters. Many of CRAB's [Engineering Services](#) staff are former county engineers or served on an engineer's staff and have many years of experience in road department administration. That experience is invaluable to the county engineers training conducted by the CRAB engineering staff. The [Information Technology](#) staff of the County Road Administration Board offers training and technical assistance in computer software programs including AutoCAD, several road design software, GIS-Mo asset and maintenance management systems, UAS, and hosts the annual Road Design Conference.

Other Agencies

In conducting the operations of the road department, the Engineer, under direction of their Board, Council or Executive, deals with numerous other agencies, some routinely, some only occasionally, depending upon the area of concern. Some of these agencies are:

Federal Agencies

Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Department of Transportation, United States Coast Guard
Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers
Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior, Bonneville Power Administration
Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
Department of the Interior, Fish, and Wildlife Service
Department of the Interior, Geodetic Survey
Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service

State Agencies

County Road Administration Board (CRAB)
Region Local Programs Engineer, Department of Transportation
Transportation Improvement Board (TIB)
State Auditor's Office
State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
State Utilities and Transportation Commission
State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington State Patrol, State Traffic Safety Commission
State Department of Ecology

County

Elected County Officials or their Deputies
Other Appointed Officials

Duties of the County Road Engineer

This is a brief synopsis of the Revised Code of Washington statutes that govern the position of County Engineer. This list is not exhaustive, and the description is not the statutory title.

RCW 36.75.020 & 050 – Board Shall Act Thru the Engineer

RCW 36.40.020 – Road Fund Budget

RCW 36.54.015 – 14 Year Ferry Plan

RCW 36.33A.040 – ER&R Rates for County Road Equipment

RCW 36.77.010 – Plans and Specs, Design and Construction

RCW 36.78.020 – CRAB Standards of Good Practice

RCW 36.80.030 – Duties of the Engineer

RCW 36.80.040 – Office of Record for All Road Matters

RCW 36.80.050 – Highway Plat Record → Modern Road Map and ROW Files

RCW 36.80.060 – Accurate Records of Expend. and Road Equip. Inventory

RCW 36.80.070 – Plans and Specs

RCW 36.81.050 – Road Establishment

RCW 36.82.160 – Road Fund Budget

RCW 36.86.020 – Standards for Roads and Bridges

RCW 36.87.040 – Road/ROW Vacation/Abandonment

RCW 36.88 – County Road Improvement Districts

RCW 47.36.060 – Traffic Control Devices

County Engineers Reference List of Contents*

- **Organization and Personnel**
 - Current Organization Chart
 - Function #'s (for time and equipment usage accounting)
 - Current Union Contract(s)(CBA's)
 - ER&R Equipment Rates

- **Administrative Information**
 - Current CRAB Annual Certification
 - Current County Road Log (system inventory)
 - County Arterials Listing
 - County Roads by Name
 - County Roads by Number
 - Annual Bridge and Inspection Report
 - Current Three-Year Collision History

- **Financial Information**
 - Current Annual Road Budget
 - Current County Road Levy Certification
 - Year-to-Date County Road Expenditures Report

- **Construction Information**
 - Annual Construction Program (contract and county forces projects)
 - 6 Year Transportation Improvement Plan (6 Year TIP)

- **Maintenance Information**
 - Annual County Arterial Preservation Program (seal coat schedule)
 - Annual Maintenance Program (Maintenance Management Program)

- **Selected RCW's and WAC's**
 - Title 36, Ch. 32, 33, 33A, 55, 75-89 (minimum)
 - WAC 136 (CRAB)

**This is only a suggested list and may not include all the documents for your particular county.*