

216C.09 COMMISSIONER DUTIES.

(a) The commissioner shall:

(1) manage the department as the central repository within the state government for the collection of data on energy;

(2) prepare and adopt an emergency allocation plan specifying actions to be taken in the event of an impending serious shortage of energy, or a threat to public health, safety, or welfare;

(3) undertake a continuing assessment of trends in the consumption of all forms of energy and analyze the social, economic, and environmental consequences of these trends;

(4) carry out energy conservation measures as specified by the legislature and recommend to the governor and the legislature additional energy policies and conservation measures as required to meet the objectives of sections 216C.05 to 216C.30;

(5) collect and analyze data relating to present and future demands and resources for all sources of energy;

(6) evaluate policies governing the establishment of rates and prices for energy as related to energy conservation, and other goals and policies of sections 216C.05 to 216C.30, and make recommendations for changes in energy pricing policies and rate schedules;

(7) study the impact and relationship of the state energy policies to international, national, and regional energy policies;

(8) design and implement a state program for the conservation of energy; this program shall include but not be limited to, general commercial, industrial, and residential, and transportation areas; such program shall also provide for the evaluation of energy systems as they relate to lighting, heating, refrigeration, air conditioning, building design and operation, and appliance manufacturing and operation;

(9) inform and educate the public about the sources and uses of energy and the ways in which persons can conserve energy;

(10) dispense funds made available for the purpose of research studies and projects of professional and civic orientation, which are related to either energy conservation, resource recovery, or the development of alternative energy technologies which conserve nonrenewable energy resources while creating minimum environmental impact;

(11) charge other governmental departments and agencies involved in energy-related activities with specific information gathering goals and require that those goals be met;

(12) design a comprehensive program for the development of indigenous energy resources. The program shall include, but not be limited to, providing technical, informational, educational, and financial services and materials to persons, businesses, municipalities, and organizations involved in the development of solar, wind, hydropower, peat, fiber fuels, biomass, and other alternative energy resources. The program shall be evaluated by the alternative energy technical activity; and

(13) dispense loans, grants, or other financial aid from money received from litigation or settlement of alleged violations of federal petroleum-pricing regulations made available to the department for that purpose.

(b) Further, the commissioner may participate fully in hearings before the Public Utilities Commission on matters pertaining to rate design, cost allocation, efficient resource utilization, utility conservation investments, small power production, cogeneration, and other rate issues. The commissioner shall support the policies stated in section 216C.05 and shall prepare and defend testimony proposed to encourage energy conservation improvements as defined in section 216B.241.

History: 1974 c 307 s 7; 1977 c 381 s 9; 1981 c 356 s 127,248; 1982 c 563 s 3; 1983 c 179 s 1; 1983 c 289 s 44; 1984 c 654 art 2 s 99; 1987 c 312 art 1 s 10 subd 1; 1988 c 617 s 1; 2005 c 97 art 4 s 3; 2008 c 356 s 6