

State Funds to Improve Railroad Intersection at West First Street

Local News

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ABERDEEN, Wash. - State regulators last week approved funds to improve the safety at a railroad crossing in the city of Aberdeen. The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) approved \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) to Puget Sound & Pacific Railroad (PSAP) to upgrade the warning signals at a railroad-highway grade crossing at the intersection of West First St. in Aberdeen.

The railroad company will replace the spur track crossing surface to concrete, install new underground cable and improve the signal equipment including upgrading the flashing lights with long-lasting, energy-efficient LED lights (light-emitting diodes.). Train detection equipment will be changed to constant warning from the current AC DC. These improvements will increase the overall safety at the crossing because motorists and pedestrians can rely on the new warning devices to determine if a train is approaching the crossing. The LED lights will provide greater visibility for the motoring public.

West First St. is a two-lane roadway with a speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 3,990 vehicles. The upgrades must be completed by Dec. 30, 2012. State GCPF funding is limited to \$20,000 for the project. The approximate cost is \$43,145. PSAP is contributing toward project costs above the grant amount. The Legislature created the GCPF in 1969 to provide money for safety measures designed to decrease the potential for accidents and fatalities at public and private crossings and along railroad tracks in the state. The UTC administers the fund. The UTC is the state agency responsible for railroad safety, including approving new grade crossings and closing or altering existing rail crossings. The agency investigates train accidents, inspects public-railroad crossings, approves rail-safety improvement projects and manages Operation Lifesaver, a rail-safety education program in Washington and nationwide.