

# WASHINGTON ★★☆☆☆

## Summary Facts and Ratings

Climate:	West coast marine climate with mild temperatures and steady breezes west of the Cascades; semi-arid climates to the east. Few major storms, but cloudy 9 months of the year in the west, more sun in the east. Winters are moderate in the west but wet and overcast; colder and drier in the east.
Population Density:	Average. 101 ppl/sq. mile (3000 ppl/sq. mile in Seattle area) but only 35 ppl/sq. mile east of the Cascades. Hispanic 11%, Asian 7%, mixed 4.7%, Black 4%,
Cost of Living Index:	Average. 105.8 (average is 105).
Private Land Availability:	Fair. 37% of land is state or federally owned, including most of the best forests.
Building Permits:	Required statewide. Stricter regulations around Seattle area. Basements can be built in most places in the state.
Land and Urban Planning:	“Smart Growth” land use planning is in vogue here, with statewide planning boards controlling local boards.
Food Production:	Very good in the west, irrigation required in the east. Growing season in west 150-210 days. Shorter in the east, but has more sun. Rainfall is about 40 in/yr west of the Cascades and 17 in/yr to the east. Fishing and hunting are excellent.
Health Environment:	Water quality is good, except in 59% of communities that have fluoridated water. Air Pollution is moderate because of constant sea breezes into the Seattle Metro area which blows it northeastward. There is nuclear pollution around the Hanford site in eastern WA (tri-cities area).
Traffic:	Terrible in Seattle-Everett (rated 2 <sup>nd</sup> worst in nation behind LA), Tacoma and Spokane also have their share but it is low in rural areas. WA cities use red light and speed cameras.
Politics:	Very liberal population in Seattle overpowers conservatives in rural WA. Dem 52%, Rep 43%, Ind/3 <sup>rd</sup> party 5%.
Taxes:	Moderate. Ranked 15 <sup>th</sup> lowest with an average state tax burden of 8.9% of income. No income tax. Gross receipts tax of 2-3% for all businesses. State and local sales tax is a high 8.8%. Property taxes are high in Seattle, but statewide average ranks 25 <sup>th</sup> in the nation.
Corruption:	Medium high in Seattle, low in eastern WA. Fair amount of corruption in Seattle police and judges. Overall, WA ranks low in corruption compared to other states.
Crime:	Average. Violent crime 331.9/100K, property crime 3785/100K. Most crime is in the Seattle area.
Personal Liberty:	Low, rated 1 out of 5.
Gun Liberty:	Good. No permit to purchase firearms. “Shall issue” state for a concealed weapon permit. Open carry friendly state.
Alternative Medicine:	Excellent access to natural health practitioners. Several alternative medical schools. Lay midwives are legal and have many free-standing birth centers or perform home birth.
Home Schooling:	Moderate. State requires parents to send notification, test scores, and/or professional evaluation of student progress.
Military Targets:	<b>Fort Lewis</b> , Tacoma. Army infantry and Special Forces, Stryker Brigade; secondary target. <b>Bangor Submarine Base and Bremerton Naval Base</b> , Puget Sound. Trident missile submarines, naval ship storage; primary target. <b>Indian Island Naval Ammo Depot</b> , north of Bremerton. Air refueling; primary target. <b>Whidbey Island Naval Air Station</b> , Puget Sound. Naval aviation; primary target. <b>FEMA Regional Bunker</b> at 130 228th St. SW, Bothell. Cold war bunker; not currently a target.

Military Targets continued:	<b>Naval Reservation or Jim Creek Naval Station</b> , west of Lakewood. Very low frequency submarine communication station; primary target. <b>Fairchild AFB</b> , Spokane. Airlift and refueling; primary target. <b>McChord AFB</b> , Tacoma. Airlift Command; secondary target. <b>NSA Listening Post</b> , at Yakima Firing Center; primary target
Nuclear Power Plants:	<b>Columbia Station</b> , north of Richland on Hanford Site. 1 reactor.

## Notes

Washington is a state of tremendous variety, from rain forests in the Olympic Peninsula to the deserts in the east. The geography here is very similar to Oregon, except that it is even more wet and cloudy west of the Cascades. It is gorgeous in Seattle when the sun shines, but that isn't very often. Worse than this, the traffic situation in Seattle and Everett are terrible if you have to commute in it every day. Traffic here during rush hour took 81% longer to travel freeways and major arterial roads, according to a traffic study performed by Texas A&M.

The volcano danger is significant in western WA. Mt. Saint Helens is rebuilding after blowing its top and Mt. Rainier is threatening. When the latter blows and its glaciers melt, the mud flows will be devastating to most of the valleys around the mountain where there are many people. Both states have become home to dedicated environmentalists and liberals that have tied up development for years, but this mostly affects the rural areas of the east, which need more local freedom. It's way too late for the overcrowded Seattle corridor.

While we love the lush forests and waterways of the nearby Cascade Mountains and Puget Sound, the oppressiveness of Seattle's left/liberal establishment that dominates the whole state and its major newspapers makes it less than attractive. The rain and cloud cover is dreary much of the year in that area, so we prefer the drier climate east of the Cascades. We especially like the northeastern parts of the state where you can find coniferous forestation at low altitudes. It is still cloudy most months of the year, but at least it has a longer and drier summer.

Washington has no income tax, which is a big plus, particularly if you live close to Oregon where you can shop without a sales tax. The cost of living is quite high in the Seattle area but lower in the east, particularly for housing.

Major threats to your long-term safety include multiple first-strike military targets very close to Seattle, and its 3 dormant volcanoes in the Cascade Mountains. Northeastern WA is also in an elevated earthquake risk zone, which creates potential tidal wave threats to the sound. The Bangor Trident Submarine base is a key nuclear target and will most certainly be hit in the next world war. There are also various auxiliary service and nuclear weapons storage facilities north and south that will be hit. All of this means you should not locate

in the Seattle Metro area. Massive social unrest will be the guaranteed result of any major crisis. If traffic is heavily congested in good times, it will be impossible to travel in a severe panic. There are only three main exits out of the area: north and south on I-5 and west on I-90. That means the towns in those areas will be inundated with refugees. Avoid even the small cities of Ellensburg and Yakima to the east as they will be overwhelmed.

## Strategies for Populated Living Areas

**Seattle:** If you must live in or near the Seattle area for work, stay far away from the main freeway corridors, north and south. These freeways cross many bridges and will trap many thousands of cars in a crisis. Pick a commute from east or west that avoids most freeways. On the west, across the sound, the valleys around Skokomish on the Olympic Peninsula are one compromise. This area is outside the range of destruction and fallout from military targets, and we believe large groups of refugees will not go in that direction during a crisis. You can always go deeper into the peninsula to a retreat for further safety. To the east, a good compromise is to locate toward the foothills of the cascades, staying at least 4-5 miles away from I-90. Fallout is easy to contend with compared to the potential social unrest fanning out from the traffic corridors. If social unrest creeps toward the hills, you must be prepared to have a retreat or exit through the Cascades, but not along I-90.

**North of Seattle:** You have to go as far as Mount Vernon and Bellingham to give you a sufficient buffer zone from the high density population areas of Seattle. If you choose a southern Washington location, go as far as Centralia, and then stay east or west of the freeway by 4 or 5 miles.

**Vancouver:** This city is across the Columbia River from Portland. Locate east of I-5 to have access to retreat areas east in the Columbia Gorge. Don't go north where Mt. St. Helens is still a threat.

**Spokane:** This is a delightful city with a much better climate than Seattle. Stay on the east or northeast side of the city to avoid Fairchild AFB which is a military target in the west.

## Retreat Areas

**Eastern Washington:** The best areas in WA are east of the Cascades. We recommend the vast valleys and pine forests north of a line between Chelan in central WA and Newport on the eastern border with Idaho, excluding the large Indian reservation marked in red. These are where you also find the best long term retreat areas. Spokane is the largest city in the area where jobs are available, but it too has a nuclear target in Fairchild AFB.

Farther east is the community of **Walla Walla** which is great farm country and far away from the danger zones. The Tri-cities area (Richland, etc.) is a bigger economic center—still relatively safe, but you have to be careful of the closeness of the Hanford nuclear reservation with all its nuclear clean-up problems.

Besides the northern zone previously mentioned, another good retreat area is east of **Clarkston**, sister city of Lewiston, Idaho. Although these two cities are in the dry plains, they are the gateway to the Orofino/Kamiah area of Idaho.

In the south, there are nice areas in and around Yakima, but Yakima itself is not included, being downwind of Mt. Saint Helens, a dormant volcano. Yakima also has a NSA listening station and is in line to receive huge inflows of people fleeing Seattle someday. That doesn't mean you can't find an out-of-the-way place for safety, but you must prepare for the increased threats.

**WA/OR Border—the Columbia Gorge:** For people wanting to take advantage of the two-state tax preference policy, there are nice cities on the Washington side of the Columbia Gorge. You want to be about an hour's drive east of the Portland and Vancouver area to avoid refugee flows coming from that direction. Most of that will flow down the Oregon side, unless the freeway is closed, and then all the refugee flow will switch to the non-freeway Washington side. If you locate in White Salmon, WA, across from Hood River, make sure you find property outside the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area and its draconian building restrictions.