

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Jim Burke, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

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This is directly from the governor's office: Today, Governor Jay Inslee signed an executive order (Executive Order 24-01 [https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe\\_order/24-01%20-%20Artificial%20Intelligence%20%28tmp%29.pdf](https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/24-01%20-%20Artificial%20Intelligence%20%28tmp%29.pdf)) to develop guidelines for how the state adopts generative artificial intelligence (AI) into its own systems to ensure its ethical and transparent use. Under Inslee's order, WaTech (<https://watech.wa.gov/>), the agency operating the state's technology and information security services, will work with the governor's cabinet agencies to submit a report identifying potential generative AI initiatives that could be implemented in state operations. The plan would develop initial guidelines for how the government may procure, use and monitor the use of generative AI.

Inslee said, "This executive order lays out a year-long process for agencies working together to assess the feasibility, benefits, and challenges of integrating this technology into agency operations and services. It's our duty to the public to be thorough and thoughtful in how we adopt these powerful new tools." People and businesses are adopting generative artificial intelligence – digital algorithms used to create new content – at a dizzying rate. This new technology's explosive popularity is seen in the enjoyment consumers get out of chatbots like ChatGPT and photorealistic image creators like DALL-E 2.

The generative AI market is worth nearly \$45 billion, according to Statista Market Insights, fueling further interest from investors who see the technology's promise. Nick Stowe, the state's chief technology officer, said generative AI could also hold opportunities for language translation, code generation, and contract management in state agencies. It can provide simple efficiencies like automating tedious tasks or lead to groundbreaking discoveries through research assistance.

But trailblazing technologies present unknowns, and those can include risks and unintended consequences. Some AI models still have significant quality limitations, raise privacy and security concerns, and have been shown to reinforce social biases. Others aren't used for their intended purposes, such as an imagemaker co-opted to harm or ruin someone's reputation with "deepfakes," or a mental health chatbot hijacked to give inappropriate responses to people in need. To provide a fair, ethical and equitable use of generative AI, the order enlists the state Office of Equity to create and oversee an accountability framework that will support these efforts.

By the end of this year, agencies will have guidelines to analyze the impact adopting generative AI may have on vulnerable communities. The state's process will evaluate equitable outcomes in the deployment and implementation of "high-risk" use cases. "High-risk" generative AI refers to technology that could impact a person's health and safety or fundamental rights. Examples include biometric identification, critical infrastructure, employment, health care, law enforcement, and the administration of democratic processes.

The governor's executive order will also assess the impact of this technology on the state workforce, develop strategies to mitigate those impacts, and support programs that train workers in the skills they need to successfully use these technologies.

Looking beyond government, the order also requires the state Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to create opportunities and partnerships with research institutes to develop more innovations in generative AI that can be applied to education. Inslee's executive order is closely aligned with California's, empowering agencies to be proactive in how they approach AI regulation and putting a strong emphasis on quality. With this order, Washington becomes the 10th state with a governor to issue an executive order around

AI. Inslee said, “With today’s action, Washington state is moving to the fore of policy work on this crucial 21st Century challenge. The work we do around generative AI over this coming year will be yet another example of how the Evergreen State is also the Ever Forward State.”

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can reach out to us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.