

# Federal Energy Regulatory Commission



**Established:** 1977

**Address:** 888 First St. NE,  
Washington, DC 20426

**Phone:** 202-502-6088

**2013 Budget:** 0 (includes  
offsetting receipts)

**Employment:** 1,500

**Website:** [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)

**Functions:** FERC regulates interstate aspects of the electric-power, natural-gas, oil-pipeline, and hydroelectric industries. The commission oversees related environmental matters, and administers accounting and financial-reporting regulations of jurisdictional companies.

**Profile by Sophie  
Yarborough**

## **Jon Wellinghoff** **Chairman**

When Wellinghoff visited a resort in the Napa Valley during a work trip recently and spotted a golf cart, he didn't immediately think about his chance to score a hole in one. Instead, he pondered how electric golf carts could be plugged in at night to help stabilize the electric grid. "I don't play golf.... My hobbies are kind of thinking about energy," he said. "My wife and children sometimes chide me for thinking too much about energy."

As FERC chairman since 2009, Wellinghoff, 64, has overseen the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. His term expired June 30, and he plans to step down as soon as Ron Binz, President Obama's choice to succeed him, is confirmed by the Senate; that is likely to take a few months.

Wellinghoff drew the spotlight to the agency by cracking down on suspected power-market manipulation by such Wall Street banks as JPMorgan Chase. He also made it possible to upgrade the electric-grid infrastructure so that energy from far-flung wind and solar farms could be transmitted to more-populated areas.

The best way to discover innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to energy is to "get out of the building and listen to people in the field that are out there doing things," Wellinghoff said. On his watch, he created the Office of Energy Policy and Innovation and the Office of Infrastructure Security, which focuses on tackling the biggest concerns in cybersecurity and the physical security of the electric grid and the natural-gas system.

Wellinghoff, who was born in Santa Monica, Calif., grew up in Reno, Nev. He attended the Antioch School of Law in Washington, which he chose for its philosophy of helping others and "learning by doing." He also holds degrees from the University of Nevada and Howard University.

He put in two terms as Nevada's first consumer advocate for customers of public utilities. In that post, he represented utility consumers before the state Public Utilities Commission, FERC, and the Nevada Supreme Court. Wellinghoff got a crash course in energy law during the energy crisis, giving him a powerful foundation for his future.

He is married with four children.



Jon Wellinghoff