

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1710

C 305 L 91

Synopsis As Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring certification of water systems operators.

Sponsor(s): By House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Miller, Fraser, Rust, Valle, Roland, Winsley and Dorn; by request of Department of Health).

House Committee on Environmental Affairs
Senate Committee on Energy & Utilities

Background: Washington State law defines a public water system as any water system having two or more connections. There are over 12,500 public water systems in the state. Over 11,500 of these systems have fewer than 100 connections.

Congress amended the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in 1986. Under an agreement with the federal government, the state Department of Health enforces the SDWA in Washington State. The SDWA increases the number of contaminants that must be tested for and imposes additional monitoring and treatment requirements on public water systems.

The SDWA defines a public water system as any system which has at least 15 service connections or which regularly serves at least 25 individuals.

Washington law requires a public water system to have a certified operator if the system has at least 100 connections or if it uses a surface water supply that must be filtered and serves at least 25 individuals.

The law also requires the secretary of the Department of Health to categorize water systems for the purpose of determining skills and experience required for operator certification.

Summary: A public water system does not include a water system with four or fewer residential connections on a farm.

A public water system must have a certified operator if it has at least 100 connections, regardless of the water

source, or if it has 15 connections or an average of 25 individuals and it uses surface water or ground water under the influence of surface water.

The secretary's categorizing of water systems for the purpose of operator certification is designed to assure the protection of public health, the protection of the state's water resources, and to implement the Safe Drinking Water Act. The secretary shall consider economic impacts and public health risks in making these categorizations.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	96	0	
Senate	45	2	(Senate amended)
House	94	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 28, 1991