

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1357

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS, MARCH 24, 1993

**Brief Description:** Modifying certification of public water supply system operators.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Rust, Horn, Roland and Valle; by request of Department of Health)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chairman; Moore, Sutherland, and Talmadge.

**Staff:** Cathy Baker (786-7708)

**Hearing Dates:** March 24, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

Public water systems having 100 or more connections, or having 15 or more connections and using a surface water supply, are required to have a certified operator.

The Department of Health and the water and wastewater operator certification board of examiners oversee the operator certification program. Certificates are issued to individuals who pass a written examination, pay a fee, and otherwise meet the Department of Health's requirements. Certificates are renewable annually.

Existing certification fees cover a portion of the cost of administering the operator certification program; these fees are currently deposited in the state general fund.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Health may assess fees on public water systems, in addition to fees on certified operators, to support the waterworks operator certification program. The department shall establish two schedules of fees, one for applicants for certified operator and one for public water systems. The fees shall be set at a level sufficient for the department to recover the costs of the program.

A waterworks operator certification account is created. All fees received by the department for waterworks operator

certification are deposited into the account. The account is subject to appropriation. Moneys from the account shall be used by the department to carry out the purposes of the waterworks certification program.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** yes

**Fiscal Note:** available

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The certification program is required by both state and federal law and is effective in ensuring safe drinking water. Existing fees are not adequate to cover the cost of the certification program. The fee structure should be modified to reflect actual services provided, including services to water systems.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Dave Clark, Washington Department of Health (pro)