

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1114

As Passed House

March 10, 1997

Title: An act relating to reclaimed water.

Brief Description: Revising regulations concerning reclaimed water.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (originally sponsored by Representatives Mastin, Chandler, McMorris, Delvin, Mulliken, Johnson, Schoesler and Honeyford).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 1/27/97, 2/10/97 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/97, 95-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Chandler, Chairman; Parlette, Vice Chairman; Schoesler, Vice Chairman; Linville, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cooper; Delvin; Koster; Mastin; Regala and Sump.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background: The Legislature enacted SSB 5606 during the 1995 session to encourage the use of reclaimed water. Reclaimed water is defined as effluent derived in any part from sewage from a wastewater treatment system that has been adequately and reliably treated, so that as a result of that treatment it is suitable for a direct beneficial use or a controlled use that would not otherwise occur.

Reclaimed water was specifically authorized to be used for surface spreading if the reclaimed water meets the criteria for groundwater recharge, is incorporated into a sewer or water comprehensive plan, and is approved by the Department of Ecology or the Department of Health. There is no authority for the Department of Ecology to authorize the use of reclaimed water that does not meet the groundwater recharge criteria for surface spreading.

The use of reclaimed water was also specifically authorized for discharge into created wetlands so long as the water meets class A reclaimed water standards, the discharge is incorporated into a sewer or water comprehensive plan, and is approved by the Department of Health or the Department of Ecology. Reclaimed water that does not meet Class A reclaimed water standards may be discharged into created wetlands when specifically authorized by the Department of Ecology in conjunction with a pilot project to test the use of created wetlands for advanced treatment.

Agencies are not precluded from adopting a definition that is more stringent than the definition adopted by the United States Army Corps of Engineers when implementing the reclaimed water laws.

Summary of Bill: Reclaimed water that does not meet the groundwater recharge criteria may be used for surface percolation when the Department of Ecology, in consultation with the Department of Health, has specifically authorized this use at a lower standard.

Reclaimed water may be discharged into constructed beneficial use wetlands or constructed treatment wetlands if the water meets the Class A or B reclaimed water standards. Reclaimed water that does not meet the Class A or B reclaimed water standards may be discharged into constructed treatment wetlands when specifically authorized by the Department of Ecology in consultation with the Department of Health. The requirement that a discharge of reclaimed water under lower standards must be in conjunction with a pilot program is deleted. The Department of Ecology and Department of Health must develop and implement standards for discharging reclaimed water into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands.

When plans are submitted to the Department of Ecology for the construction of new sewerage systems, sewage treatment or disposal systems, or improvements to those systems, they must include consideration of opportunities for using reclaimed water.

The Department of Health and the Department of Ecology must report on the progress of implementing the reclaimed water laws to the House Agriculture and Ecology Committee and the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee by December 15, 1997.

The Department of Health must develop standards, procedures, and guidelines for the reuse of greywater by January 1, 1998. The Department of Health and local health officers may permit the use of greywater under rules adopted by the department.

Agencies must delineate wetlands in accordance with the 1987 manual adopted by the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Changes are made in terminology and other technical changes are made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This will encourage the use of reclaimed water. Distinguishing between the two different types of wetlands reflects the recommendations of the consultant team who developed standards for use of reclaimed water.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Dave Monthie, Department of Health (pro with amendments); and Judy Turpin, Washington Environmental Council (pro with amendments).