

# ***ANALYSIS OF HB 1517***

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***House Agriculture & Ecology Committee  
1999***

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<p>- A definition of municipal water supply purposes– is provided for the purposes of perfecting a water right and for relinquishment.</p>
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## **BACKGROUND:**

The Department of Ecology is required to prescribe the time for commencing and completing work on any project for which a water right permit has been granted, as well as the time for the application of the water to beneficial use. The department is directed to cancel the permit for noncompliance with the terms of the permit or permit extension. If a water right permit is granted for municipal water supply purposes, the department must consider when fixing the time frames for the construction schedules and for applying water to beneficial use, the term and amount of financing required to complete the project, delays that may result from conservation and water use efficiency measures implemented by the public water system, the supply needs of the public water system's service area consistent with an approved comprehensive plan, and related water demand projections prepared by the public water system.

If a person fails to put water to beneficial use without sufficient cause for a period of five successive years, the right or portion of the right to withdraw or divert the water is relinquished and reverts to the state. There are several exemptions to the general relinquishment provision, including a water right claimed for municipal water supply purposes.

The Legislature enacted a definition of municipal water supply purposes– during the 1997 legislative session, but this definition was vetoed by the Governor.

## **SUMMARY:**

A definition is provided for municipal water supply purposes–. This definition is to be used by the Department of Ecology when determining whether due diligence is being exercised in constructing a project for which a water permit has been granted, and for applying the exemption from relinquishment for a water right for municipal water supply purposes.

Municipal water supply purposes– means the use of water to satisfy the needs of a city, town, public utility district, water-sewer district, or a group A water system which meets certain

criteria. The group A water system must deliver water to serve domestic use as well as at least two of the associated uses of commercial, industrial, or public facilities water use; and must be required to serve potential customers under a coordinated water system plan or the public water system requirements of the Department of Health. For purposes of the group A water system requirements, public facilities– means public buildings occupied by full-time public employees.

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