

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1677

C 234 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Changing irrigation district provisions.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (Originally sponsored by Representatives B. Chandler, Grant, G. Chandler, Linville, Mastin, Delvin and Parlette).

House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology
Senate Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development

Background:

In 1989, the voters approved an amendment to the Washington Constitution to allow local governments engaged in the sale or distribution of water to provide assistance for the conservation or more efficient use of water. Cities, towns, counties, public utility districts, and water-sewer districts are authorized to provide assistance to owners of structures in financing the acquisition and installation of fixtures, systems, and equipment for the conservation or more efficient use of water under an adopted water conservation plan. The type of assistance that may be provided includes arranging or providing financing for the purchase and installation of approved conservation fixtures, systems, and equipment. The fixtures, systems, and equipment must be purchased or installed by a private business, the owner, or the local government. Different forms of pay-back are authorized, including incremental additions to the utility bill. Irrigation districts are not authorized to provide this type of assistance.

Irrigation districts do not have to use competitive bidding procedures for purchases of materials, equipment, and supplies when these items are not included as part of a public works project.

Most units of local government are authorized to use a uniform process to award contracts for purchases instead of following formal sealed bidding requirements. The particular statutes pertaining to a unit of local government specify the maximum dollar threshold of the contracts that may be awarded. Under this process, the local government must obtain quotations from at least three different vendors whenever possible to assure that a competitive price is established, and then award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder. Irrigation districts are authorized to use small works rosters, but are not authorized to use this process to award contracts for purchases.

Summary:

An irrigation district may assist the land owners receiving water from the district and persons discharging water from the land into irrigation district-maintained facilities in financing the leasing, acquisition, and installation of fixtures, systems, programs, and equipment for the conservation, improvement, or more efficient use of water. The assistance may include arranging or providing financing for the purchase and installation of approved conservation fixtures, systems, programs, and equipment. The fixtures, systems, programs, and equipment may be purchased, leased, or installed by a private business, the owner, or the irrigation district. The irrigation district may make an appropriate charge-back for the extension of the money or credit in providing the assistance. The board of directors of the irrigation district may fix rates or tolls and charges, levy an assessment, or both, from people in the district to whom the district made this assistance available.

Irrigation districts must use formal competitive bidding procedures when awarding contracts for purchases of materials, supplies, or equipment unless the board of directors adopts a resolution which establishes a policy for waiving these formal bidding requirements. The board of directors may, by resolution, waive these formal bidding requirements for purchases that do not exceed \$10,000. Exemptions that apply to purchases of items included as part of a public works project also apply to all purchases.

Irrigation districts may use the uniform process established for awarding contracts for purchases from a vendor list in lieu of following formal competitive bidding requirements when authorized in a resolution adopted by the board. Contracts that may be awarded under this process may not exceed \$50,000 exclusive of sales tax.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 96 0
Senate 49 0 (Senate amended)
House 97 0 (House concurred)

Effective: July 25, 1999