SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5082

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Environmental Quality & Water Resources, March 2, 1999

Title: An act relating to microbial inactivation of biomedical waste.

Brief Description: Requiring microbial inactivation of biomedical waste.

Sponsors: Senators Swecker and Rasmussen.

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 2/16/99, 3/2/99 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5082 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Honeyford, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Morton and Swecker.

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: Current law defines cultures and stocks as laboratory wastes infectious to humans. These wastes may contain high concentrations of pathogenic organisms, some of which are highly contagious and dangerous. The State and Territorial Association on Alternative Treatment Technologies has recommended a treatment standard to kill infectious agents.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Effective January 1, 2001, generators of cultures and stocks are required to either treat on-site or to segregate cultures and stocks from other biomedical waste and transport to a treatment facility. A biomedical waste treatment facility must be authorized by the local health jurisdiction in order to treat cultures and stocks. The departments of Health and Labor and Industries must review and either approve or disapprove a decision by a local health jurisdiction regarding the treatment of cultures and stocks.

"Cultures and stocks" are defined as wastes infectious to humans requiring biosafety levels 3 or 4 practices. Definitions of biosafety levels 3 and 4 practices are referenced to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publication.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute adds an intent and purposes section, removes the definition of microbial inactivation and changes the definition of "cultures and stocks" to wastes infectious to humans requiring biosafety levels 3 or 4 practices. Definitions of biosafety levels 3 and 4 practices are added and references a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publication.

Generators of cultures and stocks are required to either treat on-site or to segregate cultures and stocks from other biomedical waste and transport to a treatment facility. A biomedical waste treatment facility must be authorized by the local health jurisdiction in order to treat cultures and stocks. The departments of Health and Labor and Industries must review and either approve or disapprove a decision by a local health jurisdiction regarding the treatment of cultures and stocks. The substitute bill deletes a surcharge on medical test site license fees. Technical corrections are made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: Large institutions with many labs should be viewed as a single facility and should use a central autoclave. Reliance upon waste haulers with safeguards is appropriate. Delete definition of "microbial inactivation" and rely upon "treatment." The surcharge on medical test site license fees is not necessary. Smaller companies and grant-funded research labs don't have resources to acquire autoclaves. US DOT regulations make this bill unnecessary.

Testified: Jackie Der and Karen Van Dusen, University of Washington (concerns); Dorothy Caravan, LASSA and Dynacare Laboratories (con); Jim Peterson, Smith Kline Beecham Clinical Laboratories (con); Robin Olson, NW Hospital (con); Robb Menaul, WA State Hospital Assn. (con; amendments); Enid Layes, WA Biotechnology & Biomedical Assn (concerns); Mike Ryherd and Stephen Benedict, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, (con); Greg Hanon, WA State Veterinary Medical Association (concerns); Scott Nelson and Mark Leary, Browning-Ferris Industries (con).