
SENATE BILL 6286

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By Senator Morton

Read first time 01/16/2004. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Water.

1 AN ACT Relating to heating oil tank liability protection; amending
2 RCW 70.149.040, 70.149.070, and 70.149.080; and providing an effective
3 date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 70.149.040 and 1997 c 8 s 1 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 The director shall:

8 (1) Design a program for providing pollution liability insurance
9 for heating oil tanks that provides up to sixty thousand dollars per
10 occurrence coverage and aggregate limits, and protects the state of
11 Washington from unwanted or unanticipated liability for accidental
12 release claims;

13 (2) Administer, implement, and enforce the provisions of this
14 chapter. To assist in administration of the program, the director is
15 authorized to appoint up to two employees who are exempt from the civil
16 service law, chapter 41.06 RCW, and who shall serve at the pleasure of
17 the director;

18 (3) Administer the heating oil pollution liability trust account,
19 as established under RCW 70.149.070;

1 (4) Employ and discharge, at his or her discretion, agents,
2 attorneys, consultants, companies, organizations, and employees as
3 deemed necessary, and to prescribe their duties and powers, and fix
4 their compensation;

5 (5) Adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW as necessary to carry out
6 the provisions of this chapter;

7 (6) Design and from time to time revise a reinsurance contract
8 providing coverage to an insurer or insurers meeting the requirements
9 of this chapter. The director is authorized to provide reinsurance
10 through the pollution liability insurance program trust account;

11 (7) Solicit bids from insurers and select an insurer to provide
12 pollution liability insurance for third-party bodily injury and
13 property damage, and corrective action to owners and operators of
14 heating oil tanks;

15 (8) Register, and design a means of accounting for, operating
16 heating oil tanks;

17 (9) Implement a program to provide advice and technical assistance
18 to owners and operators of active and abandoned heating oil tanks if
19 contamination from an active or abandoned heating oil tank is
20 suspected. Advice and assistance regarding administrative and
21 technical requirements may include observation of testing or site
22 assessment and review of the results of reports. If the director finds
23 that contamination is not present or that the contamination is
24 apparently minor and not a threat to human health or the environment,
25 the director may provide written opinions and conclusions on the
26 results of the investigation to owners and operators of active and
27 abandoned heating oil tanks. The agency is authorized to collect, from
28 persons requesting advice and assistance, the costs incurred by the
29 agency in providing such advice and assistance. The costs may include
30 travel costs and expenses associated with review of reports and
31 preparation of written opinions and conclusions. Funds from cost
32 reimbursement must be deposited in the heating oil pollution liability
33 trust account. The state of Washington, the pollution liability
34 insurance agency, and its officers and employees are immune from all
35 liability, and no cause of action arises from any act or omission in
36 providing, or failing to provide, such advice, opinion, conclusion, or
37 assistance; ((and))

1 (10) Establish a public information program to provide information
2 regarding liability, technical, and environmental requirements
3 associated with active and abandoned heating oil tanks;

4 (11) Monitor agency expenditures and seek to minimize costs and
5 maximize benefits to ensure responsible financial stewardship;

6 (12) Create an advisory committee of stakeholders to advise the
7 director on all aspects of program operations and fees authorized by
8 this chapter. The committee should meet at least quarterly, or more
9 frequently at the discretion of the director; and

10 (13) If necessary, adopt by rule appropriate user fees to
11 supplement program funding.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 70.149.070 and 1997 c 8 s 2 are each amended to read
13 as follows:

14 (1) The heating oil pollution liability trust account is created in
15 the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from the pollution
16 liability insurance fee collected under RCW 70.149.080 and reinsurance
17 premiums shall be deposited into the account. Expenditures from the
18 account may be used only for the purposes set out under this chapter.
19 Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures
20 from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under
21 chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for expenditures.
22 Any residue in the account in excess of funds needed to meet
23 administrative costs for January of the following year shall be
24 transferred at the end of the (~~biennium~~) calendar year to the
25 pollution liability insurance program trust account.

26 (2) Money in the account may be used by the director for the
27 following purposes:

- 28 (a) Corrective action costs;
29 (b) Third-party liability claims;
30 (c) Costs associated with claims administration;
31 (d) Purchase of an insurance policy to cover all registered heating
32 oil tanks, and reinsurance of the policy; and
33 (e) Administrative expenses of the program, including personnel,
34 equipment, supplies, and providing advice and technical assistance.

35 **Sec. 3.** RCW 70.149.080 and 1995 c 20 s 8 are each amended to read
36 as follows:

1 (1) A pollution liability insurance fee of (~~six tenths of one~~)
2 one and two-tenths cents per gallon of heating oil purchased within the
3 state shall be imposed on every special fuel dealer, as the term is
4 defined in chapter 82.38 RCW, making sales of heating oil to a user or
5 consumer.

6 (2) The pollution liability insurance fee shall be remitted by the
7 special fuel dealer to the department of licensing (~~with payment of~~
8 ~~the special fuel dealer tax~~).

9 (3) The fee proceeds shall be used for the specific regulatory
10 purposes of this chapter.

11 (4) The fee imposed by this section shall not apply to heating oil
12 exported or sold for export from the state.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Section 3 of this act takes effect July 1,
14 2004.

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