
**Natural Resources, Ecology &
Parks Committee**

HB 2593

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, B. Sullivan, Jarrett, Morris, Hankins, Chase, McIntire, Dickerson, McCoy, Conway, Green, Darneille, Schual-Berke, Lovick, Pettigrew, Sommers, Ericks, Lantz, Hasegawa, Morrell, Kenney, Haler, Springer, Roberts, P. Sullivan, Strow, Miloscia, Wallace, Cody, Sells, Moeller, Dunshee, Williams, O'Brien, McDermott, Kessler, Woods, Kilmer, Eickmeyer, Hunt, Flannigan, Takko, Nixon, Rodne, Simpson, Linville and Kagi; by request of Department of Ecology.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Ecology to adopt procedures for evaluating oil spill contingency plans held by vessels, and to conduct random practice drills on vessels without prior notice.
- Clarifies that all motor vehicles and all seagoing vessels which conduct ship refueling, bunkering, or lightering operations must comply with state laws governing oil spill containment and recovery.
- Grants the Department of Ecology the authority to require additional oil containment safeguards.

Hearing Date: 1/20/06

Staff: Amy Van Horn (786-7168).

Background:

The Legislature enacted oil spill prevention and response measures in 1991, and expanded on those laws in 2004. The 2004 legislation adopted a goal of zero oil spills for the state. The Director of the Department of Ecology (Department) has the primary authority to oversee oil spill prevention, abatement, response, containment, and cleanup efforts in state waters. The oil spill program requires vessels and oil transfer facilities to have oil spill prevention plans, contingency response plans in the event of a spill, and financial responsibility for spills.

Department Advisory Committee

In 2004 the Department formed an advisory committee to help devise a regulatory system for the fueling of vessels and ships. As required by the 2004 law, the Department reported to the Legislature on December 15, 2004. The advisory committee reported its plan to continue its work and make a final report to the Legislature in the future.

Contingency and Prevention Plans

Owners and operators of onshore and offshore facilities and all covered vessels must prepare and submit oil spill contingency and prevention plans to the Department. Oil spill prevention plans must establish compliance with federal law, and comply with a number of personnel and equipment requirements. Prevention plans are valid for five years and may be combined with contingency plans. Facilities may opt to submit contingency plans for tank vessels unloading at the facility.

Persons or facilities conducting ship refueling, bunkering, or lightering of petroleum products are required to have containment and recovery equipment readily available according to Department standards.

Department Rulemaking

The Department must adopt rules for ship refueling, bunkering, and transfers of oil to tank vessels by June 30, 2006. The rules must establish standards for the circumstances under which containment equipment should be deployed. The Department has the authority to require alternate oil containment measures, including the use of automatic shutoff devices and alarms, extra personnel, or containment equipment that is deployed quickly and effectively.

The standards for ship refueling and oil transfers must be suitable to the environmental and operational conditions of the regulated facilities. In addition, the Department must consult with the United States Coast Guard to develop state standards that are compatible with federal requirements. The Department must have a process for immediately notifying affected tribes of any oil spill, and shellfish beds must be considered in oil spill contingency plans.

Federal Legislation

The federal government and the Coast Guard, a federal agency, regulate oil tankers. In 2000, the United States Supreme Court found that federal law preempted four of the Department's rules addressing oil tankers. *United States v. Locke*, 529 U.S. 89 (2000) [Intertanko]. The court held that the federal government alone may regulate the design, construction, alteration, repair, maintenance, operation, equipping, personnel qualification, and manning of oil tankers. The court found that the state may adopt regulations governing oil tankers under some circumstances, particularly if those regulations do not have an extraterritorial effect on the tankers and address the peculiarities of local waters.

Summary of Bill:

Random Practice Drills

The Department must, by rule, adopt procedures to determine the adequacy of oil spill contingency plans held by tank vessels, cargo vessels, and passenger vessels. The Department must conduct random, unannounced practice drills to test the contingency plans, and report on how well a vessel satisfies the elements of its contingency plan during the drill.

Fuel Trucks

All motor vehicles and all seagoing vessels which conduct ship refueling, bunkering or lightering operations must comply with state laws governing oil spill containment and recovery. This includes dockside refueling of commercial ships by fuel trucks.

Inspection and Notice Authority

The Department has the authority to require prior notice of the time, location, and volume of any transfer of oil to a ship; and to conduct inspections of oil transfer operations.

Additional Oil Containment Safeguards

The Department's authority is expanded from the ability to require *alternative* oil containment safeguards to the authority to require *additional* oil containment safeguards during any transfer of oil.

Force of Administrative Rules

The Department may issue administrative orders if oil transfer operations violate Department rules addressing oil spill prevention and contingency plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.