

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1524

As Reported by House Committee On:
Technology, Energy & Communications

Title: An act relating to the sale of light-emitting diode holiday lights.

Brief Description: Requiring the use of certain light-emitting diode lights.

Sponsors: Representatives Chase, Morris and B. Sullivan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Technology, Energy & Communications: 1/31/07, 2/9/07 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires that holiday lights sold in the state be light-emitting diode (LED) lights.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY, ENERGY & COMMUNICATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Morris, Chair; McCoy, Vice Chair; Crouse, Ranking Minority Member; McCune, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eddy, Hankins, Hudgins, Hurst, Takko and VanDeWege.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Ericksen.

Staff: Kara Durbin (786-7133).

Background:

Energy Efficiency Standards

In early 2005, the Legislature adopted minimum energy efficiency standards for 12 electrical products which were not covered by federal law at that time. In 2006, the Legislature amended its efficiency standards to remove those standards that had been preempted by federal law and to change the efficiency standards for certain incandescent reflector lamps to be consistent with California's efficiency standards for those products.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Under the state energy efficiency law, the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) is authorized to test covered products. If a product fails its test, the CTED must inform the public of the test results and charge the manufacturer for the cost of purchasing and testing the product. The CTED may inspect distributors and retailers to determine compliance with the energy efficiency standards. The CTED must investigate alleged violations of the standards. A manufacturer or distributor that repeatedly violates the standards is subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$250.

While state and federal law does regulate certain types of larger, incandescent bulbs, state and federal law does not regulate the efficiency of smaller, incandescent bulbs commonly used in decorative light strings.

Decorative Light Strings

Between late November and early January, decorative light strings are often used to decorate holiday trees and the exteriors of residential and commercial buildings. There are several different types of decorative light strings, such as miniature lights, C-6, and C-7 lights, which each have different sized bulbs and lamp wattages. A string of decorative lights can consist of incandescent lamps or light-emitting diode (LED) lamps.

According to a recent U.S. Department of Energy report, the average miniature incandescent lamp consumes 0.4 watts, whereas the average miniature LED lamp consumes 0.04 watts. This equates to an energy efficiency savings of approximately 90 percent.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Decorative light strings are added to the list of products regulated under the state's energy efficiency law. A minimum efficiency standard is created for decorative light strings sold or offered for sale in the state. Decorative light strings must be light-emitting diode (LED) lights.

Decorative light strings manufactured after January 1, 2008, may not be sold in the state, unless the lights are LED lights.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill replaces the term "incandescent holiday lights" or "holiday lights" with the term "decorative light strings."

The substitute bill defines "decorative light string" as a string of lamps that operate on main power or via a power adaptor that is used for decorative residential lighting purposes.

The substitute bill exempts the provisions of the bill from the certification and testing requirements under RCW 19.260.070 for other regulated products.

The substitute bill authorizes the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to investigate complaints and assess penalties for repeat violations of the bill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a small step. Last year, the state of Montana lit their holiday tree with LED lights and saved 99 percent of their electricity. They are 90 percent more efficient than regular incandescent lights. They are very long-lasting, often burning for thousands of hours. I urge your adoption.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Chase, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.