
**Select Committee on
Environmental Health**

ESB 6868

Brief Description: Protecting sole source aquifers by providing sewer utility service to mobile home parks.

Sponsors: Senators Brown and Marr.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Allows Spokane County and cities within Spokane County with legislative authority to require a mobile home park to connect to a sewer system under certain conditions.

Hearing Date: 2/25/08

Staff: Brad Avey (786-7289).

Background:

Under current state law, cities, towns, or counties cannot require a mobile home park on a septic system to connect to local sewer system unless a local board of health makes a determination that the mobile home park's septic system is failing. Failing septic systems can impact public health, groundwater, and drinking water supplies.

Drinking water supplies are protected, planned for, and regulated through a mix of local, state, and federal statutes including the: State Public Water Systems Act, State Water Pollution Control Act, State Public Water System Coordination Act, State Growth Management Act, State Underground Injection Control Program, Federal Clean Water Act, and federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

Under the SDWA, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency is authorized to designate "sole source aquifers". Sole source aquifers are ground water areas that supply at least 50 percent of the drinking water consumed in the area overlying the aquifer. Sole source aquifers also have no alternative drinking water source which could physically, legally, and economically supply all those who depend upon the aquifer for drinking water. There are 11 sole source aquifers

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.

designated in Washington. The Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie aquifer, which extends across Idaho and Washington, is the sole source of drinking water for more than 500,000 people.

Summary of Engrossed Senate Bill:

Any county lying east of the crest of the Cascade mountains with a population greater than 400,000, and any city within such county, may require a mobile home park to connect to a sewer system, when the city or county legislative authority determines that:

- the mobile home park lies above a federally designated sole source aquifer;
- the sewer system is available for connection by the mobile home park;
- replacement of existing on-site septic systems by connection to a sewer system is needed to ensure the protection of drinking water supplies from the aquifer; and
- the cost of connecting the mobile home park to the sewer system on a per unit basis is reasonable and comparable to the current estimated average cost of connecting single-family residences to the sewer system.

The county or city authority requiring a mobile home park to connect to a sewer system should identify and extend financial assistance programs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 21, 2008.

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