

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1366

As Reported by House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to making technical changes to boiler and unfired pressure vessel statutes.

Brief Description: Making technical changes to boiler and unfired pressure vessel statutes.

Sponsors: Representatives Wood, Conway, Condotta, Chandler and Ormsby; by request of Department of Labor & Industries.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 1/23/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies exemptions from regulation, standards for frequency of inspections, and bonding requirements for inspectors.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Crouse, Green, Moeller and Williams.

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134)

Background:

Certain boilers and unfired pressure vessels are subject to regulation by the Board of Boiler Rules (Board) and inspection by the Department of Labor and Industries (Department). The Board develops rules based on nationally or internationally accepted engineering standards. The Board also adopts standards such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' (ASME) code. The Director of the Department approves rules, appoints the Chief Inspector, and assesses penalties against persons who violate safety standards for boilers and unfired pressure vessels.

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.

The Chief Inspector issues "inspection certificates" for boilers and unfired pressure vessels that are found to comply with the Board's rules. The Board grants "special installation and operating permits" and "special permits" for other boilers and unfired pressure vessels.

Certain boilers and unfired pressure vessels are exempt from regulation. These include some water tanks that operate at 130 degrees or less, and small unfired pressure vessels and hot water heaters. Other boilers and unfired pressure vessels are exempt from inspection requirements, but subject to regulations governing construction, installation, and repair.

Certain boilers and unfired pressure vessels are inspected annually, and others are inspected biennially. The Board, however, may provide for longer periods between inspections of power boilers and unfired pressure vessels subject to internal corrosion.

The Chief Inspector and the deputy inspectors are required to furnish performance bonds. The state pays the cost of the bonds.

Summary of Bill:

The term "inspection certificate" is used in place of the terms "special installation and operating permit" and "special permit."

The exemptions from regulation are modified. The exemption for some water tanks is for those that operate at ambient temperature (rather than 130 degrees or less). The exemption for small unfired pressure vessels is changed to conform to American Society of Mechanical Engineer standards. The exemption for small domestic hot water heaters is moved to a separate subsection.

The Board of Boiler Rules is authorized to provide for longer periods between internal inspections of low pressure heating boilers.

The bonding requirement for the Chief Inspector and the deputy inspectors is repealed.

Other technical changes are made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Board of Boiler Rules unanimously supports these updates to the state's boiler law. The most significant change is to the frequency of internal inspections. Internal inspections can damage low pressure vessels because they require emptying and refilling a vessel, and may require handling and/or disposing of chemicals. External inspections will still be conducted. Public safety will not be compromised.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Wood, prime sponsor; and Linda Williamson and Josh Swanson, Department of Labor and Industries.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.