

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5182

As of January 28, 2009

Title: An act relating to requiring offset credits in air operating permits for sawmills using forest waste products as feedstock in cogeneration facilities.

Brief Description: Requiring offset credits in air operating permits for sawmills using forest waste products as feedstock in cogeneration facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen and Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Water & Energy: 1/28/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: The Department of Ecology and seven local air quality agencies administer Washington's air operating permit standards. An air operating permit specifies requirements applying to certain air pollution sources, including permissible emission levels.

California law provides for an offset credit in air operating permits for facilities using forest waste products and other biomass as fuel in cogeneration facilities producing electrical energy. The offset is based upon the incremental emissions benefit that occurs because the biomass is not disposed of by open field or forest land burning, if it would ordinarily be burned in that manner in the same air basin.

Summary of Bill: Air quality permitting authorities must grant an offset credit in an air operating permit to a sawmill using forest waste products as biomass fuel in a cogeneration facility producing electrical energy. The credit will reflect the emissions benefit that occurs because the forest waste products will not be disposed of by open field or forest land burning. Permitting authorities must provide for the credit in technical standards.

Applicants must provide the permitting authority with information necessary to make offset credit determinations. To qualify for the offset credit, the cogeneration facility must produce no more than 50 megawatts of electricity and use the appropriate degree of pollution control technology to the extent required by the permitting authority.

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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.