

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5948

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Environment, Water & Energy, February 24, 2009

Title: An act relating to water conservation appliances.

Brief Description: Regarding water conservation appliances.

Sponsors: Senators Shin, Kastama, Jacobsen, Franklin, Berkey and Hargrove.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Water & Energy: 2/18/09, 2/24/09 [DPS, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5948 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rockefeller, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair; Fraser, Hatfield, Marr, Morton and Ranker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Ranking Minority Member; Delvin and Holmquist.

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: The Washington State Building Code Council (Council) establishes the minimum building, mechanical, fire, plumbing, and energy code requirements by reviewing, developing, and adopting the State Building Code. The State Building Code Act (Act) provides requirements to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the occupants or users of buildings and structures throughout the state. The Council must regularly review updated versions of the codes and other relevant information, and amend the Act as needed. The Council may issue opinions regarding the codes upon request of a local official who has a duty to enforce the Act.

Currently, the Act provides standards for toilets and urinals used in all new construction and all remodeling involving replacement of plumbing fixtures in all residential, hotel, motel, school, industrial, commercial use, or other occupancies determined by the Council to use significant quantities of water. The maximum water use allowed in gallons per flush (gpf)

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for toilets is 1.6 gpf. The maximum water use allowed in gallons per flush for urinals is 1.0 gpf.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): By January 1, 2014, all toilets and urinals, other than institutional toilets and urinals, commercial toilets, toilets used by children in daycare facilities, and toilets used in bariatric applications, sold or installed in new residences in this state must be high-efficiency toilets and urinals. A high-efficiency toilet is one in which the effective flush volume may not exceed 1.28 gpf and meets certain requirements. A high-efficiency urinal is one that uses no more than 0.5 gpf and meets certain requirements. Installation of the appliance must be constructed so that the discharge slope of the drain pipe is at a quarter inch per ten-foot slope between the appliance and the exit from the dwelling. This act applies only to properties served by a sewer system.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Requires that, by January 1, 2014, all toilets, other than institutional and commercial toilets, toilets used by children in daycare facilities, and toilets used in bariatric applications, sold or installed in new residences in this state must be high-efficiency toilets. Requires that, by January 1, 2014, all urinals, other than institutional urinals, sold or installed in new residences in this state must be high-efficiency urinals. Removes the requirement that each manufacturer of toilets and urinals that sells toilets and urinals in this state must offer for sale a minimum percentage of high-efficiency toilets and urinals. Adds standards to the definitions of high-efficiency toilets, high-efficiency urinals, and nonwater supplied urinals. Establishes that installation of the appliance must be constructed so that the discharge slope of the drain pipe is at a quarter inch per ten-foot slope between the appliance and the exit from the dwelling. Establishes that this act applies only to properties served by a sewer system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: In an average home, the three largest water consumers are the kitchen, the shower, and the toilet. This bill encourages the use of high-efficiency toilets to reduce the amount of water a toilet uses when flushing. This is a goal that every toilet sold in Washington by 2014 will be a high-efficiency toilet, using 1.28 gpf instead of 1.6 gpf. This bill is a good step forward for efficiency. Our current toilet standards have not been updated since 1993 and there is new technology that is available that works great. In 2007 there were 24 manufacturers who make 111 different models of high-efficiency toilets and nine manufacturers of high-efficiency urinals with 25 different models. These toilets compact the time that the flush happens so you get a larger volume of water in a shorter amount of time. These toilets perform as well or better than current toilets. This bill includes a transition market plan. These toilets can save 4,000 gallons per person per year, saving a family of four \$90 per year on their water bill.

OTHER: There is a problem with the use of these high-efficiency toilets in the line from the fixtures because there is not enough water to carry the waste out of the house and all the way to the sewage treatment plant. These toilets need secondary water use to carry the waste down the line. There should be a requirement for these high-efficiency fixtures but with proper engineering such that you should not be requiring someone who is replacing their toilet to do so with one of these because it will not work with their existing drain lines.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Allan Dietemann, city of Seattle; Gerald Desmond, Jr., Plumbing Manufacturers Institute.

OTHER: Charly Mitchel, Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors of Washington and Mitchel Plumbing.