
Environment Committee

SSB 6116

Brief Description: Concerning on-site sewage program management plans.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections
(originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, Swecker, Pridemore, Ranker and Murray).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes a local board of health to adopt and manage an on-site sewage program management plan, and to impose reasonable rates or charges in an amount sufficient to pay for the actual costs of administration and operation of the plan.
- Authorizes a local board of health to contract with the county treasurer to collect the rates or charges imposed.
- Specifies that a local board of health may not impose a lien on real property for failure to pay rates and charges imposed.

Hearing Date: 2/16/12

Staff: Anna Jackson (786-7194).

Background:

The Washington State Board of Health (BOH) has the authority to adopt rules for the design, construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of on-site sewage systems with design flows of less than 3,500 gallons per day. The BOH rules require property owners to complete an evaluation of their on-site sewage system once every three years for gravity drain field systems and annually for all other types of systems.

Local boards of health are responsible for identifying failing septic tank drain fields. A local board of health may adopt more restrictive standards for on-site sewage systems than those adopted by the BOH. A local board of health may grant a waiver from specific requirements adopted by the BOH for on-site sewage systems if the local board of health determines that the waiver is consistent with the BOH standards.

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.

On-site sewage systems located in marine recovery areas designated by the Washington State Department of Health (Department) or a local board of health are subject to enhanced on-site sewage system regulations, including inspections, inventory and identification, and monitoring to ensure protection of public health and Puget Sound water quality. The local boards of health in 12 Puget Sound counties must develop an on-site sewage system management plan specifically to address shellfish growing areas and degraded marine water quality. The Department approves each county's marine recovery area management plan.

Summary of Bill:

A local board of health may adopt and manage an on-site sewage program management plan, and may impose and collect reasonable rates or charges in an amount sufficient to pay for the actual costs of administration and operation of the plan.

A local board of health may contract with the county treasurer to collect the rates or charges imposed, but may not impose a lien on real property for failure to pay rates and charges imposed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 13, 2012.

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