

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6014

As of February 16, 2012

Title: An act relating to the management of storm water discharging to marine waters.

Brief Description: Concerning the management of storm water discharging to marine waters.

Sponsors: Senators Ranker and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment: 1/18/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) sets effluent limitations for discharges of pollutants. Pollutant is defined in CWA to include a variety of materials that may be discharged into water through human activities, construction or industrial processes, or other methods.

The Department of Ecology (DOE) is delegated federal CWA authority by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. DOE also is the agency authorized by state law to implement state water quality programs.

CWA establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit system to regulate wastewater discharges from point sources to surface waters. Point sources are defined generally as discernable, discrete, and confined conveyances from which pollutant discharges can or do occur. NPDES permits are required for anyone who discharges wastewater to surface waters or who has a significant potential to impact surface waters. NPDES permits also are required for storm water discharges from certain industries, construction sites of specified sizes, and municipalities operating municipal separate storm sewer systems that meet specified criteria.

Summary of Bill: DOE must submit a report to the Senate and House of Representatives by September 1, 2012, that includes a summary of and update on its ongoing actions relating to the regulation and management of storm water discharging to marine waters. Additionally, the report must include any legislative recommendations.

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: Requested on January 15, 2012.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: OTHER: DOE appreciates the interest in storm water pollution prevention. DOE has recently completed a study on the effects of storm water on marine waters. It would be helpful to clarify the intent of this bill.

Persons Testifying: OTHER: Don Seeberger, DOE.