
Environment Committee

HB 1952

Brief Description: Concerning nonsubstantive changes to programs relevant to the department of ecology designed to create administrative efficiency.

Sponsors: Representatives Tharinger and Uptegrove.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amends certain programs administered by the Department of Ecology to remove prescriptive program administration and reporting requirements.

Hearing Date:

Staff: Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

The Department of Ecology (DOE) is responsible for the administration of a long list of statutes that affect the state's environment. The DOE's administrative responsibilities include the management of programs related to air quality, recycling, waste reduction and reuse, hazardous waste, municipal sewage sludge, and used waste oil. Certain DOE agency actions may be appealed to the Pollution Control Hearings Board.

Statutes that establish the DOE's program management responsibilities include a variety of procedural and administrative requirements. Many of these statutes also include since-passed deadlines by which the Department was directed to have achieved certain objectives, include obsolete references to components of program management which have subsequently been changed by more-recently enacted statutes, or include requirements to periodically report to the Legislature or the Governor on the agency's activities.

Summary of Bill:

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.

Programs administered by the DOE are amended to remove prescriptive program administration and reporting requirements, repeal and delete outdated provisions, and make technical changes. Changes are made to the following statutes:

- Pollution Control Hearings Board (chapter 43.21B RCW);
- Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Litter Control (chapter 70.93 RCW);
- Clean Air Act (chapter 70.94 RCW);
- Solid Waste Management (chapter 70.95 RCW);
- Waste Reduction (chapter 70.95C RCW);
- Hazardous Waste Fees (chapter 70.95E RCW);
- Used Oil Recycling (chapter 70.95I RCW);
- Municipal Sewage Sludge (chapter 70.95J RCW); and
- Hazardous Waste Management (chapter 70.105 RCW);

Specific details of the changes include:

- authorizing penalties of less than \$15,000 in front of the Pollution Control Hearings Board to be heard by an administrative law judge, rather than requiring the Board itself to convene for the hearing;
- removing or lengthening requirements for the periodic submission of reports on certain agency activities;
- removing requirements for other state agencies to periodically report certain litter collection information to the DOE;
- authorizing the use of financial aid grants to local governments for the implementation of solid waste plans, in addition to the development of those plans;
- reducing the proportion of state funding which local governments must match in order to participate in certain DOE financial assistance programs;
- requiring that certain information be posted on the DOE's website; and
- making technical changes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 2 which takes effect June 30, 2019.