
Environment Committee

HB 2620

Brief Description: Enhancing the potable water supply by encouraging treatment of raw groundwater.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz and Short.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Health to seek to enhance the potable water supply by encouraging treatment of raw groundwater sources where maximum contaminant levels are exceeded.

Hearing Date: 2/12/14

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7291) and Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

Types of Public Water Systems.

The Department of Health (DOH) and local health jurisdictions are responsible for managing public water systems. Public water systems are divided into two categories: group A public water systems and group B public water systems. Group A water systems are public water systems with one of the following three qualifications:

1. features 15 or more service connections;
2. serves an average of 25 or more people a day for 60 or more days a year, regardless of the number of service connections; or
3. serves 1,000 or more people for two or more consecutive days.

Group B public water systems are those that do not meet the definition of a group A public water system.

Permitting for Public Water Systems.

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.

Group A public water systems must obtain a DOH-approved annual operating permit. Group A public water systems must submit a water system plan that explains operational, technical, managerial, and financial capabilities demonstrate the ability to meet present and future needs, and show eligibility for financing. In addition, group A public water systems must explain why the water system is needed, present construction documents, and receive source approval. Source approval includes documentation that the water source is of necessary size to meet demands, and contains water that meets water quality standards as demonstrated by initial water quality analysis. If the source does not meet water quality standards, the water source may have to be treated as a condition of approval. The DOH may impose additional permit conditions, requirements for system improvements, and compliance schedules where reasonable and necessary to ensure a safe and reliable water supply before issuing or renewing an operating permit.

For group B public water systems, local governments may establish extra requirements in addition to those established by the State Board of Health. Before a group B public water system may be installed or add additional service connections, the groundwater source and design of the system must be approved by the DOH or the local health jurisdiction. To receive groundwater source approval, water quality requirements need to be met, as demonstrated by the analysis of water quality samples from the raw water source. Groundwater source approval will not be given if any of the following occur:

- average concentration from all samples for each substance listed exceeds maximum contaminant levels (MCL);
- a contaminant of public health concern exceeds MCL; or
- repeat sample results indicate a presence of coliform bacteria.

Summary of Bill:

In issuing operating permits to group A water systems, the DOH must seek to enhance the potable water supply by encouraging treatment to raw groundwater sources where maximum contaminant levels are exceeded.

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.