
Local Government Committee

SSB 6284

Brief Description: Preventing water-sewer districts from prohibiting multipurpose fire sprinkler systems.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Security (originally sponsored by Senators Takko and Roach).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Prevents a water-sewer district from prohibiting the use of multipurpose fire sprinkler systems for single family homes or townhouses or requiring a separate water meter or backflow preventer for multipurpose fire sprinkler systems.

Hearing Date: 2/18/16

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

Water-Sewer Districts.

Water-sewer districts (districts) may purchase, construct, maintain, and supply waterworks to furnish water to inhabitants within and outside of the district. Districts may also develop and operate systems of sewers and drainage, and are authorized to create facilities, systems, and programs for the collection, interception, treatment, disposal, and control of pollution from wastewater. Districts may also fix rates and charges for services, enter into contracts, levy taxes, and issue bonds and instruments evidencing indebtedness. Districts are governed by boards of elected commissioners.

Fire Protection Sprinkler Systems.

A "fire protection sprinkler system" is defined in statute as an assembly of underground and/or overhead piping or conduit beginning at the connection to the primary water supply that conveys water to dispersal openings or devices to extinguish, control, or contain fire and to provide protection from exposure to fire or other products of combustion.

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.

There are two primary types of fire protection sprinkler systems used in residential homes: stand-alone sprinkler systems, and multipurpose sprinkler systems. Stand-alone sprinkler systems are kept separate and independent from the water distribution system of the home, and the piping of the system serves only the fire sprinklers. Multipurpose sprinkler systems combine fire sprinklers with the home's plumbing, so water is supplied both to regular plumbing fixtures and to fire sprinklers. Backflow prevention devices are used when sprinkler systems are connected to a nonpotable water supply, to prevent contamination between nonpotable and potable water.

Summary of Bill:

Water-sewer districts may not prohibit the use of multipurpose fire sprinkler systems for single family homes and town houses or require a separate water meter or backflow preventer for multipurpose fire sprinkler systems.

A "multipurpose fire sprinkler" is defined as a fire sprinkler system that: (1) is supplied only by the purveyor's water; (2) does not have a fire department pumper connection; (3) is constructed of approved potable water piping and materials to which sprinkler heads are attached; and (4) terminates at a connection to a toilet or other plumbing fixture to prevent stagnant water.

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.