

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6012

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As of February 17, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to the protection of drinking water when issuing building permits.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the protection of drinking water when issuing building permits.

**Sponsors:** Senators Roach and Liias.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Security: 2/19/15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

**Staff:** Karen Epps (786-7424)

**Background:** Drinking Water. More than 5.5 million Washington residents receive their drinking water from Group A or Group B public water systems, representing roughly 85 percent of the state's population. Group A water systems either have 15 or more service connections, regularly serve 25 or more people 60 or more days per year, or serve 1000 or more people for two or more consecutive days. Group B water systems serve fewer than 15 connections and fewer than 25 people per day. About 725,000 Washington residents get their drinking water from individual private wells.

Urban Growth Area. The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the comprehensive land use planning framework for counties and cities in Washington. Counties that fully plan under GMA must designate urban growth areas, areas within which urban growth must be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. These fully planning counties and each city within must include in their urban growth areas, areas and densities that are sufficient to permit the urban growth projected to occur in the county or city for the succeeding 20-year period.

Building Permits – Potable Water. The State Building Code requires that all building permit applicants must provide evidence that an adequate supply of potable water will be available for the building being proposed. Adequate evidence of a potable water supply can include possession of a water right or a letter from a water purveyor stating the ability to provide water to the building. All public water systems must provide an adequate quantity and quality of water in a reliable manner at all times. In most cases, adequate and reliable

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potable water is supplied either from a source located off of the property by an approved water purveyor or a permit-exempt well located on the property.

**Summary of Bill:** A building permit application for a construction project costing more than \$5,000 that is outside the urban growth area, and is not connected to a public sewer system must complete a risk assessment of possible impacts to the drinking water supply of the surrounding property owners. The risk assessment must be mailed to the following:

- the surrounding property owners that may be impacted by the construction as identified in the risk assessment;
- any federally recognized Indian tribe that may be impacted by the construction as identified in the risk assessment; and
- any agency or community group that the city or county may identify as having an interest in the risk assessment.

The risk assessment must include a mitigation plan that provides that the quality and quantity of drinking water remains the same for the surrounding property owners.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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