

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5162

As Reported by House Committee On: Appropriations

Title: An act relating to creating the wastewater treatment plant operator certification account.

Brief Description: Creating the wastewater treatment plant operator certification account.

Sponsors: Senators McCoy, Sheldon, Rolfes, Takko and Chase; by request of Department of Ecology.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/13/17, 3/23/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification Account (Account).
- Directs fees for wastewater treatment plant operator certificates into the new Account rather than the State General Fund.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Buys, Caldier, Cody, Fitzgibbon, Haler, Hansen, Harris, Hudgins, Jinkins, Kagi, Lytton, Manweller, Nealey, Pettigrew, Pollet, Sawyer, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Stanford, Tharinger, Vick, Volz and Wilcox.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Stokesbary, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Condotta and Taylor.

Staff: Dan Jones (786-7118).

Background:

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.

Operators of sewage treatment plants are required to be certified by the Water Quality Program at the Department of Ecology. Certification is achieved through a computer-based exam and is available in five levels, each with progressively higher requirements for education and experience. Certification must be renewed every three years. There are currently around 2,000 certified wastewater treatment plant operators in Washington. The fee for a wastewater treatment plant operator certificate (certificate) is \$50 for a new certificate and \$30 for a renewed certificate. The fee levels are set in statute and were last amended in 1987, when they were raised from the original amounts of \$10 for a new certificate and \$5 for a renewal. The fee revenue is deposited into the State General Fund.

Summary of Bill:

The Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Certification Account (Account) is created in the State Treasury. The Account is appropriated and may only be used for the wastewater treatment plant operator certification program at the Department of Ecology. All fees related to wastewater treatment plant operator certificates are directed into the new Account instead of the State General Fund.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Account created in the bill will allow the Department of Ecology to collect money to keep the Wastewater Treatment Operator Certificate Program operating.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Don Seeberger, Department of Ecology.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.