

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6164

As Passed Senate, February 6, 2024

Title: An act relating to county emergency management plans.

Brief Description: Concerning county emergency management plans.

Sponsors: Senator Wagoner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs: 1/18/24, 1/30/24 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires a local organization that produces a local comprehensive emergency management plan to include in the communication plan an expeditious notification of citizens at risk during a hazardous materials spill or release.
- Provides that a local comprehensive emergency management plan to include the provision of at least one public meeting to inform the public about the hazardous material spill or release.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LAND USE & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6164 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Lovelett, Chair; Salomon, Vice Chair; Torres, Ranking Member; Kauffman and Short.

Staff: Maggie Douglas (786-7279)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: Each county, city, and town (political subdivision) in Washington must establish an emergency management organization by ordinance or resolution, either independently or in cooperation with another political subdivision.

Every political subdivision must develop a local comprehensive emergency management plan to address all natural and man-made emergencies to which the political subdivision is vulnerable including a hazardous materials emergency response plan. The comprehensive emergency management plan must provide a functional description of how warnings and emergency information will be addressed.

Summary of Bill: A local organization that produces a local comprehensive emergency management plan must include in its communication plan an expeditious notification of citizens at risk during a hazardous materials spill or release. Notification must be via the most appropriate technology available to determine citizen risk levels.

A local comprehensive emergency plan must include, if a hazardous material release or spill necessitates the establishment of an incident command system, the provision of at least one public meeting to inform the public about the spill or release. A public meeting conducted under this provision must allow for remote participation and may be held jointly with the county legislative authority's regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting. The public meeting must include representatives from the Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the party liable for the hazardous material spill or release.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: There was a large gasoline line leak up in Skagit County, and leaked across the land and flowed out towards the Skagit River. Landowners had gasoline flowing across their properties and under their bridges and they didn't feel like they received timely notification. This is a belt and suspenders bill to make sure that affected communities are being promptly contacted in the case of emergency. Jurisdictions may choose what kind of technology is most appropriate to communicate to those likely to be affected.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Keith Wagoner, Prime Sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.