

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6164

C 331 L 24
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning county emergency management plans.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Senator Wagoner).

Senate Committee on Local Government, Land Use & Tribal Affairs
House Committee on Innovation, Community & Economic Development, & Veterans

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.

Each political subdivision must also designate a hazardous materials incident command agency. An incident command agency is the predesignated or appointed agency charged with coordinating all activities and resources at the incident scene. Hazardous materials are defined as materials:

- which may cause unacceptable risks to human life within a specified area adjacent to a spill, seepage, fire, explosion, or other release, and which will require evacuation if not contained;
- that, if spilled, could cause unusual risks to the general public and to responding emergency response personnel;
- that, if involved in a fire, will pose unusual risks to emergency response personnel;
- requiring unusual storage or transportation conditions to assure safe containment; or
- requiring unusual treatment, packaging, or vehicles during transportation to assure safe containment.

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.

Summary: 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 Type 1 or Type 2 hazardous materials spill or release.

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) must hold at least one public meeting to inform the public about the hazardous material spill or release. The public meeting must allow for remote participation if technologically feasible, and may be held jointly with the county legislative authority's regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting. The public meeting must include:

- a representative from Ecology;
- a representative from the local organization for emergency services or management in the jurisdiction where the spill or release occurred; and
- a representative for the party responsible for the material spill or release.

A Type 1 hazardous material spill or release is defined as a spill or release of national significance that requires:

- the activation of Ecology's crisis management team, incident management team, command, and general staff;
- involvement of the governor's office and federal agency officials;
- establishment of area command; and
- active involvement of Ecology's spills program management.

A Type 1 hazardous materials spill or release may require the establishment of a national incident commander.

A Type 2 hazardous material spill or release is defined as a large or major incident of long duration that requires the activation of Ecology's crisis management team, incident management team, unified command at an appropriate command post, and most or all of the command and general staff positions. A Type 2 hazardous material spill or release may require other incident management teams, resources from other states, and the establishment of an area command. The incident will go into multiple operational periods, and requires significant product spilled and numerous sensitive sites threatened. A written incident action plan is required for each operational period.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	96	0	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 6, 2024