

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5550

C 327 L 19
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Implementing the recommendations of the pesticide application safety work group.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Saldaña, Warnick, Conway, Das, Hasegawa, Keiser, King, Rolfes and Van De Wege).

Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: In 2018, the Legislature passed ESSB 6529. The legislation established a pesticide application safety work group to review existing state and federal law on pesticide safety and application, arrange for a presentation about technologies, review the structure of the former review panel, and review data and reports from state agencies and other states' relevant agencies. Work group members included legislators from both chambers and caucuses, as well as representation from state agencies and the Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

The work group provided a report to the Legislature called Pesticide Application Safety. The report included the following recommendations regarding what can be done now to improve pesticide application safety:

- expand training—the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) lacks sufficient resources to meet the training demand from pesticide applicators and handlers; and
- establish a new pesticide application safety panel—the panel would provide an opportunity to evaluate and recommend policy options, and investigate exposure cases.

In the report, the work group concluded that draft legislation was warranted to expand funding for a training program and set up a new pesticide application safety panel with clear objectives.

Summary: The Pesticide Application Safety Committee is established. The committee is composed of:

- legislative members from both houses;

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- agency heads from WSDA, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Labor and Industries, and Public Lands;
- the dean of Washington State University's College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences;
- the director of the University of Washington Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center; and
- the pesticide safety education coordinator at the Washington State University cooperative extension.

The secretary of DOH and director of WSDA are the committee co-chairs. The committee must hold its first meeting by September 2019 and must meet at least three times each year and consider methods to reduce meeting costs. The committee must provide an annual report to the Legislature, which may include recommendations.

The first priority of the committee is to explore how state agencies collect and track data. The committee must also consider the feasibility and requirements of developing a shared database, including how DOH could use existing tools to better display multiagency data regarding pesticides. The committee may also evaluate and recommend policy options related to:

- improving agricultural pesticide application safety;
- establishing baseline data;
- communication, information, and education provided to and among different members of the agricultural community, including in English and Spanish and with translation apps;
- compiling industry's best practices to limit pesticide exposure;
- reporting of pesticide exposure and related issues;
- incentives for using new technology; and
- evaluating and exploring exposure prevention techniques and protocols and best practices for use of personal safety equipment and reflective gear.

An advisory work group is created to collect information and make recommendations to the full committee on topics requiring unique expertise and perspectives on issues within the jurisdiction of the committee. The secretary of DOH, in consultation with the director of WSDA and the full committee, will appoint the following members to the advisory work group:

- a representative from WSDA;
- two representatives of employee organizations that represent farmworkers;
- two farmworkers with expertise on pesticide application;
- a representative of community and migrant health centers;
- a toxicologist;
- a representative of growers who use air blast sprayers;
- a representative of growers who use aerial pesticide application;
- a representative of growers who use fumigation to apply pesticides; and
- a representative of aerial applicators.

The advisory work group may only hold meetings at the request of the committee. The advisory work group must provide annual reports on its activities and recommendations to the full committee.

These provisions expire in 2025.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	95	0	(House amended)
Senate	45	2	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 28, 2019