

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1665

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As of March 28, 1995

**Title:** An act relating to on-site sewage disposal systems.

**Brief Description:** Limiting review or approval of on-site sewage disposal systems by the department of ecology.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (originally sponsored by Representatives McMorris, Campbell, Honeyford, Koster, Johnson, Huff, Cairnes, Fuhrman, D. Schmidt, Padden and Thompson).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ecology & Parks: 3/29/95.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

**Staff:** Cathy Baker (786-7708)

**Background:** Current state law requires the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to review and approve all plans and specifications relating to the construction or modification of sewage treatment plants. Ecology may delegate to local governments the authority to review and approve such plans and specifications, provided that the local government meets certain criteria. By administrative rule, Ecology reviews only those on-site systems that have flows exceeding 14,500 gallons per day.

By rule, the state Department of Health (DOH) reviews and approves plans and specifications for large on-site systems with flows between 3,500 and 14,500 gallons per day.

On-site systems that have flows under 3,500 gallons per day (most residential systems) are governed by on-site system regulations that have been adopted by the state Board of Health and are implemented by local health departments. Plans and specifications for these smaller on-site systems are approved by local health departments.

The Department of Ecology is authorized to enforce the provisions of certain state and federal water pollution control laws. If a person is violating or creates a substantial potential to violate these water pollution control laws, the department may issue a notice of violation or an order to achieve compliance.

**Summary of Bill:** On-site sewage disposal systems are exempt from the requirement that plans and specifications for the construction or modification of sewage treatment facilities be submitted to the Department of Ecology for review and approval.

The Department of Ecology may not determine that an on-site sewage disposal system is in violation of water quality laws solely on the grounds that these systems have not been approved by the department.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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