

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1726

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C 225 L 97

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Allowing outdoor burning of storm and flood-related debris.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (originally sponsored by Representatives Robertson, Linville, L. Thomas, Regala, Benson, Kastama, Smith, Hatfield, Koster, Sullivan, McDonald, Chandler, Zellinsky, DeBolt, B. Thomas, Cairnes, Johnson, Cooke, Clements, Kessler and Mulliken).

**House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology**  
**Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment**

**Background:** In general, state law regulates where and how outdoor burning is permitted and what may be burned. Outdoor burning refers to both "backyard" burning and to land-clearing fires. Outdoor burning does not include silvicultural burning (slashburns) or agricultural burning. Pollutants emitted by outdoor burns include inhalable particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM-10) and carbon monoxide. Outdoor burning contributes an estimated 6 percent to statewide air emissions.

Outdoor burning is prohibited in areas where federal PM-10 or carbon monoxide standards are violated. These areas include the greater Spokane, Yakima, and Olympia areas and the Tacoma tideflats, the Duwamish valley, and the Kent valley. State law prohibits outdoor burning by December 31, 2000, in urban growth areas designated under the Growth Management Act, or in cities greater than 10,000 population.

The federal Clean Air Act requires a state implementation plan for areas that do not meet, or have not met, federal air quality standards. These plans must identify enforceable actions that will reduce air pollution sufficiently to meet federal air quality standards. Many of these plans include outdoor burning bans as one action to reduce air pollution. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has final approval of state implementation plans.

**Summary:** Outdoor burning conducted solely for managing storm and flood-related debris may be allowed in areas where outdoor burning is otherwise prohibited. The permitting authority may decide if burning will be permitted in an area in which outdoor burning is prohibited. A permit is required and a fee may be charged to recover the costs of administering the permit. All restrictions on what may be burned

remain unchanged except that outdoor burning of debris resulting from land-clearing activities is not allowed.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 97 0

Senate 38 11

**Effective:** July 27, 1997