

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6225

As Passed House - Amended:

March 1, 2006

Title: An act relating to regulating the business of installing, repairing, and maintaining domestic water pumping systems.

Brief Description: Regulating the business of installing, repairing, and maintaining domestic water pumping systems.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Honeyford, Haugen, Morton, Hewitt, Rockefeller, Pflug, Parlette, Shin and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 2/22/06 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 3/1/06, 97-1.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House)

- Creates a specialty plumber certificate, issued by the Department of Labor and Industries, for persons installing, maintaining, and repairing domestic water pumping systems within the interior space of a residence.
- Coordinates the requirements for obtaining the specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate with the requirements for a pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrician certificate by allowing the Department of Labor and Industries to create a combined examination and issue one document reflecting competency in both areas.
- Coordinates application requirements, including the bond requirement, for becoming a licensed pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrical contractor and for becoming a licensed general contractor.
- Prohibits advertising for electrical work without having an electrical contractor license.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Crouse, Holmquist, Hudgins, Kenney and McCoy.

Staff: Sarah Dylag (786-7109).

Background:

Work on pumps for domestic water systems can involve plumbing work and electrical work. State law contains various requirements for the certification of certain plumbers and for the licensing and certification of electrical contractors, administrators, and electricians. A person installing, maintaining, and repairing domestic water pumping systems within the interior space of a residence must obtain appropriate plumbing and electrical certification before engaging in such work. Training, examination, and continuing education requirements apply in both areas.

Plumbing

No person may engage in or offer to engage in the installation, alteration, repair, and renovation of potable water systems within a building without having a journeyman certificate, specialty certificate, temporary permit, or trainee certificate from the Department of Labor and Industries (Department).

The state Advisory Board of Plumbers (Plumbing Board) advises the Director of the Department on rules regulating the trade of plumbing, and on criteria for examinations of persons who wish to engage in the plumbing trade. The Plumbing Board may also conduct hearings on the revocation of a certificate of competency.

Electrical Contractors, Administrators, and Electricians

The Department also licenses electrical contractors, certifies electrical administrators and electricians, and regulates the installation, repair, and maintenance of electrical wires, equipment, and services. Under the Department's rules, there are specialty certificates that apply to persons doing pump and irrigation work and persons doing domestic well work.

The Electrical Board advises the Director of the Department on electrical and telecommunications installation standards, inspection procedures, and adoption of rules pertaining to electrical inspections. The Electrical Board also reviews appeals of license revocations and suspensions, as well as other citations.

Summary of Amended Bill:

A specialty plumber certificate is created for persons installing, maintaining, and repairing the pressurization, treatment, and filtration components of a domestic water pumping system located within the interior space of a residential structure. The Department must establish a single document for persons meeting the new requirements for the new specialty plumber certificate and the existing requirements for a pump and irrigation or a domestic pump

electrician. The certificate is renewable every three years on or before the birthdate of the holder. The examination for the new specialty plumber certificate may be combined with examination requirements for the pump and irrigation and domestic well electrician certificates. Continuing education requirements may include both electrical and plumbing education.

Specialty Domestic Water Pumping Plumber Certificate

A specialty plumber certificate is created for persons installing, maintaining, and repairing the pressurization, treatment, and filtration components of a domestic water pumping system located within the interior space of a residential structure. The specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate does not cover work on other plumbing components of the residence; a separate plumbing certificate is still required to work on these components.

Requirements for obtaining the specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate are one year of practical experience on pumping systems not exceeding 100 gallons per minute and two years practical experience on pumping systems exceeding 100 gallons per minute. The Department may set equivalent requirements in rule.

The Department must create an examination for the specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate. The Department must create this examination in consultation with the Plumbing Board. The examination may include an examination for appropriate electrical safety and technical requirements. The Department may contract out with a nationally-recognized testing organization for this examination and for all plumbing examinations.

The Department, in consultation with the Plumbing Board, may accept the certification by a professional or trade association or other acceptable entity as meeting the examination requirements. Persons who can provide evidence prior to January 1, 2007, that they have been employed in the pump and irrigation business for not less than 4,000 hours in the most recent four calendar years must be issued the appropriate certificate by the Department after submitting an application and paying appropriate fees.

The Department must establish a single document for persons meeting the new requirements for a specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate and the existing requirements for a pump and irrigation or a domestic pump electrician. Continuing education for the specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate may include both electrical and plumbing education, but 12 of the required 24 hours must be in plumbing.

The Plumbing Board is expanded from five to seven members including one specialty plumber and one person primarily engaged in a specialty plumbing business. Expiration dates for the initial terms of these new members are established.

Licensed Pump and Irrigation or Domestic Pump Electricians

In meeting existing training requirements to become a licensed pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrician, a person is permitted to obtain required experience at the same time the individual is meeting the experience required for the new specialty domestic water

pumping plumber certificate. The Department may establish, by rule and in consultation with the Electrical Board, additional equivalent ways to meet the required training requirements.

Prior to January 1, 2007, persons who can demonstrate that they have been employed as a pump installer in the pump and irrigation or domestic pump business by a licensed electrical contractor, registered general contractor, or appropriate general specialty contractor for not less than 8,000 hours in the most recent six calendar years must be issued an appropriate certificate by the Department.

Continuing education for the pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrician certificate may combine both electrical and plumbing education as long as there is a minimum of four hours (of the eight hours currently required) of electrical training.

Electrical Contractor Application Requirements

A licensed plumbing contractor doing work on pumps for domestic water systems consistent with the specialty domestic water pumping plumber certificate will be deemed to have also met the application requirements for becoming a licensed pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrical contractor, including a bond requirement, if the contractor has met the application and bond requirements for becoming a licensed plumbing contractor. The Department must establish a single document for persons who qualify for both general contractor registration and pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrical contractor licensing.

Continuing education for licensed pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrical contractors may include both electrical and plumbing education.

Warnings for Noncompliance

Until July 1, 2007, the Department must issue a written warning to any specialty domestic water pump plumber, any pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrician, and any specialty electrical contractor performing pump and irrigation or domestic well work that does not have a valid certificate or license. The warning must state that the person must apply or be qualified for and apply for the valid certificate or license within 30 calendar days of the warning. If the person fails to comply, the Department must issue a penalty.

Advertising for Electrical Work

Current law is amended so that it is unlawful to advertise for electrical work without having an electrical contractor license.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (In support) This is complicated and comprehensive legislation that stops unnecessary government regulation of pump installers. The bill protects existing pump installers and creates a set of streamlined requirements including electrical and plumbing requirements. Ten years of work has gone into this bill to work out issues and improve the language. The bill is complicated, but it adds continuity to the certification process. It will also help consumers streamline the process of restoring service on private systems in a cost-effective way.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Pete Crow, Washington State Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters; Ron Fuller, Department of Labor and Industries; Richard King, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Glen Smith and Craig Gresham, Washington State Groundwater Association; and Grant Alexander.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.