

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1356

---

*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Commerce & Labor*

**Title:** An act relating to plumbing.

**Brief Description:** Revising provisions for regulation of plumbing.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Heavey, Prentice and Franklin; by request of Department of Labor & Industries.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Commerce & Labor, March 6, 1991, DP.

---

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
COMMERCE & LABOR**

**Majority Report:** *Do pass.* Signed by 8 members:  
Representatives Heavey, Chair; Cole, Vice Chair; Franklin;  
Jones; R. King; O'Brien; Prentice; and Wilson.

**Minority Report:** *Do not pass.* Signed by 3 members:  
Representatives Fuhrman, Ranking Minority Member; Lisk,  
Assistant Ranking Minority Member; and Vance.

**Staff:** Chris Cordes (786-7117).

**Background:** Persons engaged in plumbing are required to be licensed by the Department of Labor and Industries. Plumbing includes the installing and repairing of potable water systems and liquid waste systems within a building. The connection of irrigation systems to the water supply outside of the building is not included within the definition.

**Summary of Bill:** The definition of "plumbing" is changed from any installing and repairing of the potable water supply system within a building to the installing and repairing of the potable water distribution and supply piping from the water meter and all plumbing fixtures and drainage systems within the building. Plumbing does not include the piping installed downstream of a backflow preventer assembly separating the potable water supply line from an irrigation system, if the irrigation system water is not used for human consumption.

"Irrigation system installer" is a person who within the scope of his or her employment is required to install nonpotable water systems or the portion of a potable water system adjacent to the backflow preventer assembly for irrigation system installation. An irrigation system installer does not include plumbers licensed or certified by the Department of Labor and Industries.

The secretary of the Department of Health and the director of the Department of Labor and Industries are required to jointly establish separate certification requirements for backflow preventer assembly installers and for backflow preventer assembly maintainers and testers.

The director of the Department of Labor and Industries shall establish by rule the minimum education, on the job training, and continuing education requirements for backflow preventer assembly installers.

The secretary of the Department of Health shall establish by rule the minimum education, on the job training, and continuing education requirements for backflow preventer assembly maintainers and testers.

Persons working as irrigation systems installers for one year or more prior to the effective date of the act may apply to the Department of Labor and Industries within six months of the effective date of the act for certification as potable water backflow preventer assembly installers.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** The change in the definition of plumbing is needed to conform the statute with the requirements of the Uniform Plumbing Code that is now in effect in Washington. There are many examples of improperly installed water lines from the meter to the building, some involving multi-story apartment buildings. These lines should be included within the jurisdiction of the plumbing inspector to be sure that all safety and health requirements are met. In addition, there is a need to adopt criteria to prevent potable water contamination during the installation of irrigation systems. These installations can be a health hazard if backflow prevention is not installed correctly.

**Testimony Against:** The change in the definition of plumbing would change current practice. Many contractors now put in water lines from the water meter to the building who are not licensed plumbers. There is no need to change current

practice and no need to require all these contractors to become licensed plumbers for this very limited purpose. The changes in the bill that address problems with improperly installed irrigation systems can be made without changing the definition of plumbing.

**Witnesses:** (in favor): Larry Fischer; Bill Fisher; Joe Brewer, Department of Labor and Industries; Mark Tullis; Chuck Phelps, Seattle-King County Health Department; Jerry McDonough; Bill Liechty, Department of Health; Joe Daniels, Washington State Association of Water and Wastewater Districts; and Bob Dilger, Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council. (opposed): Dick Ducharme, Utility Contractors Association of Washington; and Mark Triplett, Building Industry Association of Washington.