

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2109

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Housing*

**Title:** An act relating to water use efficiency.

**Brief Description:** Establishing standards for water use efficiency.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Locke and Nelson.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Housing, March 1, 1991, DPS.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
HOUSING**

**Majority Report:** *That Substitute House Bill No. 2109 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*

Signed by 7 members: Representatives Nelson, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Mitchell, Ranking Minority Member; Winsley, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ballard; Leonard; and Ogden.

**Staff:** Kenny Pittman (786-7392).

**Background:** In 1989, the Legislature directed the State Building Code Council to revise the state plumbing code to require low volume plumbing fixtures for all new construction and for all remodeling or repair that involves the replacement of plumbing fixtures. The water use efficiency standards were developed for waterclosets, urinals, showerheads, and faucets.

The state's water use efficiency standards are to be phased in over a three-year period. The initial water use efficiency standards took effect on July 1, 1990. More stringent water use efficiency standards are scheduled to take effect July 1, 1993. Local governments may not amend the state's water use efficiency standards.

The State Building Code Council is required to report to the Legislature by October 30, 1992, regarding the availability of water efficient fixtures and the potential impact of their use in sewage and septic lines and treatment plants.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The effective date of the state's water use efficiency standards for plumbing fixtures is moved forward from July 1, 1993 to July 1, 1992. After July 31, 1992, no individual, public or private corporation, firm, political subdivision, government agency, or other legal entity can sell, distribute, install or approve for installation any plumbing fixture that does not meet the state's water use efficiency standards.

The State Building Code Council's required study to assess the general availability of low volume plumbing fixtures and the impact of ultra low volume plumbing fixtures on the operation of treatment plants and septic tanks is removed.

The State Building Code Council (SBCC) is required to establish methods and procedures for testing and identifying plumbing fixtures that meet the state's water use efficiency standards. The SBCC may accept test results from independent testing laboratories for plumbing fixtures or accept data submitted to and evaluated by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials. The SBCC must publish and distribute a list of plumbing fixtures that meet the state's water use efficiency standards.

The state's water use efficiency standards do not apply to plumbing fixtures that were installed prior to July 1, 1990, that are removed and relocated to another room or area of the same building or to plumbing fixtures that perform a specialized function, as determined by the SBCC.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute bill moved forward the effective date of the water use efficiency use standards for ultra low volume plumbing fixtures from July 1, 1993 to July 1, 1992.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Testimony For:** An adequate supply of water is key for future land use decisions. Moving the timetable forward one year will save millions of gallons of water. The consumer's use of water will be lowered and they will pay reduced water bills. The ultra low volume plumbing fixtures are available in adequate supply.

**Testimony Against:** This issue was worked in 1989. The timetable for the three-year phase in of the standards was set to allow industry time to produce the ultra low volume plumbing fixtures that would be required under this bill. This would also help in lowering the cost of these fixtures,

which are now more expensive than the standard low volume fixtures.

**Witnesses:** Ron Main, King County Council (in favor of bill); Mark Triplett, Building Industry Association of Washington (against the bill); and Jerry Parker and Tiffany Yelton, Department of Ecology (provided technical information).