

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1709

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C 304 L 91  
*Synopsis As Enacted*

**Brief Description:** Concerning safe drinking water.

By House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Fraser, Miller, Rust, Valle, Roland, Winsley, Rasmussen, Ebersole, Wineberry and Dorn; by request of Department of Health).

House Committee on Environmental Affairs  
House Committee on Revenue  
Senate Committee on Agriculture & Water Resources

**Background:** Washington State has over 12,500 public water systems. A public water system is any water system serving two or more households. Over 11,500 of these systems have fewer than 100 connections. The law requires the operators of public water systems to provide information to the Department of Health, including the name, address, and telephone number of the operator. No permit is required under state law to operate a public water system.

**Summary:** The operator of a public water system with 15 or more connections or serving 25 or more people must obtain an operating permit from the Department of Health. The application for a permit must include sufficient information so that the department may determine if the system complies with federal and state law and department rules. The department must approve or deny the application within 120 days after it is filed. The permit may be issued with conditions and compliance schedules. The permit is valid for one year.

Permit fees are established. The fees are to be used for implementation costs of the permit program. The minimum fee is \$25 a year for a system with between 15 and 49 connections. The maximum fee is \$10,000 a year for systems with over 53,333 connections.

A person or entity that operates or manages more than one public water system is only required to have one operating permit for all of the systems it operates or manages. The annual fee for the permit is \$1 per connection per year.

If the department denies an operating permit application and the action is appealed, the operator of the system may

continue operating the system until a decision on the appeal is issued.

All fees received from operating permit applications are to be deposited in the safe drinking water account which is created in the treasury. The account may be used to operate the permit program and to contract with local governments for drinking water programs.

Before July 1, 1996, a local government may not impose additional requirements for a public water system operating permit.

***Votes on Final Passage:***

House	76	22	
Senate	40	2	(Senate amended)
House	93	3	(House concurred)

***Effective:*** July 28, 1991