

**FINAL BILL REPORT**

**E2SSB 5724**

**C 201 L 92**

**SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED**

**Brief Description:** Requiring the department of ecology to study impacts of regulating paper mill waste.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Sutherland, Hayner and Owen)

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Chlorinated organic compounds are potentially harmful chemical effluents created at pulp and paper mills when chlorinated bleaching agents are used to whiten wood fibers. When pulp and paper are bleached in industrial processes, the carbon element of chlorinated organic compounds comes from wood and oil-based products used as defoamers; the chlorine component of these elements comes from chlorinated bleaching agents.

"Dioxin" is a term used to refer to a family of 210 chlorinated organic compounds that vary in their degree of toxicity. "TCDD" is considered to be the most toxic member of the dioxin family, and has been linked to malignancies, birth defects, and physical deterioration in laboratory animals.

Aside from dioxins, less than 10 percent of the chlorinated organic effluents from pulp and paper mills have been identified or tested for toxicity. Some of the known chlorinated organic compounds are carcinogenic to animals, bioaccumulate, and can be lethal to fish.

Federal law requires industrial and municipal dischargers to obtain a permit to discharge wastewater into any receiving waters. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has delegated the authority to permit and regulate wastewater effluents to the Department of Ecology. The EPA oversees the state program, and if for any reason the state is not able to issue permits as required by federal law, the EPA may step in to assure that dischargers are permitted as required in federal law.

The EPA is in the process of developing chlorinated organic effluent guidelines for the pulp and paper industry and expects to issue draft guidelines by 1993 and final guidelines by 1995. Washington and Oregon are the first states to

propose technology based limits on chlorinated organic effluents, consistent with proposed federal standards, before the EPA has promulgated national guidelines.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Ecology may require each pulp mill and each paper mill to submit an engineering report on the costs of installing technology to control discharges of chlorinated organic compounds. At least 24 months from the effective date of the act is to be allowed for submission of the report.

The department may not issue permits with limits on the discharge of such compounds until at least nine months after receiving the report from a kraft mill and at least 15 months after receiving the report from a sulfite mill. Nothing in the act shall apply to dioxin compounds.

**VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:**

Senate	38	6	
House	96	1	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)

Conference Committee

House	96	1
Senate	41	6

**EFFECTIVE:** June 11, 1992