

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1631

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Commerce & Trade, April 2, 2003

Title: An act relating to regulating fire protection sprinkler system contractors.

Brief Description: Regulating fire protection sprinkler system contractors.

Sponsors: Representatives McCoy, Cooper, Conway, Romero, Lovick, Simpson and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Commerce & Trade: 4/2/03 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & TRADE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Chair; Hewitt, Vice Chair; Franklin, Keiser and Mulliken.

Staff: John Dzedzic (786-7784)

Background: The State Director of Fire Protection, formerly known as the State Fire Marshal, administers examinations, issues certificates of competency, and licenses fire protection sprinkler system contractors in accordance with Chapter 18.160 RCW. License fees are deposited into the fire protection contractor license fund. These funds may be used only for the licensing, inspection, and other purposes authorized by Chapter 18.160 RCW.

The State Director of Fire Protection may suspend or revoke a fire protection sprinkler system contractor's license, or establish penalties for the following reasons: fraudulent or dishonest business practices; misrepresentation in obtaining a license; conviction of a felony; or gross incompetency or gross negligence in the preparation of technical drawings, or in the installation, repair, inspection, maintenance, or addition to a fire protection sprinkler system.

To install or maintain a fire protection sprinkler system in "any occupancy, except an owner-occupied single family dwelling" without a license issued by the State Director of Fire Protection is a gross misdemeanor. It is a class C Felony to "willfully or maliciously" install or maintain a fire protection sprinkler system "in any structure so as to threaten the safety of any occupant or user of the structure in the event of a fire."

Summary of Bill: The State Director of Fire Protection has the duty to adopt rules defining "infractions" of Chapter 18.160 RCW, and to assess fines for such infractions. Fines collected must be deposited into the fire protection contractor license fund.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The State Director of Fire Protection would benefit from having the flexibility of addressing through administrative enforcement tools those kinds of infractions that are less severe than misdeeds warranting criminal prosecution or license revocation.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative John McCoy; Paul O'Connor, Rick Jensen, Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board; Anjela Foster, Washington State Patrol (Office of the State Director of Fire Protection).