

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5595

As of February 25, 2003

Title: An act relating to modifying the public notification requirements for wastewater discharge permits.

Brief Description: Changing the public notification requirements with respect to wastewater discharge permits.

Sponsors: Senators Morton, Fraser, Regala, Hewitt and Winsley; by request of Department of Ecology.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Energy & Water: 2/12/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ENERGY & WATER

Staff: Sam Thompson (786-7413)

Background: A person seeking to discharge wastewater or other liquid or solid waste into state waters must apply to the Department of Ecology (DOE) for a waste discharge permit. The permit applicant must publish notice twice in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the proposed discharge is to be made. The notice is intended to inform the public about the permit application and of the opportunity to comment on the application. It is suggested that DOE should be responsible for publishing notice and that other methods of providing notice should be authorized.

When DOE receives a waste discharge permit application, it notifies the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Social and Health Services.

Summary of Bill: Responsibility for publishing notice of an application for a waste discharge permit is transferred from the applicant to DOE.

Upon DOE's receipt of an application, it provides notice of the application to all potentially affected state agencies and to the public, and, later, notifies interested persons of its proposed action concerning the application.

DOE must provide public notice in a manner reasonably calculated to give actual notice to persons potentially affected by the proposed discharge. Methods of providing notice may include electronic mail, posting on DOE's internet site, publication in newspapers, press releases, mailings, and other media DOE deems appropriate. DOE must maintain a list of persons interested in its actions concerning waste disposal permits and must provide notice to all persons on the list by electronic mail or regular mail. DOE must provide at least 30 days for interested persons to comment on proposed draft waste disposal permits or denials of permits.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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