

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1891

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Water, Energy & Environment, March 24, 2005

Title: An act relating to issuing reclaimed water permits to private utilities.

Brief Description: Concerning reclaimed water permits.

Sponsors: House Committee on Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade (originally sponsored by Representatives Hinkle, B. Sullivan, Buck and Haler).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/10/05, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Water, Energy & Environment: 3/23/05, 3/24/05 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Poulsen, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hewitt, Honeyford, Pridemore and Regala.

Staff: Margaret King (786-7416)

Background: Reclaimed water is an effluent derived from a wastewater treatment system that has been treated in order to be suitable for a beneficial use or a controlled use that otherwise would not occur. Reclaimed water may be used for a variety of nonpotable water purposes including irrigation, agricultural uses, industrial and commercial uses, streamflow augmentation, dust control, fire suppression, surface percolation, and discharge into constructed wetlands.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) were required to adopt a single set of standards, procedures, and guidelines for industrial and commercial uses and land applications of reclaimed water. The DOH issues permits to water generators for commercial or industrial uses of reclaimed water. The DOE issues reclaimed water permits for land applications of reclaimed water. A reclaimed water permit for these types of uses may only be issued to a municipal, quasi-municipal, or other governmental entity or to the holder of a water quality waste discharge permit.

Summary of Bill: A private utility may obtain a reclaimed water permit for industrial and commercial uses and land applications of reclaimed water. "Private utility" is defined to include all private and public utilities that provide sewerage and/or water service and do not qualify as municipal corporations. A private utility may be owned by a corporation, a cooperative association, mutual organization, or an individual person(s).

Before deciding whether to issue a reclaimed water permit to a private utility, the DOH or the DOE may require information that is reasonable and necessary to determine whether the

private utility has the financial and other resources to assure the reliability, continuity, and supervision of the reclaimed water facility.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill will reduce the number of septic systems and reduce the use of potable water for certain uses such as irrigation of landscaping. We don't believe there will be very many private utilities seeking reclaimed water permits so DOE can handle requests for permit on case by case basis. This bill provides that DOH and/or DOE can make certain that private utility has financial and other resources to assure the reliability, continuity, and supervision of the reclaimed water facility.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Representative Hinkle, prime sponsor; Chad Bala, Terra Design Works Land Consultants; Mark Nelson, Terra Design Works Land Consultants; Melodie Selby, DOE.