
Environmental Health Committee

HB 1014

Brief Description: Concerning the duties of the department of ecology's office of waste reduction and sustainable production.

Sponsors: Representatives Campbell, Hudgins, Hunt, Chase, Morrell, Nelson, Hasegawa, Wood and White.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the responsibilities of the Office of Waste Reduction within the Department of Ecology to include considerations of sustainable production and toxic chemicals use reduction.

Hearing Date: 1/14/09

Staff: Pam Madson (786-7111)

Background:

The Office of Waste Reduction within the Department of Ecology (DOE) encourages the voluntary reduction in use of hazardous substances and the generation of hazardous waste. Larger generators of hazardous waste and users of hazardous substances produce pollution prevention plans that describe how they will achieve their reduction goals. There are 600 large businesses that prepare pollution prevention plans.

During 2008 the DOE convened an advisory committee of interested stakeholders to review ways to reduce the use of toxic substances, improve the technical assistance to pollution prevention planners, encourage approaches that move away from "end-of-pipe" strategies for pollution reduction, and recommend revisions to the way the hazardous waste planning fee is calculated. The report of the advisory committee was issued in December 2008.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Pollution prevention plan requirements currently in law must be evaluated for their ability to help meet a newly established 50 percent use reduction goal for toxic chemicals by 2021. The funding program must also be evaluated. The Department of Ecology (DOE) must convene a balanced stakeholder group and report its findings and recommendations by December 31, 2009.

The Office of Waste Reduction within the DOE is renamed the Office of Waste Reduction and Sustainable Production (OWRSP). Additional responsibilities include promoting a reduction in the use of toxic chemicals in manufacturing, and the production of safer consumer products. Toxic chemicals are chemicals that have an adverse effect on human health and the environment. Toxic chemicals when used in agricultural production are not subject to this act.

The DOE will use research, development, technology demonstration, technology transfer, education, outreach, recognition, and training programs to promote:

- innovative and cost-effective methods for reducing or eliminating the use of toxic substances in manufacturing and other processes;
- pollution prevention as a means for reducing energy and resource consumption;
- affordable and cost-effective methods of achieving pollution prevention to safeguard the competitive advantage of large and small businesses in the state;
- innovation in the reduction of energy and resource consumption; and
- voluntary implementation of pollution prevention as a means for meeting the requirements of state or federal environmental laws or regulations.

The OWRSP must work with federal, state, and local agencies, and private organizations administering programs related to pollution prevention, energy consumption, resource consumption, the use and generation of hazardous substances, or the generation of waste or pollution.

The existing Waste Reduction and Hazardous Substance Use Reduction and Consultation program must provide engineering technical assistance services to businesses and manufacturers seeking to use safer chemical alternatives, reduce waste, increase efficiency, and redesign industrial processes.

The OWRSP's Research and Development program includes both waste reduction and safer chemical alternatives and may establish or participate in a multistate chemicals clearing house and share information on safer chemical alternatives.

The OWRSP is required to establish and maintain a database of chemicals used in the state to help meet the 50 percent use reduction goal for toxic chemicals by 2021.

The OWRSP must consult with the Department of Health regarding the health effects of toxic chemicals and safer chemical alternatives.

The OWRSP must prepare and submit a biennial progress report to the Legislature.

The DOE may adopt rules to fully implement the bill.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 8, 2009.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.