
Environment & Energy Committee

HB 1615

Brief Description: Increasing consistency in the classifications of water systems.

Sponsors: Representative Caldier.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits using a default number of people served per connection if it would cause a water system to be classified as a Group A system when it would otherwise be considered a Group B system.

Hearing Date: 2/3/25

Staff: Srinandan Ramachandran (786-7291) and Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

A public water system is any system providing water for human consumption, excluding a system serving only one single-family residence, or a system with four or fewer service connections serving residences on the same farm.

Group A public water systems are public water systems that:

- have 15 or more service connections;
- serve an average of 25 or more people per day for at least 60 days within a calendar year, regardless of the number of service connections; or
- serve 1,000 or more people for two or more consecutive days.

In contrast, Group B public water systems encompass all other public water systems.

The State Board of Health adopts rules, administered by the Department of Health (DOH)'s

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

Office of Drinking Water, that pertain to the operations of public water systems. Local governments are authorized to establish operating permit requirements for public water systems, provided these requirements receive approval from the DOH and lead to an enhanced level of service for the public water system. For Group B public water systems, there is an additional requirement that the local operating permit requirements must be at least as strict as the state regulations.

According to DOH regulations, when calculating the population served to determine whether a system qualifies as a Group A or Group B public water system, the water system operator must assume an average of 2.5 residents per dwelling unit. If a proposed system serves 10 or more dwelling units, it must adhere to the approval standards for Group A systems.

Summary of Bill:

A default number of people per service connection may not be used to determine the number of individuals served by a public water system if doing so would change the system's classification from Group B to Group A.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.