HOUSE BILL REPORT
SHB 2472

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to ensuring that work on fire protection sprinkler systems is performed by licensed contractors and certified fitters.

Brief Description: Ensuring that work on fire protection sprinkler systems is performed by licensed contractors and certified fitters.

Sponsors: House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards (originally sponsored by Representatives Bronoske, Berry, Ormsby, Obras, Bernbaum, Fosse, Timmons, Zahn, Parshley, Hall, Cortes, Thomas and Donaghy).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Labor & Workplace Standards: 1/20/26, 1/30/26 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/10/26, 92-3.
Passed Senate: 3/3/26, 45-3.
Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires a contractor or fitter working on a fire protection sprinkler system to produce evidence of a license or certificate.
- Requires the state Director of Fire Protection to investigate violations of contractor licensing and certification requirements.
- Allows a local fire code official or the state Director of Fire Protection to issue a stop work order upon finding that a fire sprinkler system contractor or fitter is acting in violation of certain licensing and certification laws.
- Allows a local fire code official or the state Director of Fire Protection to require the removal and replacement of a system when warranted by

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public safety.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKPLACE STANDARDS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Berry, Chair; Fosse, Vice Chair; Scott, Vice Chair; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Ybarra, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bronoske, McEntire, Obras and Ortiz-Self.

Staff: Alison Ryan (786-7296)

Background:

Fire Protection Sprinkler System Contractors.
The state Director of Fire Protection (Director), formerly referred to as the state Fire Marshal, issues licenses and certificates to businesses and individuals performing design, installation, testing, and maintenance of fire sprinkler systems. A fire protection sprinkler system is an assembly of underground or overhead piping or conduit beginning at the connection to the primary water supply, whether public or private, that conveys water with or without other agents to dispersal openings or devices to extinguish, control, or contain fire and to provide protection from exposure to fire or other products of combustion.

A fire protection sprinkler system contractor (contractor) is a person or organization that offers to undertake the execution of contracts for the installation, inspection, maintenance, or servicing of a fire protection sprinkler system or any part of such a system. To be licensed as a contractor, a person or firm must have a valid certificate of competency, comply with certain insurance requirements, file an application, and pay the required fees. A person must have passed an examination and meet other requirements to obtain a certificate of competency.

The Director may adopt rules pertaining to fire sprinkler systems and may issue infractions for violations of applicable state laws and agency rules. This includes, for example, installing fire sprinkler systems contrary to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes, working without valid permits, performing work without a certificate of competency, working with an expired license, or demonstrating gross incompetency or negligence. Penalties range from $300 to $7,500 for a first infraction, $400 to $10,000 for a second infraction, and $1,000 to $15,000 for a third or any subsequent infraction.

Fire Protection Sprinkler Fitting.
The Director also administers requirements governing fire protection sprinkler fitting, which includes installing, altering, and repairing sprinkler, standpipe, hose, or other hazard systems for fire protection purposes that are an assembly of piping or conduit beginning at

the connection to the primary water supply within a building, sprinkler tank heaters, air lines, and all tanks and pumps attached thereto.

The Director administers examinations and issues certificates of competency for performing fire protection sprinkler fitting and investigates alleged violations of state requirements pertaining to fire protection sprinkler fitting. Upon request by an authorized representative of the Director, a person performing sprinkler fitting must produce evidence of a certificate. Penalties for infractions are set by rule.

With limited exceptions, a person may not perform fire protection sprinkler fitting without having:

- a journey-level sprinkler fitter certificate, which allows a person to work on both residential and commercial sprinkler systems;
- a residential sprinkler fitter certificate, which allows a person to work on residential (NFPA 13R and 13D) fire protection sprinkler systems; or
- a trainee-level sprinkler fitter certificate, which allows a person to work under the supervision of a person with a journey-level or residential sprinkler fitter certificate.

A fire protection sprinkler system contractor can employ a person with a valid certificate to complete sprinkler fitting work.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Fire Protection Sprinkler System Contractors.
Upon request of a fire code official, a fire protection sprinkler system contractor (contractor) must produce evidence of a fire protection sprinkler system contractor license issued by the state Director of Fire Protection (Director). Failure to produce evidence of a license is an infraction subject to penalties.

A fire code official may issue a stop work order if the contractor does not have a license or is otherwise in violation of certain licensing and certification laws. The order remains in effect until the fire code official or the Director determines that either the contractor is in compliance or the work will be conducted in compliance. If a fire code official finds that a contractor does not have a license or is otherwise in violation, the fire code official must promptly notify the Director. The Director must investigate all alleged violations. The Director may require a contractor to provide relevant payroll records pertaining to an active investigation.

A fire code official may determine whether public safety warrants the removal and replacement of a fire protection sprinkler system installed, altered, or extended by an unlicensed contractor.

"Fire code official" means any person authorized by a city, town, county, or local governing body with jurisdiction over fire industry regulation or any other person authorized by the

Director to conduct enforcement under fire sprinkler system contractor licensing and certification laws.

Fire Protection Sprinkler Fitting.
Upon request of a fire code official, a person performing fire protection sprinkler fitting must produce evidence of a certificate issued by the Director to perform fire protection sprinkler fitting. Failure to produce evidence of a certificate is an infraction subject to penalties.

A fire code official may issue a stop work order if the person performing fire protection sprinkler fitting does not have a certificate or is otherwise in violation of certain certification laws. The order remains in effect until the fire code official or the Director determines that either the person or contractor is in compliance or that the work will be conducted in compliance. If a fire code official finds that a person working on a fire protection sprinkler system does not have a certificate or is otherwise in violation, the fire code official must promptly notify the Director. The Director must investigate alleged violations.

A fire code official may determine whether public safety warrants the removal and replacement of a fire protection sprinkler system installed, altered, or extended by an uncertified person.

"Fire code official" means any person authorized by a city, town, county, or local governing body with jurisdiction over fire industry regulation or any other person authorized by the Director to conduct enforcement under fire protection sprinkler fitting certification laws.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The goal of this bill is to ensure that individuals installing fire protection sprinkler systems are appropriately trained and credentialed. The state Fire Marshal has limited resources to oversee this industry and pursue bad actors. The bill strengthens the state Fire Marshal and local officials in a complimentary way. It allows local fire officials to issue stop work orders. This makes real-time action possible, rather than a slower, after-the-fact process. Most contractors and fitters follow the law. However, when unlicensed individuals install systems, the state does not have a robust enforcement system. The bill allows local jurisdictions, who are on the job sites, to respond. It gives cities the right tools to protect building occupants and first responders.

(Opposed) Home builders are concerned that it will be more difficult to have qualified professionals install fire sprinklers systems and may discourage home owners from installing systems. There is concern that the bill could be interpreted to apply to residential sprinkler systems, such as landscaping and irrigation systems.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Dan Bronoske, prime sponsor; Neil Hartman, Washington State Association Of UA Plumbers and Pipefitters; Suzanne Mayr, The National Fire Sprinkler Association; Karen Grove, WA State Fire Marshals Association; and Randy Haines.

(Opposed) Bill Stauffacher, Building Industry Association of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.