FINAL BILL REPORT
SB 5319

C 326 L 25
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Establishing surface mine reclamation permit fees.

Sponsors: Senators Shewmake, Chapman and Nobles; by request of Department of Natural Resources.

Senate Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Surface Mine Reclamation Program. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Surface Mine Reclamation Program was created by legislation in 1971, with the stated purpose of ensuring that the usefulness, productivity, and scenic value of all lands and waters involved in surface mining within the state receive the greatest practical degree of protection and reclamation at the earliest opportunity following completion of surface mining.

Washington law requires miners or permit holders to have obtained a reclamation permit from DNR before engaging in surface mining. The reclamation permit application includes descriptions of the type of surface mining to be performed, a description of the minerals to be mined, any applicable State Environmental Policy Act documents, and other materials.

The Surface Mine Reclamation Program is funded through annual permit fees and permit application fees. The application fee for a new reclamation permit, the expansion of an existing permitted mine, or the combination of existing public or private reclamation permits, is $4,500. The fee for revising an existing reclamation plan is $2,500. The annual fee for all permit holders is $2,000.

Certain smaller county mines used for public works projects are subject to lower annual fees. County mines under seven acres that are used exclusively for public works projects have a fee cap of $1,000. The fee is waived for county mines under seven acres with 1993 county populations under 20,000, that are used primarily for public works projects.

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.

Summary: Several surface mine reclamation permit fees are increased. The fee for revision of an existing reclamation permit or reclamation plan is increased from $2,500 to $4,500. The annual fee is increased from $2,000 to $3,500, except that the annual fee for a public permit holder for mines used exclusively for public works projects is $2,500 and annual fees paid by a county for mines used exclusively for public works projects and having less than seven acres of disturbed area per mine shall not exceed $1,000.

DNR is directed to advise applicants revising a surface mine reclamation permit or plan of any information necessary to successfully complete the application within 60 days of receipt.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	28	20	
House	60	37	(House amended)
Senate	27	20	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2025