

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1264

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, March 31, 1999

Title: An act relating to the combining of water and sewer districts.

Brief Description: Making corrections regarding combining water-sewer districts.

Sponsors: Representatives D. Schmidt, Scott, Mulliken, Fisher, Quall, Wolfe and Schoesler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 3/29/99, 3/31/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Hale, Haugen and Kline.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: Water districts are units of local government initially authorized in 1913 to provide potable water facilities, sanitary sewers, drainage facilities, and street lighting. Sewer districts are units of local government initially authorized in 1941 to provide sanitary sewers, drainage facilities, and potable water facilities. Sewer district laws are almost identical with water district laws.

Legislation enacted in 1996 and effective July 1, 1997, consolidated water district laws with sewer district laws and made a number of technical changes to these laws. Among other changes, the term "sewer system," which had been defined to include both sanitary sewers and drainage systems, was altered to apply only to sanitary sewer systems, and separate provisions were added for drainage systems.

Summary of Bill: A variety of changes are made relating to the consolidation of water district laws with sewer district laws. The distinction between sanitary sewer systems and drainage systems initiated in the 1996 legislation consolidating sewer district and water district statutes is continued. Various laws are amended to make this distinction.

Provisions relating to the use of the small works roster process for work ordered with a cost from \$5,000 to less than \$50,000 are clarified. Further, the provision subjecting financial records of associations of water-sewer district commissions to audit by the State Auditor is eliminated.

The authority for water-sewer districts to reject bids for sales of unnecessary property is limited to rejections made for good cause.

References to either "water districts" or "sewer districts" are altered to "water-sewer districts," and numerous technical changes are made to a variety of statutes related to water-sewer districts.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This is a continuing effort to clean up the consolidation of the water district title (57) and sewer district title (56). There are also attempts to clarify various provisions.

Testimony Against: Citizens representing Citizens for Safe Water felt this bill had to do with fluoridation and allowing radioactive waste into sewer systems.

Testified: PRO: Joe Daniels, WA Assn. of Sewer/Water Districts; Steve Lindstrom, Sno-King Water District Coalition; CON: Joseph Hattersley, Joe W. Yri, D.C., Ruth Natinidad, John Becket, Citizens for Safe Water Coalition.