

(ii) For an area not within a standard metropolitan statistical area, the county median income reported by the department of community development.

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CHAPTER 132

[Substitute Senate Bill No. 6446]

PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

AN ACT Relating to planning, design, and operation of public water systems; amending RCW 43.70.130, 70.119A.060, and 80.28.110; adding a new section to chapter 43.20 RCW; adding a new section to Title 80 RCW; creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds the best interests of the citizens of the state are served if:

(1) Customers served by public water systems are assured of an adequate quantity and quality of water supply at reasonable rates;

(2) There is improved coordination between state agencies engaged in water system planning and public health regulation and local governments responsible for land use planning and public health and safety; and

(3) Existing procedures and processes for water system planning are strengthened and fully implemented by state agencies, local government, and public water systems.

Sec. 2. Section 43.20.010, chapter 8, Laws of 1965 as last amended by section 251, chapter 9, Laws of 1989 1st ex. sess. and RCW 43.70.130 are each amended to read as follows:

The secretary of health shall:

(1) Exercise all the powers and perform all the duties prescribed by law with respect to public health and vital statistics;

(2) Investigate and study factors relating to the preservation, promotion, and improvement of the health of the people, the causes of morbidity and mortality, and the effects of the environment and other conditions upon the public health, and report the findings to the state board of health for such action as the board determines is necessary;

(3) Strictly enforce all laws for the protection of the public health and the improvement of sanitary conditions in the state, and all rules, regulations, and orders of the state board of health;

(4) Enforce the public health laws of the state and the rules and regulations promulgated by the department or the board of health in local matters, when in its opinion an emergency exists and the local board of health

has failed to act with sufficient promptness or efficiency, or is unable for reasons beyond its control to act, or when no local board has been established, and all expenses so incurred shall be paid upon demand of the secretary of the department of health by the local health department for which such services are rendered, out of moneys accruing to the credit of the municipality or the local health department in the current expense fund of the county;

(5) Investigate outbreaks and epidemics of disease that may occur and advise local health officers as to measures to be taken to prevent and control the same;

(6) Exercise general supervision over the work of all local health departments and establish uniform reporting systems by local health officers to the state department of health;

(7) Have the same authority as local health officers, except that the secretary shall not exercise such authority unless the local health officer fails or is unable to do so, or when in an emergency the safety of the public health demands it, or by agreement with the local health officer or local board of health;

(8) Cause to be made from time to time, personal health and sanitation inspections at state owned or contracted institutions and facilities to determine compliance with sanitary and health care standards as adopted by the department, and require the governing authorities thereof to take such action as will conserve the health of all persons connected therewith, and report the findings to the governor;

(9) Review and approve plans for public water system design, engineering, operation, maintenance, financing, and emergency response, as required under state board of health rules;

(10) Take such measures as the secretary deems necessary in order to promote the public health, to establish or participate in the establishment of health educational or training activities, and to provide funds for and to authorize the attendance and participation in such activities of employees of the state or local health departments and other individuals engaged in programs related to or part of the public health programs of the local health departments or the state department of health. The secretary is also authorized to accept any funds from the federal government or any public or private agency made available for health education training purposes and to conform with such requirements as are necessary in order to receive such funds; and

~~((10))~~ (11) Establish and maintain laboratory facilities and services as necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the department.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 43.20 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department shall have primary responsibility among state agencies to receive complaints from persons aggrieved by the failure of a

public water system. If the remedy to the complaint is not within the jurisdiction of the department, the department shall refer the complaint to the state or local agency that has the appropriate jurisdiction. The department shall take such steps as are necessary to inform other state agencies of their primary responsibility for such complaints and the implementing procedures.

(2) Each county shall designate a contact person to the department for the purpose of receiving and following up on complaint referrals that are within county jurisdiction. In the absence of any such designation, the county health officer shall be responsible for performing this function.

(3) The department and each county shall establish procedures for providing a reasonable response to complaints received from persons aggrieved by the failure of a public water system.

(4) The department and each county shall use all reasonable efforts to assist customers of public water systems in obtaining a dependable supply of water at all times. The availability of resources and the public health significance of the complaint shall be considered when determining what constitutes a reasonable effort.

(5) The department shall, in consultation with local governments, water utilities, water districts, public utility districts, and other interested parties, develop a booklet or other single document that will provide to members of the public the following information:

(a) A summary of state law regarding the obligations of public water systems in providing drinking water supplies to their customers;

(b) A summary of the activities, including planning, rate setting, and compliance, that are to be performed by both local and state agencies;

(c) The rights of customers of public water systems, including identification of agencies or offices to which they may address the most common complaints regarding the failures or inadequacies of public water systems.

This booklet or document shall be available to members of the public no later than January 1, 1991.

Sec. 4. Section 3, chapter 422, Laws of 1989 and RCW 70.119A.060 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) In order to assure safe and reliable public drinking water and to protect the public health, public water systems shall:

(a) Protect the water sources used for drinking water;

(b) Provide treatment adequate to assure that the public health is protected;

(c) Provide and effectively operate and maintain public water system facilities;

(d) Plan for future growth and assure the availability of safe and reliable drinking water;

(e) Provide the department with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the owners, operators, and emergency contact persons for the

system, including any changes to this information, and provide to users the name and twenty-four hour telephone number of an emergency contact person; and

(f) Take whatever investigative or corrective action is necessary to assure that a safe and reliable drinking water supply is continuously available to users.

(2) The department and local health jurisdictions shall carry out the rules and regulations of the state board of health adopted pursuant to RCW 43.20.050(2)(a) and other rules adopted by the department relating to public water systems.

Sec. 5. Section 80.28.110, chapter 14, Laws of 1961 and RCW 80.28-.110 are each amended to read as follows:

Every gas company, electrical company or water company, engaged in the sale and distribution of gas, electricity or water, shall, upon reasonable notice, furnish to all persons and corporations who may apply therefor and be reasonably entitled thereto, suitable facilities for furnishing and furnish all available gas, electricity and water as demanded, except that a water company shall not furnish water contrary to the provisions of water system plans approved under chapter 43.20 or 70.116 RCW.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. A new section is added to Title 80 RCW to read as follows:

In determining the rates to be charged by each water company subject to its jurisdiction, the commission may provide for the funding of a reserve account exclusively for the purpose of making capital improvements approved by the department of health as a part of a long-range plan, or required by the department to assure compliance with federal or state drinking water regulations. Expenditures from the fund shall be subject to prior approval by the commission, and shall be treated for rate-making purposes as customer contributions.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately.

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