

SB 27 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Prepared By: Tom MacDonald, Budget Analyst

Meeting Dates: 5/28, 5/31

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes the Oregon Health Authority to adopt by rule a schedule of regulatory fees assessed on water suppliers to defray the costs of surveying, inspecting, and regulating public drinking water systems in Oregon. Requires the fee schedule to be graduated based on the size and type of water system. Limits fee increases to no more than once per calendar year. Declares an emergency and takes effect July 1, 2019.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Fiscal impact of the measure

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Establishes an emergency clause with an effective date of July 1, 2019.

BACKGROUND:

The Drinking Water Services (DWS) program within the Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division regulates and monitors state drinking water systems and is the primacy agency enforcing the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. This responsibility includes the implementation of federal requirements for 2,500 water systems that serve at least 25 people or have at least 15 service connections. In addition, state law requires the regulation of approximately 900 public water systems that serve between 10 and 24 people. The program surveys community water systems, investigates the detection of contaminants, ensures system compliance, provides technical assistance to community water systems, and provides training to water system operators.

Currently, DWS charges sanitary survey fees to help support the costs of conducting these surveys. The measure broadens the statutory authority for DWS to collect fees by replacing the sanitary survey fee with an annual regulatory fee established through the rules process in order for the agency to support a wider range of regulatory functions and provide assistance to local public health authorities. The bill requires the new fee schedule to be graduated based on the size and type of the water system, and limits fee increases to no more than once per calendar year.