

HB 3655 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Action Date: 04/01/25

Action: Do pass. Refer to Ways and Means.

Vote: 11-1-0-0

Yeas: 11 - Andersen, Edwards, Gamba, Helm, Levy B, Levy E, Lively, Neron, Osborne, Owens, Wallan

Nays: 1 - Marsh

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/18, 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, in consultation with public and private stakeholders, to develop a program for examination and certification of operators of lagoon wastewater treatment systems.

Detailed summary:

Requires the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), in consultation with public and private stakeholders, to develop a program for examination and certification of operators of lagoon wastewater treatment systems. Requires the examination to be limited to topics relevant to the operation of a lagoon wastewater treatment system. Allows DEQ to contract with a third party to develop the examination. Permits a person who has one year of experience in the performance of the duties of a sewage treatment works operator, or that meets other education and experience requirements established by DEQ, to be eligible for certification as a lagoon wastewater treatment system operator after receiving a passing score on the examination. Establishes requirements for DEQ to follow relating to the results on the examination and review of the examination and examination results.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Relevance of questions on exams and certifications to the work that operators of lagoon wastewater treatment systems perform
- Need for a system-specific exam and certification for operators of lagoon wastewater treatment systems
- Ability of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to address issues in Act via rulemaking

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Lagoon wastewater treatment systems are designed to hold wastewater in a series of pond-like bodies of water. Various methods of treatment are used on the wastewater. The lagoons are often used by small, rural, or Tribal communities. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality administers a wastewater operator certification program to ensure the systems are managed in a way that protects public health and the environment.