

SB 726 B STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Carrier: Rep. Andersen

Action Date: 05/20/25

Action: Do pass with amendments to the A-Eng bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

Vote: 9-1-1-0

Yeas: 9 - Andersen, Edwards, Gamba, Helm, Levy B, Levy E, Lively, Marsh, Owens

Nays: 1 - Osborne

Exc: 1 - Wallan

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 5/1, 5/6, 5/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Environmental Quality Commission to establish rules for surface emissions monitoring and mitigation of methane gas emissions from municipal solid waste landfills located in Benton County. The Act requires, as of January 1, 2027, the owner or operator of a municipal solid waste landfill to conduct surface emissions monitoring and report data as specified to the Department of Environmental Quality.

Detailed Summary:

Requires the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) to establish rules for surface emissions monitoring and mitigation of methane gas emissions from municipal solid waste landfills located in Benton County. Requires, as of January 1, 2027, an owner/operator of a municipal solid waste landfill required to conduct surface emissions monitoring must:

- use advanced methane detection technology that meets minimum standards established by the EQC to conduct surface emissions monitoring above all surface areas of the landfill;
- report results, including specific information to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ);
- maintain monitoring records for at least five years; and
- monitor, after taking corrective action, within 10 days of any exceedance and submit mitigation plan to be submitted to DEQ for approval if corrective action cannot be taken.

Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current methane emission detection methods
- Potential human health impacts from gaseous emissions from landfills
- Stakeholders involved with bill development
- Content of adopted amendments
- Available technology for detecting landfill emissions and leaks
- Costs to landfill operators of complying with bill

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment modifies definition of “municipal solid waste landfill” to specify that it is **located in Benton County**. It also specifies that the owner or operator of a municipal solid waste landfill required to conduct surface emissions monitoring must **monitor**, rather than remonitor, the site of any exceedance within 10 days of first detecting the exceedance.

BACKGROUND:

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According to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), landfill gas is a natural byproduct of the decomposition of organic material in landfills and is composed of approximately 50 percent methane. Methane is considered a greenhouse gas and, over a 20-year time period, considered more than 80 times as potent as carbon dioxide according to DEQ. In October 2021, the Environmental Quality Commission adopted new rules which regulate landfill gas emissions. The rules require many landfills in Oregon to obtain an Air Contaminant Discharge Permit to submit data on the landfill characteristics and potentially monitor, collect, and/or control landfill gas emissions.

Coffin Butte Landfill is the only landfill in Benton County. It accepts waste from several counties in the mid-Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast. The landfill is 740 acres, 178 of which are permitted for waste disposal.