
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 66

AN ACT CONCERNING OUTDOOR WOOD-BURNING FURNACES.

SUMMARY:

This bill (1) makes permanent the ban on outdoor wood-burning furnaces that do not meet certain requirements and (2) extends the requirement to burn only non-chemically treated wood to all outdoor wood-burning furnaces.

Current law prohibits people from constructing, installing, establishing, modifying, operating, or using an outdoor wood-burning furnace unless it was either built or in use before July 8, 2005 or:

1. is installed at least 200 feet from the nearest home not serviced by it;
2. has a chimney higher than the roof peaks of homes within 500 feet of the furnace and not serviced by it, but no higher than 55 feet;
3. burns only non-chemically treated wood; and
4. is installed and operated according to the manufacturer's written instructions, provided the instructions comply with the law.

Under current law, these restrictions terminate if federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations governing these furnaces take effect. The bill makes the restrictions permanent, and requires all outdoor wood-burning furnaces, regardless of when they were built or in use, to burn only non-chemically treated wood. This year, EPA proposed regulations covering outdoor-wood burning furnaces (see BACKGROUND).

By law, a violation of the outdoor wood-burning furnace law is an infraction, and violators are subject to a fine of up to \$90. Each day a furnace operates in violation of the law is a separate infraction.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Outdoor Wood-Burning Furnace

By law, an outdoor wood-burning furnace is an accessory structure or appliance designed to (1) be located outside living space ordinarily used for human habitation and (2) transfer or provide heat, through liquid or other means, by burning wood or solid waste. It is used to heat (1) spaces other than the space where the furnace is located, (2) any other structure or appliance on the premises, or (3) domestic water or water used in a swimming pool, hot tub, or jacuzzi. The definition excludes fire pits, wood-fired barbecues, or chimineas.

Proposed EPA Regulations

Outdoor wood-burning furnaces are not currently regulated by EPA. In January 2014, EPA proposed new rules to its air emissions standards for residential wood heaters that would begin to regulate these furnaces. The current proposal would phase in particulate matter emissions limits, starting in 2015. It would apply only to new furnaces, not those already in use or for sale.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 28 Nay 1 (02/28/2014)