

# **SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2261**

*Providing for the evaluation of additional measures to reduce wood smoke emissions*

## **PROGRAM IMPACTS**

This bill directs Ecology to set up a work group to develop and recommend strategies for reducing pollution from wood stoves and fireplaces. Members of the work group will include representatives of:

- local air quality agencies;
- the state Department of Health;
- local health departments; and
- the home heating industry.

The work group will identify regulatory-, voluntary- and incentive-based ways to reduce wood smoke pollution. Examples include:

- Changing the “trigger level” for restricting wood stove use;
- Offering incentives to people that encourage them to replace older stoves with newer, cleaner heating methods; and
- Changing the current wood stove fee to increase revenue for change-out programs.

After evaluating the options they identify, the group will recommend a strategy or strategies to the 2008 Legislature in December 2007.

### **Will the work group make a decision about woodstove “trigger levels”?**

The woodstove “trigger level” is the air pollution level Ecology and local air agencies use to decide whether to restrict woodstove use. The bill permits the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency to pilot test different trigger levels to control wood stove use. The work group will be able to examine how useful and effective the revised trigger levels are during the fall 2007 heating season. This pilot testing will also provide information for policy discussions during the 2008 legislative session.

## **RESOURCE IMPACTS**

No funding was provided to Ecology to fulfill requirements of this legislation. The fiscal note on the final bill identified a \$25,000 cost for implementing the provisions of the legislation. This includes costs for:

- staffing (agency and consulting personnel) the work group;
- convening the work group for deliberations (approximately six meetings); and
- developing a final report for the Governor and the Legislature.

Ecology's 07-09 biennium operating budget has \$650,000 set aside to offset the loss of federal funds for characterizing and reducing particulate matter pollution. Since smoke pollution from wood stoves is a prime contributor to particle pollution in Washington, it is appropriate to use a portion of these replacement funds to evaluate strategies to reduce wood stove pollution. However, to pay for this study, the amount of funding to local air quality agencies and Ecology for other fine particle work in the 07-09 biennium will be reduced.

No new hiring is required.

## **WORK PLAN**

Ecology staff is currently organizing a 15-member work group, including representatives from Ecology, local air quality agencies, the state Department of Health, local health departments, related industries, a health advocacy organization, Master Builders, neighborhood associations and a local elected official. Ecology expects the work group to meet eight times between July and December to develop recommendations. A consultant to facilitate the work group has also been identified.

A technical working group has already been formed to develop information on wood smoke pollution areas around the state. This group will also conduct a survey to determine the number and types of wood heating devices currently in use, and gain more information to assist the work group.

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