

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/ SB 2766

SPONSOR: Comprehensive Planning Committee and Senator Constantine

SUBJECT: Emergency Planning / Right-to-Know Act

DATE: March 31, 2004 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Cooper	Yeatman	CP	Fav/CS
2.			HP	
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

This Committee Substitute (CS) updates the date of a reference to a hazardous substances list in the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA).

This bill amends section 252.85 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Part II of s. 252, F.S., is the Florida Hazardous Materials Emergency Response and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1988. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is responsible for providing administrative support, including staff, facilities, materials, and services, to the State Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Commission to enable the commission and local emergency planning committees to perform their functions under the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA).

Section 252.84(1), F.S., states that it is the intent of the Legislature that state activities and expenditures under this part be self-sustaining, supported primarily by the fees provided in this part. Section 252.85, F.S., requires owners or operators of facilities with hazardous materials provide DCA with various registration, filing, and reporting fees to support state administration of EPCRA requirements. Section 252.85(3), F.S., requires:

Any owner or operator of a facility that is required to submit a report or filing under s. 313 of EPCRA shall pay an annual reporting fee not to exceed \$150 for those s. 313 EPCRA listed substances in effect on January 1, 1998.

However, EPCRA has updated the 1998 list. Because the current reference is obsolete, many owners or operators of facilities with hazardous materials inadvertently submit fees for reports for which the fee provisions do not apply. In these cases, the department has to process a refund for these fees, which requires a specific form and processing through the department's Finance and Accounting section, and subsequent vouchering through the Chief Financial Officer. In addition, facility owners or operators may not be submitting reports on hazardous materials required by the updated EPCRA.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 252.85(3), F.S., to revise a date (from 1998 to 2004) of a reference to a hazardous substances list in the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). This will ensure that the proper reports are submitted to DCA, as required under EPCRA.

Section 2 provides an effective date of July 1, 2004.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

A slight increase in overall program revenues may be realized by DCA due to the payment reporting requirements. However, DCA reports that this increase will be negligible.

B. Private Sector Impact:

The CS clarifies reporting and fee payment requirements under EPCRA. Some industries will be required to submit reports, with the required fees, on hazardous materials as required by EPCRA.

C. Government Sector Impact:

DCA will realize savings by resolving the current conflict with respect to chemical reporting and fee payment requirements.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
