
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5522

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SEWAGE RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT AND REQUIRING A REPORT CONCERNING WELL CONTAMINATION PROTOCOLS.

SUMMARY

By law, within two hours after becoming aware of any sewage spill or permitted sewage bypass (discharge), the operator of a sewage treatment plant or collection system (operator) must report electronically to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) about the discharge. The report must be updated daily while the discharge continues. This bill requires the report to be posted on the operator's website.

Also by law, within two hours after becoming aware of a discharge that reaches a waterbody, or may come into contact with the general public, the operator must notify certain local officials about the discharge. Under the bill, the DEEP commissioner must require the operator to post, in a timeframe DEEP sets, a sign at the location of the discharge with the information the operator gave those local officials.

Under the bill, by December 1, 2026, DEEP must implement a real-time public notification system that is separate and independent from any social media platform and allows the public to sign up to receive alerts, directly to their phone via text message or email, within two hours after discharges being reported to DEEP. This replaces a current similar requirement, although current law does not (1) require the system to be separate from social media or (2) specify the alert methods.

Lastly, the bill requires DEEP, by January 1, 2027, to submit a report to the Environment Committee on its protocols for interacting with the Department of Public Health and local health departments when a private well contamination occurs. The report must contain any prohibitions on information sharing between these public agencies, and

the reasons for those prohibitions. It must detail how DEEP canvasses a community when private well contaminations occur to inform potentially affected homeowners and commercial property owners about the contamination and any needed or recommended steps to ensure the health and safety of private wells.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

DEEP Real-Time Public Notification System

Currently, DEEP uses a combination of the CT DEEP Performance Dashboard and a social media account to inform the public about unanticipated sewage spills.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 34 Nay 0 (03/18/2026)