

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 46th Legislature (1997)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR

HOUSE BILL NO. 2039

By: Smith (Dale)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to environment and natural resources; providing for study, research and testing of alternative treatment methods for water, wastewater and sludge; providing for powers and duties of Water Quality Management Advisory Council; providing for promulgation of emergency rules; providing for guidelines; providing for approval and restrictions; requiring funding assistance; providing for meetings; providing for a project review evaluation process; requiring report; providing for codification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2-10-403.1 of Title 27A, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The purpose of this section is to provide for the study, research and testing of alternative treatment methods for water, wastewater and sludge from municipal or agricultural treatment systems.

B. The Water Quality Management Advisory Council established pursuant to Section 2-2-201 of Title 27A of the Oklahoma Statutes shall establish and implement a pilot program for determining the cost-effectiveness and environmental safety of sludge treatment by aerobic digestion through an aeration process. The pilot program shall include alternative wastewater and sludge disposal projects in four counties in this state. The pilot project for each process shall cover a one-year period ending November 1, 1998.

C. The Council shall recommend to the Environmental Quality Board pilot program guidelines and establishment of a procedure

for consideration of project proposals. Such guidelines shall be promulgated by the Board as emergency rules by September 1, 1997. Guidelines shall include provisions for:

1. Determining size and type of facilities eligible for alternative systems;
2. Safeguards for the protection of the public health and environment;
3. General conditions for initial and operating costs;
4. Record keeping;
5. Submission of reports;
6. Requirements for meetings and participation by the community directly involved in the project;
7. Information required for implementation of a pilot project; and
8. Such other information or conditions deemed necessary by the Board for the establishment and effective operation of such alternative process systems.

D. The Council shall accept and approve applications meeting the guidelines promulgated pursuant to this section. The Council shall approve each pilot project, based on the following:

1. Initial and operating costs over the life of each system;
2. Operational efficiency of the system including a cost comparison between conventional treatment and the proposed alternative system;
3. Short- and long-term environmental effects;
4. Potential for long-term success of the system with regard to operational costs and environmental impact;
5. Opinions on the system from users of the system as to odors, water quality, costs, sludge disposal, and any other areas of concern or comments. In order to obtain comments, the Council shall hold community meetings in the areas in which the pilot projects have been approved for use.

E. 1. For any pilot project approved, the Department of Environmental Quality shall provide the assistance and approvals necessary for obtaining any funding, through loans and grants, for the establishment and operation of the pilot project.

2. The Department of Commerce and the Oklahoma Water Resources Board shall cooperate with an approved pilot project in obtaining any necessary loans and grants to implement and maintain the pilot projects.

F. The Council shall establish a pilot project and review evaluation process and shall make a report to the Environmental Quality Board and the Legislature analyzing and evaluating all pilot projects in operation. The report shall be furnished to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate not later than March 1, 1999. The report shall include recommendations for continuation, termination or expansion of the projects.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

46-1-6750

KSM