

1 SENATE BILL NO. 227
2 INTRODUCED BY F. MANDEVILLE, C. FRIEDEL, C. GLIMM, J. FITZPATRICK
3
4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND
5 SUBDIVISION REVIEW LAWS; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TO
6 DEVELOP A CURRICULUM AND EXAMINATION TO CERTIFY APPLICANTS; ALLOWING A CERTIFIED
7 APPLICANT TO REVIEW SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS AND ASSUME LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
8 REVIEW; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT TO REVIEW APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY CERTIFIED
9 APPLICANTS; REMOVING LIMITS ON EXTENSIONS OR ALTERATIONS OF EXISTING PUBLIC WATER
10 AND SEWER SYSTEMS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW; REMOVING THE REQUIREMENT FOR
11 LOCAL REVIEW AGENTS TO REVIEW FOR ADEQUATE STORMWATER DRAINAGE; PROVIDING
12 RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AMENDING SECTIONS 75-6-121, 76-4-121, AND 76-4-127, MCA; AND
13 PROVIDING AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

14
15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:
16

17 **NEW SECTION. Section 1. Certification of applicants to prequalify for review.** (1) The
18 department shall promulgate rules to allow for the certification of applicants, including the development of an
19 educational curriculum and examination to enable an applicant to act as a certified reviewing agent pursuant to
20 76-4-104(4), and shall conduct reviews of subdivision applications submitted by certified applicants under 76-4-
21 114.

22 (2) To become certified, an applicant:

23 (a) must be a registered sanitarian or licensed professional engineer with at least 5 years of
24 professional experience;

25 (b) must have submitted at least one application that was approved by the department prior to
26 applying for certification; and

27 (c) shall participate in all portions of the required curriculum and must successfully pass the
28 examination developed by the department as provided in subsection (1).

1 (3) (a) Except as allowed in subsection (3)(b), a certified applicant may not review public water
2 supply systems, public sewage systems, or extensions of or connections to these systems.

3 (b) A certified applicant may review subdivisions proposed to connect to existing municipal or
4 county water and/or sewer district water and wastewater systems previously approved by the department if no
5 extension of the systems is required.

6 (4) A certified applicant:

7 (a) shall meet all review timelines required for application review under 76-4-114;

8 (b) shall certify that the contents of an application, including any supplemental information as
9 required in 76-4-115, are complete;

10 (c) shall submit completed applications to the department;

11 (d) is not entitled to subdivision fees under 76-4-105; and

12 (e) shall assume all legal responsibility for the certified applicant's actions related to applications
13 reviewed and completed by the certified applicant.

14 (5) Completed applications received by the department from a certified applicant must be
15 considered approved by the reviewing agent and may be filed by the county clerk and recorder as allowed in
16 ~~76-4-112~~ 76-4-122 if the application meets all other conditions of ~~76-4-112~~ 76-4-122.

17 (6) (a) The department shall review at least 10% of all applications submitted by certified
18 applicants in a calendar year using the standard review process allowed in this part.

19 (b) If the department reviews an application submitted by a certified applicant pursuant to
20 subsection (6)(a) and finds that the certified applicant has violated a requirement of this part or a rule adopted
21 or an order issued under this part, the department shall revoke the certified status of the applicant. An applicant
22 whose certified status has been revoked as provided in this subsection (6)(b) may not apply for certification
23 under this section and may be liable for penalties allowed in 76-4-109. The department or any other aggrieved
24 person may seek additional remedies allowed in 76-4-110 or seek other redress under any available law.

25 (7) A certified applicant is required to renew the applicant's certification at least once every 2
26 years.

27 (8) Nothing in this section restricts or denies the ability of the department to enforce the provisions
28 of this chapter, including but not limited to the enforcement provisions provided in 76-4-108, 74-6-1001, and 76-

1 4-1002.

2

3 **Section 2.** Section 75-6-121, MCA, is amended to read:

4 **"75-6-121. Delegation of review of small public water and sewer construction.** (1) If a local
5 government requests a delegation and the appropriate division of the local government has established
6 satisfactory review programs, the department ~~may~~shall delegate to the division of local government the review
7 of:

8 (a) small public water and sewer systems; and

9 (b) extensions or alterations of existing public water and sewer systems ~~that involve 50 or fewer~~
10 ~~connections.~~

11 (2) The department ~~may~~shall adopt rules regarding the delegation of review authority to divisions
12 of local government."

13

14 **Section 3.** Section 76-4-121, MCA, is amended to read:

15 **"76-4-121. Restrictions on subdivision activities.** A person may not dispose of any lot within a
16 subdivision, erect any facility for the supply of water or disposal of sewage or solid waste, erect any building or
17 shelter in a subdivision that requires facilities for the supply of water or disposal of sewage or solid waste, or
18 occupy any permanent buildings in a subdivision until:

19 (1) a certificate of subdivision approval has been issued pursuant to 76-4-114 indicating that the
20 reviewing authority has approved the subdivision application and that the subdivision is not subject to a sanitary
21 restriction;

22 (2) the certifying authority has provided certification pursuant to 76-4-127 that the subdivision will
23 be provided with adequate municipal or county water and/or sewer district facilities ~~and~~or adequate storm
24 water drainage; or

25 (3) the subdivision is otherwise exempt from review under 76-4-125."

26

27 **Section 4.** Section 76-4-127, MCA, is amended to read:

28 **"76-4-127. Notice of certification that adequate storm water drainage ~~and~~or adequate**