

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DHS 1/31/2013

LRB Number	13-0762/1	Introduction Number	SB-001	Estimate Type	Original
Description Regulation of ferrous metallic mining and related activities, procedures for obtaining approvals from the Department of Natural Resources for the construction of utility facilities, making an appropriation, and providing penalties					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Current law requires the Department of Health Services (DHS) to work with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide health-based recommendations for groundwater quality standards (consisting of enforcement standards and preventive action limits) for contaminants or naturally-occurring substances in groundwater. These standards are established by DNR to provide regulatory guidance for a range of practices that may impact Wisconsin groundwater, such as pesticide and herbicide application, landfill design, or mine construction.

DHS receives segregated (SEG) revenue from the environmental management account under the environmental fund to develop groundwater standards and emission standards for hazardous air contaminants. In the 2011-13 biennium, DHS received \$315,900 SEG revenue annually for these purposes from the DNR's environmental management account. A portion of this revenue funds one full-time toxicologist position at DHS to provide risk assessment and toxicological expertise related to potentially toxic substances that may occur in Wisconsin groundwater. Upon the submission of a mine construction permit request, this DHS toxicologist may be consulted to address questions from DNR related to the materials and processes that will be utilized in the proposed mine and the potential impact on local groundwater and public health. The amount of work required will generally vary on a permit-by-permit basis.

This bill modifies DNR groundwater quality evaluation processes. However, DHS requirements under this bill do not change. To the extent this bill results in an increase in the number of mining permit applications, DNR may require additional toxicology services from DHS. It is currently unknown if this bill will result in an increase in the number of mining permit applications that DNR must evaluate. However, the Department concludes that it can manage the requirements of establishing groundwater quality standards with current resources. Therefore, this bill is estimated to have no fiscal impact on DHS or on local public health departments.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications