



Legislative Council Staff

Research Note

Version: Final

Date: 8/3/2016

Bill Number

House Bill 16-1141

Sponsors

*Representatives Becker K. and
Coram
Senators Jahn and Roberts*

Short Title

Radon Exposure In Buildings

Research Analyst

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Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill which becomes effective August 10, 2016, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

Summary

This bill requires the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to establish a radon education and awareness program. By January 1, 2017, the department must also establish a radon mitigation assistance program to provide financial assistance to low-income individuals for radon mitigation in their homes. The two programs are funded from the Hazardous Substance Response Fund.

In addition, the bill extends the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Program Fund until July 1, 2027. The bill repeals the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Oversight Committee.

Background

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in the soil. It has no color, odor, or taste, and is known to cause lung cancer. Radon moves from uranium-bearing granite deposits in the soil to the atmosphere. It is commonly found in:

- spaces between basement walls and the slab;
- cracks in foundations or walls;
- crawl spaces;
- openings around sump pumps and drains; and
- construction joints and plumbing penetrations.

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The Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Program Fund provides a state match to federal funds available for the cleanup of uranium mill tailing sites as designated for cleanup under the federal "Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978", 42 U.S.C. sec. 7901 et seq.

The Department of Public Health and Environment reports annually to the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Oversight Committee on the progress of the cleanup of uranium mill tailing sites; the proposed and final transfer or disposition of the land of any of the sites; the proposed program activities; any direct and indirect costs associated with monitoring, notification, and handling of designated uranium mill tailings; and financial requests for the next fiscal year. The committee is comprised of the Executive Director of the Department of Local Affairs and four legislative members.

House Action

House Health, Insurance, and Environment Committee (February 9, 2016). At the hearing, representatives from the Colorado Association of Local Public Health Officials, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Sierra Club Rocky Mountain Chapter, and Tri-County Health testified in support of the bill.

The committee adopted amendment L.003, and referred the bill, as amended, to the House Appropriations Committee. Amendment L.003 specified that the Radon Education and Awareness Program and Radon Mitigation Assistance Program will be funded from the Hazardous Substance Response Fund.

House Appropriations Committee (March 4, 2016). The committee adopted amendment L.005 and amendment J.002, and referred the bill, as amended, to the House Committee of the Whole. Amendment L.005 allowed the Department of Public Health and Environment to expend money from the fees collected under the solid waste user fee to finance the Radon Education and Awareness Program and the Radon Mitigation Assistance Program. Amendment J.002 added an appropriation clause to the bill.

House second reading (March 7, 2016). The House adopted the House Health, Insurance, and Environment and House Appropriations committee reports, and passed the bill on second reading, as amended.

House third reading (March 8, 2016). The House passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

Senate Action

Senate Health and Human Services Committee (March 24, 2016). At the hearing, representatives from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and Tri-County Health testified in support of the bill. The committee referred the bill, unamended, to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Senate Appropriations Committee (April 1, 2016). The committee referred the bill, unamended, to the Senate Committee of the Whole.

Senate second reading (April 5, 2016). The Senate passed the bill on second reading with no amendments.

Senate third reading (April 6, 2016). The Senate passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

Relevant Research

Annual Reports to the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Oversight Committee:
<http://bit.ly/2acGOK1>.