

Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Carrier – House: Rep. Holvey  
Carrier – Senate: Sen. Prozanski

Revenue: No revenue impact

Fiscal: Fiscal statement issued

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Action: Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure as Amended and Be Printed B-Engrossed

Vote: 13 – 8 – 1

House

Yeas: Buckley, C. Edwards, D. Edwards, Galizio, Kotek, Nathanson, Shields

Nays: Garrard, Gilman, Jenson, Richardson

Exc: G. Smith

Senate

Yeas: Bates, Carter, Johnson, Monroe, Verger, Walker

Nays: Girod, Nelson, Whitsett, Winters

Exc:

Prepared By: Paul Siebert, Legislative Fiscal Office

Meeting Date: June 18, 2009

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Specifies that Act applies to open field burning, propane flaming and stack pile burning of grass seed crop residues or cereal grain crop residues in Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Linn, Benton, and Lane Counties. Establishes that maximum total acreage allowed to be open burned in 2009 is 20,000 acres. Establishes that additional acreage allowed to be burned on steep terrain or identified species is 15,000 acres. Authorizes EQC by order to issue permits for emergency open burning, propane flaming, or stack or pile burning of up to 2,000 acres if there is extreme hardship due to disease outbreak or insect infestation that outweighs dangers to public health. Establishes that EQC may assess fees for acreage allowed to be emergency burned and requires that fee be deposited in ODA Service Fund. Increases fees. Allows the EQC to request moneys from ODA sufficient to carry out Department duties specified in the bill. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Description of provisions of the amendment
- Description of fiscal impacts
- Stack and pile provisions
- Application of prohibitions on field burning

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Removes provisions that allowed the EQC to list other counties subject to limits on field burning; modifies steep terrain and species field burning provisions to 15,000 acres; and, allows EQC to request moneys from ODA sufficient to carry out duties specified in the bill.

**BACKGROUND:** Field burning disposes of leftover straw and stubble on fields after grass seed harvesting. It is used to control weeds, insects and plant diseases, and helps maintain grass seed purity. The practice began more than 50 years ago, with as much as 250,000 acres being burned in the mid 1980s. In 1991, passage of HB 3343 began a phase-down of field burning, with the acreage limit reduced from 180,000 to 40,000 acres. The current limit of 65,000 is based on 40,000 acres plus a 25,000 acre limitation for certain fire-dependent grass species and grasses grown on highly erodible soils on steep slopes.