

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 83RD LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 8, 2013

TO: Honorable Allan Ritter, Chair, House Committee on Natural Resources

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1973 by Lucio III (Relating to the provision of water by a public utility or water supply or sewer service corporation for use in fire suppression.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would expand the requirements for fire suppression capability to apply on a statewide basis, rather than specifically to residential areas, and it would require that standards be adopted in all municipalities, instead of those over 1 million population or falling between specific population limits under current law. The bill would subject municipalities' extraterritorial jurisdictions to fire suppression regulatory standards, and it would provide water supply or sewer service corporations the authority to issue fire flow standards.

The bill would also revise how the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) assesses a regulatory authority's implementation of the standards for installation of fire hydrants in addition to the existing requirement for water pressure and the maintenance of sufficient water pressure to fire hydrants utilized for firefighting purposes in a volume adequate to protect public safety.

Although the bill would expand the number of entities under the TCEQ's regulatory jurisdiction with respect to water flows for fire suppression, passage of the bill is not expected to result in significant costs to the agency.

Local Government Impact

Local governments that are regulatory authorities could incur increased enforcement costs when requiring adequate water capacity and pressure for fire suppression. Local governments that do not currently have adequate fire-flow standards would experience cost increases to install new water lines, provide additional storage, install service pumps, obtain increased water supply capacity, etc. in order to provide sufficient capability. However, the significance of any cost increases would vary depending on the characteristics of each system and service area.

The cities of Houston and Dallas reported no fiscal impact associated with the bill.

Source Agencies: 582 Commission on Environmental Quality

LBB Staff: UP, SZ, TL, KKR