

By: Hull

H.B. No. 254

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to youth camp emergency response and safety standards and emergency safety and evacuation plans.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 141, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Sections 141.0091 and 141.0092 to read as follow:

Sec. 141.0091. EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND SAFETY STANDARDS.

The executive commissioner by rule shall establish emergency response and safety standards for youth camps. The standards must require:

(1) safe overnight accommodations in areas subject to flooding and located near a body of water or a waterway, including a river, stream, creek, or tributary, provided the standards prohibit the use of a permanent structure located:

(A) within 1,000 feet of the body of water or waterway; or

(B) near the body of water or waterway and elevated less than 50 feet above the ground;

(2) adequate camper, staff, and volunteer training on the camp's evacuation procedures during a severe or hazardous weather event;

(3) installation and maintenance of proper severe or hazardous weather event equipment and warning systems with signal and power sources operating independently without a power grid

1 connection;

2 (4) adequate nighttime emergency prevention security  
3 provided by a qualified adult who remains awake and on duty during  
4 camp sleeping hours; and

5 (5) proper life preserving equipment in each structure  
6 used by campers for overnight accommodations.

7 Sec. 141.0092. EMERGENCY SAFETY AND EVACUATION PLAN. (a) A  
8 youth camp operator shall develop an emergency safety and  
9 evacuation plan for evacuating campers, staff, and volunteers in  
10 the event of a severe or hazardous weather event, including a flood  
11 or fire. The plan must:

12 (1) include procedures for using life preserving and  
13 lifesaving equipment when evacuation is not possible; and

14 (2) designate an individual responsible for  
15 coordinating plan implementation during an emergency.

16 (b) A youth camp operator shall:

17 (1) post the camp's emergency safety and evacuation  
18 plan on the camp's publicly available Internet website; and

19 (2) provide a copy of the plan to each camper's parent  
20 or legal guardian with the camper's enrollment documents.

21 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date  
22 of this Act, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human  
23 Services Commission shall adopt rules establishing youth camp  
24 emergency response and safety standards, as required by Section  
25 141.0091, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

26 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
27 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as

H.B. No. 254

1 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
3 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the last day of the  
4 legislative session.