
HB25-1014 Increasing Efficiency Division of Water Resources

**Audio, Floors
and
Committees:****Summary:**

The division of water resources in the department of natural resources (division) is responsible for administering water rights and issuing water well permits, among other duties.

Under current law, after having received a permit to appropriate designated groundwater or construct a well outside the boundaries of a designated groundwater basin, a permit holder is required to construct the well within one year after the date of issuance of the permit. If the well is not constructed within one year, the permit expires; except that the ground water commission (commission) in the division or the state engineer, as applicable, may grant a single one-year extension.

The bill extends the time frame for construction of a well to 2 years, eliminating the need for the commission or the state engineer to approve a one-year extension to the initial one-year construction time frame, except for permits issued for federally authorized water projects. The bill also removes the requirement that the commission or state engineer must mail a certified letter to the permit holder before a permit can be formally expired. The bill allows the commission or state engineer to reinstate an expired permit if the applicant for reinstatement of the permit can show that the well was completed in a timely manner and submits a \$30 fee.

Under current law, the division engineer of each water division is required to decennially present to the water court a list of water rights that meet the criteria for abandonment. The bill splits this decennial abandonment process into 2 batches, grouped by water division and spaced 5 years apart, beginning with 2030 and 2035. The bill maintains the requirement that the abandonment process be performed every 10 years in each water division.

The bill extends certain time frames relating to the well permitting process. Lastly, the bill eliminates final permitting requirements for non-Denver Basin bedrock aquifer wells in the designated basins.

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced.)

Status: 1/8/2025 Introduced In House - Assigned to Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources

Amendments:

Committee
Votes:

HB25-1077 **Backflow Prevention Devices Requirements**

**Audio, Floors
and
Committees:**

Summary: **Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee.** Backflow is the reverse flow of water, fluid, or gas caused by back pressure or back siphonage. Under current law, individuals who are engaged in the business of installing, removing, inspecting, testing, or repairing backflow prevention devices are subject to the licensure requirements for plumbers, except when the individuals are installing or testing a stand-alone fire suppression sprinkler system.

The bill exempts individuals engaged in the business of inspecting, testing, or repairing backflow prevention devices from licensure requirements but retains the licensure requirements for individuals engaged in the installation or removal of the devices.

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced.)

Status: 1/8/2025 Introduced In House - Assigned to Business Affairs & Labor

Amendments:
Committee
Votes:

SB25-007 **Increase Prescribed Burns**

**Audio, Floors
and
Committees:**

Summary: **Wildfire Matters Review Committee. Section 1** of the bill creates the prescribed fire claims cash fund (fund) in the state treasury and requires the treasurer to transfer \$1 million to the fund. The division of fire prevention and control (division) shall expend money from the fund to pay claims that are certified by the division in accordance with new guidelines as specified in the bill and as adopted by the director of the division. The division shall authorize a payment in the amount certified in a claim; except that the maximum payment that the division may authorize is equal to 10% of the amount of money in the fund at the time the claim is filed.

The division shall certify a claim that meets the following guidelines:

- The claim demonstrates, in sufficient detail, the costs or damages that resulted from the prescribed burn;
- The prescribed burn that resulted in the costs or damages was conducted in

full compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements for prescribed burning;

- Before conducting the prescribed burn, the certified prescribed burn manager registered the written prescription plan for the prescribed burn with the division and paid an administrative fee; and
- No more than 60 days have passed between the completion of the prescribed burn and the date upon which costs and damages were incurred.

The bill gives rule-making authority to the director of the division to adopt rules and guidelines for the implementation and administration of the program and permits the division to contract with a third-party to administer, certify, and pay the claims. The bill also requires a claimant who accepts a payment that covers the full amount certified in the claim to waive all future claims related to the prescribed burn.

Sections 2 and 3 expand the definition of a "certified burner" in the state to include an individual who has not completed the Colorado division's training and certification program but who meets reciprocity requirements and possesses a valid Colorado certification number. An individual seeking certification through reciprocity may receive a certification number from the division by:

- Applying for certification to the division, according to the rules and standards of the division, including the payment of any associated fee; and
- Submitting evidence to the division, according to the rules and standards of the division, that the individual holds a valid certification from a state government or other entity.

The director of the division, in consultation with the Colorado state forest service, is required to adopt rules and standards pertaining to the qualification for and the terms and durations of certification, including through reciprocity.

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced.)

Status: 1/8/2025 Introduced In Senate - Assigned to Agriculture & Natural Resources

Amendments:

Committee

Votes:

SB25-040 Future of Severance Taxes & Water Funding Task Force

**Audio, Floors
and
Committees:**

Summary: **Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee.** The bill creates the future of severance taxes and water funding task force (task force).

The department of natural resources is required to contract with a third party to conduct a study on severance taxes and water funding and develop recommendations for ways to continue funding water needs in the face of decreasing severance tax revenue (study). The purpose of the task force is to work with the third party to conduct the study and develop recommendations.

No later than January 15, 2026, the third party must submit a draft report, detailing the results of the study and any recommendations, to the department of natural resources and the task force for review. The task force is required to provide input on the draft report. No later than July 15, 2026, the third party must submit a final report, which incorporates the input of the task force, to the water resources and agriculture review committee (committee). The task force must present the final report to the committee during the 2026 legislative interim.

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced.)

Status: 1/8/2025 Introduced In Senate - Assigned to Agriculture & Natural Resources

Amendments:

Committee

Votes: