

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 948
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Education
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, there is a statutory requirement regarding the testing of natural gas systems at public school district facilities. However, no requirement exists regarding liquified petroleum (LP)-gas systems. To ensure the safety of the public school students, staff, and the general public, the LP-gas systems at public schools should be tested to ensure leak-free LP-gas systems. As proposed, S.B. 948 requires the testing of LP-gas systems in all schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 113, Natural Resources Code, by adding Subchapter L, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER L. TESTING OF LP GAS SYSTEMS IN SCHOOL FACILITIES

Sec. 113.321. DEFINITIONS. Defines "supplier" and "school district."

Sec. 113.322. REQUIREMENT TO PERFORM TEST. (a) Requires each school district to perform biennial pressure tests on the liquified petroleum (LP)-gas piping system in each school district facility. Requires the school district to perform the tests before the beginning of the school year.

(b) Authorizes the school district to perform the tests on a two-year cycle under which the district pressure tests the LP-gas piping system in approximately one-half of the facilities each year.

(c) Requires the pressure test in each facility to be conducted and reported not later than July 1 of the year in which the pressure test is performed, if a school district operates one or more school district facilities on a year-round calendar.

(d) Provides that a test performed under a municipal code satisfies the pressure testing requirements prescribed by this section.

Sec. 113.323 TEST PROCEDURES. (a) Requires the person responsible for a school facility to perform the test for leakage to determine whether the LP-gas system holds at least the amount of pressure specified by the National Fire Protection Association 54, National Fuel Gas code.

(b) Requires the test for leakage to be conducted in accordance with National Fire Protection Association 54.

(c) Requires the Railroad Commission of Texas (commission), at the request of a school district, to assist the district in developing a procedure for conducting the test and certification of the employee to conduct the test.

Sec. 113.324. NOTICE OF TEST. (a) Requires a school district to provide written notice to the commission the date and the result of each pressure test or other inspection.

(b) Requires the school district to provide verification to each supplier that the piping has been testing in accordance with this subchapter, prior to the introduction of any LP-gas.

(c) The commission shall maintain a copy of the notice until at least the first anniversary of the date on which the supplier received the notice.

Sec. 113.325. TERMINATION OF SERVICE. Requires a supplier to terminate service to a school district facility under certain conditions.

Sec. 113.325. REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES. Requires an identified LP-gas leakage in a school district facility to be reported to the board of trustees of the district in which the facility is located.

Sec. 113.326. ENFORCEMENT. Requires the commission to enforce this subchapter.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that, except as provided by Subsection (b) of this section, Subchapter L, Chapter 113, Natural Resources Code, as added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, and each person responsible for a school facility that uses LP-gas shall perform a leak test as required by that subchapter.

(b), Requires a school district, if the district is not able, before the beginning of the 2001-2002 school year, to perform the leak test or other inspections of LP-gas piping system pressure as required by that article, to perform the tests or other inspections as soon as practicable thereafter. Prohibits a supplier, as defined by Sec. 113.321(1), Natural Resources Code, as added by this Act, from terminating service to a school district facility under certain conditions.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.