

Assembly Bill No. 864

CHAPTER 592

An act to add Section 51013.1 to the Government Code, relating to oil spill response.

[Approved by Governor October 8, 2015. Filed with
Secretary of State October 8, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 864, Williams. Oil spill response: environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas.

The Lempert-Keene-Seastrand Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act requires owners or operators of various facilities, including pipelines, while operating in the waters of the state or where a spill from the pipelines could impact state waters, to have an oil spill contingency plan submitted to, and approved by, the administrator for oil spill response to ensure prompt and adequate response and removal action in case of a spill. The act requires the operator to maintain a level of readiness that will allow effective implementation of the applicable contingency plan.

The Elder California Pipeline Safety Act of 1981, among other things, requires the State Fire Marshal to adopt hazardous liquid pipeline safety regulations in compliance with the federal law relating to hazardous liquid pipeline safety. The act requires any new pipeline constructed after January 1, 1984, and which normally operates under conditions of constant flow and pressure, to be designed and constructed in accordance with specified federal regulations, and have a means of leak detection and cathodic protection that the State Fire Marshal determines is acceptable. A violation of the act is a crime. Except as provided, the act defines "pipeline" as including every intrastate pipeline used to transport hazardous liquid substances or highly volatile liquid substances, as provided.

This bill would require, by January 1, 2018, any new or replacement pipeline near environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas in the coastal zone to use best available technologies to reduce the amount of oil released in an oil spill to protect state waters and wildlife. The bill would require, by July 1, 2018, an operator of an existing pipeline near these sensitive areas to submit a plan to retrofit the pipeline, by January 1, 2020, as provided. By creating a new crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would require the State Fire Marshal to adopt regulations relating to the above provisions by July 1, 2017.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 51013.1 is added to the Government Code, to read:

51013.1. (a) By January 1, 2018, any new or replacement pipeline near environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas in the coastal zone shall use best available technology, including, but not limited to, the installation of leak detection technology, automatic shutoff systems, or remote controlled sectionalized block valves, or any combination of these technologies, based on a risk analysis conducted by the operator, to reduce the amount of oil released in an oil spill to protect state waters and wildlife.

(b) (1) By July 1, 2018, an operator of an existing pipeline near environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas in the coastal zone shall submit a plan to retrofit, by January 1, 2020, existing pipelines near environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas in the coastal zone with the best available technology, including, but not limited to, installation of leak detection technologies, automatic shutoff systems, or remote controlled sectionalized block valves, or any combination of these technologies, based on a risk analysis conducted by the operator to reduce the amount of oil released in an oil spill to protect state waters and wildlife.

(2) An operator may request confidential treatment of information submitted in the plan required by paragraph (1) or contained in any documents associated with the risk analysis described in this section, including, but not limited to, information regarding the proposed location of automatic shutoff valves or remote controlled sectionalized block valves.

(c) The State Fire Marshal shall adopt regulations pursuant to this section by July 1, 2017. The regulations shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(1) A definition of automatic shutoff systems.

(2) A process to assess the adequacy of the operator's risk analysis.

(3) A process by which an operator may request confidential treatment of information submitted in the plan required by paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) or contained in any documents associated with the risk analysis described in this section.

(4) A determination of how near to an environmentally and ecologically sensitive area a pipeline must be to be subject to the requirements of this section based on the likelihood of the pipeline impacting those areas.

(d) An operator of a pipeline near environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas in the coastal zone shall notify the Office of the State Fire Marshal of any new construction or retrofit of pipeline in these waters.

(e) For purposes of implementing this section, the State Fire Marshal shall consult with the Office of Spill Prevention and Response about the potential impacts to state water and wildlife.

(f) For purposes of this section, “environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas” is the same term as described in subdivision (d) of Section 8574.7.

(g) (1) For purposes of this section, “best available technology” means technology that provides the greatest degree of protection by limiting the quantity of release in the event of a spill, taking into consideration whether the processes are currently in use and could be purchased anywhere in the world.

(2) The State Fire Marshal shall determine what is the best available technology and shall consider the effectiveness and engineering feasibility of the technology when making this determination.

SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.