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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-SIXTH
SESSION

HOUSE FILE No. **3433**

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Authored by Juhnke

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment Policy and Oversight

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to environment; modifying subsurface sewage treatment systems
1.3 provisions; amending Minnesota Statutes 2009 Supplement, sections 115.55,
1.4 subdivision 1; 115.56, subdivision 2.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2009 Supplement, section 115.55, subdivision 1, is
1.7 amended to read:

1.8 Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to sections
1.9 115.55 to 115.56.

1.10 (b) "Advisory committee" means the Advisory Committee on Subsurface Sewage
1.11 Treatment Systems established under the subsurface sewage treatment system rules. The
1.12 advisory committee must be appointed to ensure geographic representation of the state
1.13 and include elected public officials.

1.14 (c) "Applicable requirements" means:

1.15 (1) local ordinances that comply with the subsurface sewage treatment system rules,
1.16 as required in subdivision 2; or

1.17 (2) in areas without compliant ordinances described in clause (1), the subsurface
1.18 sewage treatment system rules.

1.19 (d) "City" means a statutory or home rule charter city.

1.20 (e) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the Pollution Control Agency.

1.21 (f) "Dwelling" means a building or place used or intended to be used by human
1.22 occupants as a single-family or two-family unit.

1.23 (g) "Subsurface sewage treatment system" or "system" means a sewage treatment
1.24 system, or part thereof, that uses subsurface soil treatment and disposal, or a holding tank,

2.1 serving a dwelling, other establishment, or a group thereof, and that does not require
2.2 a state permit.

2.3 (h) "Subsurface sewage treatment system professional" means an inspector, installer,
2.4 designer, service provider, or maintainer.

2.5 (i) "Subsurface sewage treatment system rules" means rules adopted by the agency
2.6 that establish minimum standards and criteria for the design, location, installation, use,
2.7 maintenance, and closure of subsurface sewage treatment systems.

2.8 (j) "Inspector" means a person who inspects subsurface sewage treatment systems
2.9 for compliance with the applicable requirements.

2.10 (k) "Installer" means a person who constructs or repairs subsurface sewage treatment
2.11 systems.

2.12 (l) "Local unit of government" means a township, city, or county.

2.13 (m) "Performance-based system" means a system that is designed specifically for
2.14 environmental conditions on a site and is designed to adequately protect the public
2.15 health and the environment and provide consistent, reliable, long-term performance. At a
2.16 minimum, a performance based system must ensure that applicable water quality standards
2.17 are met in both ground and surface water that ultimately receive the treated sewage.

2.18 (n) "Maintainer " means a person who removes solids and liquids from and maintains
2.19 and repairs components of subsurface sewage treatment systems including, but not limited
2.20 to, sewage, aerobic, and holding tanks.

2.21 (o) "Seasonal dwelling" means a dwelling that is occupied or used for less than 180
2.22 days per year and less than 120 consecutive days.

2.23 (p) "Septic system tank" means any covered receptacle designed, constructed, and
2.24 installed as part of a subsurface sewage treatment system.

2.25 (q) "Designer" means a person who:

2.26 (1) investigates soils and site characteristics to determine suitability, limitations, and
2.27 sizing requirements; and

2.28 (2) designs subsurface sewage treatment systems.

2.29 (r) "Straight-pipe system" means a sewage disposal system that transports raw or
2.30 partially treated sewage directly to a lake, a stream, a drainage system, or ground surface.

2.31 (s) "Design guidance" means a nonenforceable advisory document that assists
2.32 designers and regulators with interpretation and application of rules adopted under this
2.33 section and section 115.56.

2.34 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2009 Supplement, section 115.56, subdivision 2, is
2.35 amended to read:

3.1 Subd. 2. **License required.** (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), a person may
3.2 not design, install, maintain, pump, inspect, or provide service to a subsurface sewage
3.3 treatment system without a license issued by the commissioner. Licenses issued under this
3.4 section allow work on subsurface sewage treatment systems that are designed for a flow of
3.5 10,000 gallons per day or less and do not require a state permit ~~using prescriptive designs~~
3.6 ~~and design guidances provided by the agency.~~ Licensees who design ~~systems using these~~
3.7 ~~prescriptive designs and design guidances~~ subsurface sewage treatment systems with flow
3.8 of 10,000 gallons per day or less and that do not require a state permit are not subject to
3.9 the additional licensing requirements of section 326.03.

3.10 (b) A license is not required for a person who complies with the applicable
3.11 requirements if the person is:

3.12 (1) a qualified employee of state or local government who is a certified professional;

3.13 (2) an individual who constructs a subsurface sewage treatment system on land that
3.14 is owned or leased by the individual and functions solely as the individual's dwelling or
3.15 seasonal dwelling, unless specifically disallowed in local ordinance. A person constructing
3.16 a subsurface sewage treatment system under this clause must comply with all local
3.17 administrative and technical requirements. In addition, the system must be inspected
3.18 before being covered and a compliance report must be provided to the local unit of
3.19 government after the inspection;

3.20 (3) a farmer who pumps and disposes of sewage waste from subsurface sewage
3.21 treatment systems, holding tanks, and privies on land that is owned or leased by the
3.22 farmer; or

3.23 (4) an individual who performs labor or services for a licensed business under this
3.24 section in connection with the design, installation, operation, pumping, or inspection of a
3.25 subsurface sewage treatment system at the direction and under the personal supervision of
3.26 a person certified under this section.

3.27 (c) The commissioner, in conjunction with the University of Minnesota Extension
3.28 Service or another higher education institution, shall ensure adequate training and design
3.29 guidance exists for subsurface sewage treatment system certified professionals.

3.30 (d) The commissioner shall conduct examinations to test the knowledge of applicants
3.31 for certification and shall issue documentation of certification.

3.32 (e) Licenses may be issued only upon submission of general liability insurance, a
3.33 corporate surety bond in the amount of at least \$10,000, and the name of the individual
3.34 who will be the designated certified individual for that business. The bond may be for
3.35 both plumbing work and subsurface sewage treatment work if the bond complies with the
3.36 requirements of this section and section 326B.46, subdivision 2.

4.1 (f) Local units of government may not require additional local licenses for
4.2 subsurface sewage treatment system businesses.

4.3 (g) No other professional license under section 326.03 is required to design,
4.4 install, maintain, inspect, or provide service for a subsurface sewage treatment system
4.5 that is designed for a flow of 10,000 gallons per day or less and does not require a state
4.6 permit ~~using prescriptive designs and design guidances provided by the agency~~ if the
4.7 system designer, installer, maintainer, inspector, or service provider is licensed under this
4.8 subdivision and the local unit of government has not adopted additional requirements.