

LEGISLATIVE BILL 19

Approved by the Governor March 03, 2016

Introduced by Krist, 10.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act; to amend section 71-5306, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to change provisions relating to certification of laboratories as prescribed; and to repeal the original section.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 71-5306, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

71-5306 (1) To carry out the provisions and purposes of the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act, the director may:

(a) Enter into agreements, contracts, or cooperative arrangements, under such terms as are deemed appropriate, with other state, federal, or interstate agencies or with municipalities, educational institutions, local health departments, or other organizations, entities, or individuals;

(b) Require all laboratory analyses to be performed at the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Environmental Laboratory, or at any other certified laboratory which has entered into an agreement with the department therefor, and establish and collect fees for making laboratory analyses of water samples pursuant to sections 71-2619 to 71-2621, except that subsection (6) of section 71-2619 shall not apply for purposes of the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act. Inspection fees for making other laboratory agreements shall be established and collected pursuant to sections 71-2619 to 71-2621;

~~(c) Certify laboratories performing tests on water that is intended for human consumption. The director may establish, through rules and regulations, standards for certification. Such standards may include requirements for staffing, equipment, procedures, and methodology for conducting laboratory tests, quality assurance and quality control procedures, and communication of test results. Such standards shall be consistent with requirements for performing laboratory tests established by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to the extent such requirements are consistent with state law. The director may accept accreditation by a recognized independent accreditation body, public agency, or federal program which has standards that are at least as stringent as those established pursuant to this section. The director may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations which list accreditation bodies, public agencies, and federal programs that may be accepted as evidence that a laboratory meets the standards for certification. Inspection fees and fees for certifying other laboratories shall be established and collected to defray the cost of the inspections and certification as provided in sections 71-2619 to 71-2621;~~

~~(c) d) Receive financial and technical assistance from an agency of the federal government or from any other public or private agency;~~

~~(d) e) Enter the premises of a public water system at any time for the purpose of conducting monitoring, making inspections, or collecting water samples for analysis;~~

~~(e) f) Delegate those responsibilities and duties as deemed appropriate for the purpose of administering the requirements of the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act, including entering into agreements with designated agents which shall perform specifically delegated responsibilities and possess specifically delegated powers;~~

~~(f) g) Require the owner and operator of a public water system to establish and maintain records, make reports, and provide information as the department may reasonably require by regulation to enable it to determine whether such owner or operator has acted or is acting in compliance with the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act and rules and regulations adopted pursuant thereto. The department or its designated agent shall have access at all times to such records and reports; and~~

~~(g) h) Assess by regulation a fee for any review of plans and specifications pertaining to a public water system governed by section 71-5305 in order to defray no more than the actual cost of the services provided.~~

(2)(a) The director shall certify and enter into authorization agreements with laboratories to perform tests on water that is intended for human consumption, including the tests required by the director for compliance and monitoring purposes. The director shall establish, through rules and regulations, standards for certification. Such standards (i) may include requirements for staffing, equipment, procedures, and methodology for conducting laboratory tests, quality assurance and quality control procedures, and communication of test results, (ii) shall provide for certification of independent laboratories to test samples provided by public water systems for all acute toxins for which the department tests such samples, including, but not limited to, coliform, nitrates, inorganic chemicals, organic chemicals, radionuclides, and any other acute toxins for which the department tests such samples, and (iii) shall be consistent with requirements for performing laboratory tests established by the United States Environmental Protection

Agency to the extent such requirements are consistent with state law. The director may accept accreditation by a recognized independent accreditation body, public agency, or federal program which has standards that are at least as stringent as those established pursuant to this section. The director may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations which list accreditation bodies, public agencies, and federal programs that may be accepted as evidence that a laboratory meets the standards for certification. Inspection fees and fees for certifying other laboratories shall be established and collected to defray the cost of the inspections and certification as provided in sections 71-2619 to 71-2621.

(b) Laboratories shall be allowed to test water samples which are not compliance samples by testing methods other than the methods and procedures required to be used on compliance samples by rules and regulations of the department. For purposes of this section, compliance sample means a water sample required under the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act and rules and regulations of the department to determine whether a public water system meets current drinking water standards.

(3 2) All such fees collected by the department pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Safe Drinking Water Act Cash Fund, which is hereby created. Such fund shall be used by the department for the purpose of administering the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

Sec. 2. Original section 71-5306, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is repealed.