

STATE OF NEW YORK

331

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. L. ROSENTHAL, GOTTFRIED, ABINANTI, QUART, OTIS, PAULIN, CAHILL, DINOWITZ, GUNTHER, ENGLEBRIGHT, STECK, BARRON -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COLTON, COOK, GALEF, GLICK, J. RIVERA, THIELE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law and the public service law, in relation to the protection of public health from exposure to radon in natural gas

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds that
2 radon and its radioactive progeny are a major cause of lung cancer, and
3 that there is no safe exposure level for public health protection. New
4 York State has benefited from low levels of those elements in natural
5 gas delivered to consumers, due to the low levels of radioactivity
6 occurring in the gas from the sources upon which New York has primarily
7 relied. However, there is now concern that natural gas may be coming to
8 New York State from sources with high levels of radioactivity from those
9 elements. It is the intent of this act to prevent levels of radon and
10 its radioactive progeny from exceeding current levels in gas distributed
11 to residential and other consumers, mindful of internationally-recog-
12 nized mitigation action levels. It is the intent of this act to only
13 regulate the distribution of gas within the state.

14 § 2. The public health law is amended by adding a new article 35-B to
15 read as follows:

ARTICLE 35-B

RADON

Section 3560. Definitions.

3561. Protection from radon.

3562. Gas corporation requirements.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 § 3560. Definitions. As used in this article, unless the context
2 clearly requires otherwise:

3 1. "Bq/m³" means Becquerel per cubic meter, where 1 Bq corresponds
4 to one radioactive disintegration per second. 100 Bq/m³ is equal to
5 2.7 pCi/l.

6 2. "Curie" is a unit of radioactivity. One Curie is equal to 3.7 x
7 10¹⁰ radioactive decays per second. One pico Curie (pCi) is 1x10⁻¹²
8 Curies.

9 3. "Delivery point" means, as determined by the commissioner under
10 this article, a point in a gas corporation's distribution system.

11 4. "Gas" and "gas corporation" shall have the same meanings as they
12 are defined and used in the public service law.

13 § 3561. Protection from radon. 1. It is the responsibility of the
14 commissioner to minimize, through the application of the ALARA (as low
15 as reasonably achievable) principle, the risk to members of the public
16 posed by exposure to radon and its radioactive progeny. To achieve this
17 goal, the commissioner may call for the assistance of the department of
18 environmental conservation and the public service commission as neces-
19 sary to support permitting, monitoring, compliance auditing and enforce-
20 ment action as directed by the commissioner.

21 2. The commissioner shall establish a system for determining, and
22 (where the commissioner deems it appropriate) designating, delivery
23 points where gas from a pipeline is transferred to a gas corporation's
24 distribution system that are appropriate and practicable for monitoring
25 levels of radon and its radioactive progeny to achieve the purposes of
26 this article.

27 3. In order to achieve the goals established in this section, every
28 gas corporation selling or otherwise providing gas to customers in New
29 York shall, consistent with this article, establish and maintain a
30 program to continuously monitor the level of radon and its radioactive
31 progeny, measured as gross alpha activity, in the natural gas delivered
32 to the gas corporation at each delivery point, reporting such levels
33 through a publicly-accessible website on a real time basis. The program
34 shall include provision for generating alerts to the gas corporation
35 relating to the monitored levels and appropriate responses.

36 4. The commissioner shall establish a compliance assurance system for
37 the monitoring systems required pursuant to subdivision two of this
38 section, including a periodic physical inspection and measurement
39 program to be implemented by the department at the various delivery
40 points. This program shall be designed so that each delivery point is
41 inspected and sampled at least twice per year by the department.

42 5. (a) The commissioner shall make regulations and establish a program
43 to implement and enforce this article. The commissioner shall comply
44 with this paragraph within one year after this article shall become a
45 law.

46 (b) As part of this enforcement program, whenever the commissioner
47 determines that a gas corporation is not in compliance with the require-
48 ments of this article, he or she shall issue an order requiring such gas
49 corporation to comply, including the development and implementation of a
50 plan of correction. Where necessary, the commissioner may order the flow
51 of natural gas at any delivery point that is not in compliance with the
52 requirements of this article be shut off until a gas corporation brings
53 that delivery point into compliance with this article. The commissioner
54 may impose a civil fine of up to twenty-five thousand dollars per day
55 per delivery point on the gas corporation until the radon and its radio-
56 active progeny levels at each delivery point that is out of compliance

1 have been brought into compliance with this article. The commissioner
2 may commence a civil action or proceeding whenever a gas corporation
3 fails to comply with an order issued by the commissioner under this
4 article.

5 6. Any person may commence a civil action or proceeding against:

6 (a) any gas corporation that is not in compliance with the require-
7 ments of this article, and

8 (b) the commissioner if he or she fails to enforce the requirements of
9 this article, provided that the commissioner has received notice of the
10 intent to commence such civil action or proceeding and has failed within
11 thirty days of receiving such notice to take enforcement action against
12 a gas corporation that is not in compliance with this article. The court
13 in such action or proceeding may issue an injunction or other order
14 compelling compliance and shall enter an order requiring a gas corpo-
15 ration or the commissioner, as the case may be, to pay the reasonable
16 legal fees and expenses incurred by the individual or organization that
17 commenced the civil action or proceeding.

18 § 3562. Gas corporation requirements. 1. Each gas corporation shall
19 establish and implement a radon mitigation response program to ensure
20 that the level of radon and its radioactive progeny at any delivery
21 point shall not exceed: 100 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 2.7 pCi/l) averaged
22 over any one hour period, 75 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 2.02 pCi/l) averaged
23 over any 24 hour period, 50 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 1.37 pCi/l) averaged
24 over any seven day period.

25 2. Gas corporations are prohibited from building new or additional
26 storage facilities to mitigate radon levels.

27 3. It is unlawful for any gas corporation to pass harmful effects of
28 mitigation to other regions in the state.

29 4. No gas corporation shall distribute gas unless it is reasonably
30 certain that the level of radon and its radioactive progeny in the gas
31 when it is received by residential or other consumers will be at or
32 below the level of 100 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 2.7 pCi/l) averaged over
33 any one hour period.

34 § 3. Subdivision 1 of section 18-a of the public service law, as
35 amended by section 2 of part NN of chapter 59 of the laws of 2009, is
36 amended to read as follows:

37 1. All costs and expenses of the department and commission shall be
38 paid pursuant to appropriation on the certification of the chairman of
39 the department and upon the audit and warrant of the comptroller. The
40 costs and expenses of the department and commission shall include an
41 amount to be suballocated to the department of health for the costs and
42 expenses of administering article thirty-five-B of the public health
43 law. The state treasury shall be reimbursed [~~therefore~~] therefor by
44 payments to be made thereto from all moneys collected pursuant to this
45 chapter. The total of such costs and expenses shall be borne by the
46 public utility companies (including for the purposes of this section
47 municipalities other than municipalities as defined in section eighty-
48 nine-1 of this chapter), corporations (including the power authority of
49 the state of New York), and persons subject to the commission's regu-
50 lation, to be assessed in the manner provided in subdivisions two, three
51 and four of this section and section two hundred seventeen of this chap-
52 ter.

53 § 4. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 2 of section 18-a of the public
54 service law, as amended by section 2 of part A of chapter 173 of the
55 laws of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

1 (a) The chairman of the department shall estimate prior to the start
2 of each state fiscal year the total costs and expenses, including the
3 compensation and expenses of the commission and the department, their
4 officers, agents and employees, and including the cost of retirement
5 contributions, social security, health and dental insurance, survivor's
6 benefits, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance and other fringe
7 benefits required to be paid by the state for the personnel of the
8 commission and the department, and including all other items of mainte-
9 nance and operation expenses, and all other direct and indirect costs.

10 The estimate by the chairman of the department relating to the costs and
11 expenses of the department of health of administering article thirty-
12 five-B of the public health law shall be made in agreement with the
13 commissioner of health and the director of the budget. Based on such
14 estimates, the chairman shall determine the amount to be paid by each
15 assessed public utility company and the Long Island power authority and
16 a bill shall be rendered to each such public utility company and author-
17 ity.

18 § 5. If any provision of this act, or any application of any provision
19 of this act, is held to be invalid, or to violate or be inconsistent
20 with any federal law or regulation, that shall not affect the validity
21 or effectiveness of any other provision of this act, or of any other
22 application of any provision of this act, which can be given effect
23 without that provision or application; and to that end, the provisions
24 and applications of this act are severable.

25 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that
26 section two of this act shall take effect sixty days after it shall
27 become a law. Effective immediately, the commissioner of health, the
28 chair of the public service commission, the comptroller, and the direc-
29 tor of the budget are authorized to make regulations and take any other
30 measures necessary to implement this act on its effective date.