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1849

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

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Introduced by M. of A. L. ROSENTHAL, OTIS, PAULIN, DINOWITZ, GUNTHER,
STECK -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COLTON, COOK, GLICK, 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 Assem-
bly, 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.

21 § 3560. Definitions. As used in this article, unless the context
22 clearly requires otherwise:

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

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

4 2. "Curie" is a unit of radioactivity. One Curie is equal to 3.7 x
5 10¹⁰ radioactive decays per second. One pico Curie (pCi) is 1x10⁻¹²
6 Curies.

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

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

11 § 3561. Protection from radon. 1. It is the responsibility of the
12 commissioner to minimize, through the application of the ALARA (as low
13 as reasonably achievable) principle, the risk to members of the public
14 posed by exposure to radon and its radioactive progeny. To achieve this
15 goal, the commissioner may call for the assistance of the department of
16 environmental conservation and the public service commission as neces-
17 sary to support permitting, monitoring, compliance auditing and enforce-
18 ment action as directed by the commissioner.

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

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

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

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

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

1 fails to comply with an order issued by the commissioner under this
2 article.

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

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

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

16 § 3562. Gas corporation requirements. 1. Each gas corporation shall
17 establish and implement a radon mitigation response program to ensure
18 that the level of radon and its radioactive progeny at any delivery
19 point shall not exceed: 100 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 2.7 pCi/l) averaged
20 over any one hour period, 75 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 2.02 pCi/l) averaged
21 over any 24 hour period, 50 Bq/m³ (equivalent to 1.37 pCi/l) averaged
22 over any seven day period.

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

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

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

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

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

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

54 (a) The chairman of the department shall estimate prior to the start
55 of each state fiscal year the total costs and expenses, including the
56 compensation and expenses of the commission and the department, their

1 officers, agents and employees, and including the cost of retirement
2 contributions, social security, health and dental insurance, survivor's
3 benefits, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance and other fringe
4 benefits required to be paid by the state for the personnel of the
5 commission and the department, and including all other items of mainte-
6 nance and operation expenses, and all other direct and indirect costs.
7 The estimate by the chairman of the department relating to the costs and
8 expenses of the department of health of administering article thirty-
9 five-B of the public health law shall be made in agreement with the
10 commissioner of health and the director of the budget. Based on such
11 estimates, the chairman shall determine the amount to be paid by each
12 assessed public utility company and the Long Island power authority and
13 a bill shall be rendered to each such public utility company and author-
14 ity.

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

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