

# MPCA FEE INCREASE PROHIBITION BILL

## OPPOSE HF 2940 (BLISS); SF 2637 (INGEBRIGTSEN)

### THIS BILL WOULD:

Prohibit the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) from increasing fees paid by permit applicants without prior direction from the legislature. The programs affected are:

- Training water pollution control personnel,
- Training those who build, design, install, service, or operate septic systems,
- Operator certification for wastewater treatment and water supply systems, and
- All water permits including pollution discharge permits and feedlot permits.

The bill also requires the MPCA to submit a report to the legislature of the use of all fees collected for water quality permits in FY 2019

### THIS IS A PROBLEM BECAUSE:

The MPCA began a process last year to review the current water permit fee structure. They found that fees related to municipal and industrial wastewater permits, noncontact cooling water permits, stormwater permits, feedlot permits, septic systems, environmental review, variances, and laboratory certification fell \$23.58 million short of covering program costs.

The program costs pay for the staff and resources to

- Write permits
- Set discharge limits
- Evaluate variance requests
- Inspect facilities for compliance; enforce against non-compliant entities
- Perform compliance-related monitoring
- Provide training and licensure to industry professionals and certify laboratories

A shortfall in fees has caused the MPCA to backfill funding from other sources. It also has created delays in permitting and threatened environmental protection efforts as some monitoring and compliance tasks go undone.

### HERE IS A PROPOSED SOLUTION:

The legislature should allow the MPCA to continue a process started last year to evaluate the current fee structure and adjust fees where there are shortfalls.



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