

Legislative Analysis



CREATE BROWN ALERT SYSTEM FOR DANGEROUS LEVELS OF E. COLI IN WATER

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House Bill 4427 (H-3) as reported from committee
Sponsor: Rep. Alicia St. Germaine
Committee: Natural Resources and Tourism
Complete to 10-30-25

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4427 would amend the Emergency Management Act to require issuance of a ***brown alert*** for a county if the waters of that county are determined to contain a dangerous level of *Escherichia coli* (commonly referred to as *E. coli*) as the result of a discharge of sewage from a combined sewer or sanitary sewer overflow event. A dangerous level of *E. coli* would be defined as an amount in excess of 300 *E. coli* per 100 milliliters.

Brown alert would mean an emergency alert through the Wireless Emergency Alert system concerning a dangerous level of *E. coli* in any waters of the county.

The ***health officer*** or health officer's designee would be responsible for determining whether dangerous levels of *E. coli* or sewage are present in the waters of their county. As soon as practical, but within 12 hours of making such a determination, the officer or designee would have to notify the emergency management coordinator of the applicable county or counties. The coordinator would have to issue a brown alert to county residents as soon as possible, but no later than 12 hours after being notified of the dangerous levels. A brown alert would have to include the location of the contamination and the health risks of exposure to that contamination and could contain additional information as well.

Health officer would mean the individual in charge of either a county health department or a health department that represents multiple counties.

Proposed MCL 30.410a

BACKGROUND:

According to testimony presented in committee, the bill is intended to provide a uniform notification to residents of an area impacted by a sewage overflow if that overflow resulted in *E. coli* contaminating a body of water. This would provide clarity to residents as to whether that body of water was safe to be in or around and help prevent adverse health effects.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4427 would not have a significant fiscal impact on state expenditures to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or local units of government.

POSITIONS:

The following entities indicated support for the bill:

- Huron River Watershed Council (10-1-25)
- Michigan Environmental Council (10-1-25)
- Clean Water Action (9-10-25)

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