

SUPPORT HB2221/ SB1373

Environmental Justice and Community Outreach
Delegate Hayes/ Senator McClellan

Reasons to support SB 1373/ HB2221

- Often when the public first learns about a new project in their community the applicant and agency may be advanced in the development process, depriving the public the ability to weigh in at those critical first steps
- This legislation would help ensure that communities are notified in advance of any permits being submitted so that their voice can be considered in the drafting of permit applications
- This bill would also take an important first step in updating the media channels used to notify the public by requiring the use of individual mailings and social media in addition to the traditional newspaper notices
- By requiring the applicant to gather and submit comments from the impacted community, DEQ will have the ability to better assess whether an applicant made a meaningful effort to accommodate the concerns raised

Overview:

This legislation would require applicants for certain air, hazardous waste, and water new and/or major modified permits to hold a public meeting. The applicant must publish notices of the hearing in English and Spanish in a newspaper, publish notice of the meeting on social media, and on signage at the proposed site location. Additionally, the applicant will need to mail notices to properties within a 3-mile radius. These actions must be taken at least 60 days prior to the public meeting.

At the public meeting applicants must advise the community of the expected environmental impacts and take written and verbal comments. A summary of those comments must be submitted to DEQ along with a report responding to community concerns.

The application will not be deemed complete and ready for review until all these steps have been completed by the applicant and verified by DEQ.



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