



ARIZONA STATE SENATE
Fifty-Seventh Legislature, First Regular Session

FACT SHEET FOR S.B. 1444

helium exploration; aquifer protection permit

Purpose

Exempts helium exploration and production wells that are designed, constructed, operated and maintained to not discharge a contaminant into an aquifer from the statutorily outlined aquifer protection permit requirements.

Background

Any person who discharges or who owns or operates a facility that discharges must obtain an aquifer protection permit from the Director of the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) or the Director's designee ([A.R.S. § 49-241](#)). The Director of ADEQ, by rule, may exempt specifically described classes or categories of facilities from the aquifer protection permit requirements on a finding either that there is no reasonable probability of degradation of the aquifer or that aquifer water quality will be maintained and protected because the discharges from the facilities are regulated under other federal or state programs that provide the same or greater aquifer water quality protection ([A.R.S. § 49-250](#)).

Discharge is the addition of a pollutant from a facility either directly to an aquifer or to the land surface or the vadose zone in such a manner that there is a reasonable probability that the pollutant will reach an aquifer ([A.R.S. § 49-201](#)).

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Exempts helium exploration and production wells that are designed, constructed, operated and maintained to not discharge a contaminant into an aquifer from the statutorily outlined aquifer protection permit requirements.
2. Exempts ADEQ from rulemaking requirements for one year.
3. Contains a statement of legislative intent.
4. Makes technical changes.
5. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

Prepared by Senate Research
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SB/slp