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HOUSE BILL NO. 1677

Offered January 13, 1999

A BILL to amend and reenact § 10.1-1455 the Code of Virginia, relating to medical wastes; penalties.

Patrons—Morgan, Blevins, Bloxom, Christian, Cox, Darner, Davis, Drake, Hamilton, Hargrove, Marshall, McQuigg, O'Brien, Parrish, Rhodes, Ruff, Sherwood and Weatherholtz

Referred to Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 10.1-1455 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 10.1-1455. Penalties and enforcement.

A. Any person who violates any provision of this chapter, any condition of a permit or certification, or any regulation or order of the Board shall, upon such finding by an appropriate circuit court, be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$25,000 for each day of such violation. All civil penalties under this section shall be recovered in a civil action brought by the Attorney General in the name of the Commonwealth. Such civil penalties shall be paid into the state treasury and deposited by the State Treasurer into the Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund pursuant to Chapter 25 (§ 10.1-2500 et seq.) of this title.

B. In addition to the penalties provided above, any person who knowingly transports any hazardous waste or medical waste to an unpermitted facility; who knowingly transports, treats, stores, or disposes of hazardous waste or medical waste without a permit or in violation of a permit; or who knowingly makes any false statement or representation in any application, disclosure statement, label, manifest, record, report, permit, or other document filed, maintained, or used for purposes of hazardous waste or medical waste program compliance shall be guilty of a felony punishable by a term of imprisonment of not less than one year nor more than five years and a fine of not more than \$25,000 for each violation, either or both. The provisions of this subsection shall be deemed to constitute a lesser included offense of the violation set forth under subsection H I.

Each day of violation of each requirement shall constitute a separate offense.

C. The Board is authorized to issue orders to require any person to comply with the provisions of any law administered by the Board, the Director or the Department, any condition of a permit or certification, or any regulations promulgated by the Board or to comply with any case decision, as defined in § 9-6.14:4, of the Board or Director. Any such order shall be issued only after a hearing with at least thirty days' notice to the affected person of the time, place and purpose thereof. Such order shall become effective not less than fifteen days after mailing a copy thereof by certified mail to the last known address of such person. The provisions of this section shall not affect the authority of the Board to issue separate orders and regulations to meet any emergency as provided in § 10.1-1402.

D. Any person willfully violating or refusing, failing or neglecting to comply with any regulation or order of the Board or the Director, any condition of a permit or certification or any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor unless a different penalty is specified.

Any person violating or failing, neglecting, or refusing to obey any lawful regulation or order of the Board or the Director, any condition of a permit or certification or any provision of this chapter may be compelled in a proceeding instituted in an appropriate court by the Board or the Director to obey such regulation, permit, certification, order or provision of this chapter and to comply therewith by injunction, mandamus, or other appropriate remedy.

E. Without limiting the remedies which may be obtained in this section, any person violating or failing, neglecting or refusing to obey any injunction, mandamus or other remedy obtained pursuant to this section shall be subject, in the discretion of the court, to a civil penalty not to exceed \$25,000 for each violation. Such civil penalties shall be paid into the state treasury and deposited by the State Treasurer into the Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund pursuant to Chapter 25 of this title. Each day of violation of each requirement shall constitute a separate offense. Such civil penalties may, in the discretion of the court assessing them, be directed to be paid into the treasury of the county, city or town in which the violation occurred, to be used to abate environmental pollution in such manner as the court may, by order, direct, except that where the owner in violation is the county, city or town itself, or its agent, the court shall direct the penalty to be paid into the state treasury and deposited by the State Treasurer into the Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund pursuant to Chapter 25 of this title.

F. With the consent of any person who has violated or failed, neglected or refused to obey any regulation or order of the Board or the Director, any condition of a permit or any provision of this

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60 chapter, the Board may provide, in an order issued by the Board against such person, for the payment of
61 civil charges for past violations in specific sums, not to exceed the limits specified in this section. Such
62 civil charges shall be instead of any appropriate civil penalty which could be imposed under this section.
63 Such civil charges shall be paid into the state treasury and deposited by the State Treasurer into the
64 Virginia Environmental Emergency Response Fund pursuant to Chapter 25 of this title.

65 G. In addition to all other available remedies, the Board may issue special orders, as defined in
66 § 10.1-1182, for the violation of: (i) any law or regulation administered by the Board; (ii) any condition
67 of a permit or certificate issued pursuant to this chapter; or (iii) any case decision or order of the Board.
68 The Board may issue special orders only after at least two consecutive notices of the same violations
69 have been issued without satisfactory compliance and a fact-finding proceeding has been held with
70 reasonable notice to the affected persons of the time, place and purpose thereof. Special orders shall
71 become effective five days after having been delivered to the affected persons or mailed by certified
72 mail to the last known address of such persons. Should the Board find that any person is adversely
73 affecting the public health, safety or welfare, the Board shall, after a reasonable attempt to give notice,
74 declare a state of emergency and may issue, without a hearing, an emergency special order directing the
75 person to cease the activity immediately and shall within ten days hold a hearing, after reasonable notice
76 as to the time and place thereof to the person, to affirm, modify, amend or cancel the emergency special
77 order. If the Board finds that a person who has been issued a special order or an emergency special
78 order is not complying with the special order's terms, the Board may utilize the enforcement and penalty
79 provisions of this article to secure compliance.

80 H. In addition to all other available remedies, the Department and generators of recycling residues
81 shall have standing to seek enforcement by injunction of conditions which are specified by applicants in
82 order to receive the priority treatment of their permit applications pursuant to § 10.1-1408.1.

83 I. Any person who knowingly transports, treats, stores, disposes of, or exports any hazardous waste
84 *or medical waste* in violation of this chapter or in violation of the regulations promulgated by the Board
85 and who knows at the time that he thereby places another person in imminent danger of death or serious
86 bodily injury, shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a felony punishable by a term of imprisonment of not
87 less than two years nor more than fifteen years and a fine of not more than \$250,000, either or both. A
88 defendant that is not an individual shall, upon conviction of violating this section, be subject to a fine
89 not exceeding the greater of one million dollars or an amount that is three times the economic benefit
90 realized by the defendant as a result of the offense. The maximum penalty shall be doubled with respect
91 to both fine and imprisonment for any subsequent conviction of the same person.

92 J. Criminal prosecutions under this chapter shall be commenced within three years after discovery of
93 the offense, notwithstanding the provisions of any other statute.

94 K. The Board shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs in any action
95 brought by the Board under this section in which it substantially prevails on the merits of the case,
96 unless special circumstances would make an award unjust.

97 **2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment in state**
98 **correctional facilities. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation**
99 **is \$0 in FY 2009.**