

Legislative Analysis



CREATE BROWN ALERT SYSTEM FOR CERTAIN WATER CONTAMINANTS

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4427 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Alicia St. Germaine
Committee: Natural Resources and Tourism
Complete to 9-10-25

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 a dangerous level of sewage or *Escherichia coli* (commonly referred to as *E. coli*) is detected in the waters of that county. What constitutes a dangerous level would be determined using the maximum contaminant levels provided for in 42 USC 300f and the rules promulgated under 42 USC 300f to 300j-27.¹

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

The obligation to determine whether dangerous levels are present would belong to the drain commissioner, public works commissioner, water resources commissioner, or a designee of any of those commissioners. As soon as practical, but within 12 hours of determining that a dangerous level of *E. coli* or sewage is present in the waters of their county, the applicable commissioner or designee would have to notify the emergency management coordinator of that county. The coordinator would have to issue a brown alert to the residents of the county as soon as possible, but no later than 12 hours after being notified of the dangerous levels.

A brown alert would have to contain the location of the contamination and the health risks of exposure to that contamination, and could contain additional information as well.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4427 is unlikely to affect costs or revenues for the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). The bill may increase costs for local governments by requiring that certain local officials provide notification of qualifying water contamination to other local officials or the public. The extent of these potential notification costs is unclear and likely to vary, as some local jurisdictions may have the requisite communication infrastructure in place while others may not. These potential costs are likely to be covered by extant funding, as the bill does not provide additional appropriations. The bill is unlikely to affect local government revenues.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/national-primary-drinking-water-regulations>