

**SUBJECT:** Annual water loss audits by utilities receiving funds from TWDB

**COMMITTEE:** Natural Resources — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 6 ayes — Ritter, Callegari, Corte, Lucio, D. Miller, Smithee  
1 nay — T. King  
4 absent — Creighton, Frost, Laubenberg, Martinez Fischer

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 23 — 30-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

**WITNESSES:** For — Ken Kramer, Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club  
Against — None  
On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Robert Mace, Texas Water Development Board)

**BACKGROUND:** Every five years, a retail public utility is required to perform a water loss audit to be filed with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

**DIGEST:** SB 2315 would require a retail public utility receiving financial assistance from the TWDB to perform annual water loss audits to be filed with the TWDB.  
  
The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2009.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** One of the most effective water conservation efforts is stopping leakage through pipes. SB 2315 would reduce water loss resulting from aging infrastructure.  
  
The annual audit requirement would apply only to utilities that received financial assistance from the state. This would be an appropriate measure to ensure that those receiving financial assistance were, in fact, making

progress with water projects and that infrastructure problems were not continuing unnoted.

OPPONENTS  
SAY:

Requiring retail public utilities who were receiving financial assistance from the TWDB to perform water loss audits annually, rather than every five years, could be burdensome, especially for smaller utilities that may have few employees and less sophisticated record-keeping systems. These smaller utilities could have to hire engineers in order to comply, which can be expensive. The cost of a water audit can range up to \$20,000, depending on the size and record-keeping capabilities of the utility. This would be a large burden to incur annually, regardless of the size of the utility.