



SENATE BILL 616: Environmental Health Associates.

**This Bill Analysis
reflects the contents
of the bill as it was
presented in
committee.**

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee: Senate Agriculture, Energy, and Environment. **Date:** April 19, 2023
If favorable, re-refer to Finance. If favorable,
re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate

Introduced by: Sen. Jarvis **Prepared by:** Kyle Evans

Analysis of: First Edition **Committee Counsel**

OVERVIEW: *Senate Bill 616 would do all of the following: (i) create a certification for registered environmental health associates; (ii) modify the education and experience qualifications for registered environmental health specialists; (iii) decrease the amount of time an individual can be certified as a registered environmental health specialist intern; (iv) and make other technical and conforming changes.*

CURRENT LAW: Article 4 of Chapter 90A of the General Statutes governs environmental health practice, and authorizes the Board of Environmental Health Specialist Examiners to issue certificates of registration authorizing people to carry out environmental health practice, including registered environmental health specialists and registered environmental health specialist interns.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Certification for Registered Environmental Health Associates

The bill would establish a certification for registered environmental health associates, who would be allowed to perform all of the following duties while working under the responsible charge of a registered environmental health specialist:

- Permitting and inspections of private water wells.
- Inspections of Category I and II food establishments.
- Inspections of lodging establishments.
- Permitting and inspections of any Type II or Type III on-site wastewater systems, including system layouts and existing wastewater systems.
- Inspections of migrant housing.
- Inspections of private, public, and religious schools.
- Inspections of local confinement facilities.

The bill would direct the Board of Environmental Health Specialist Examiners to issue a certificate of registration as a registered environmental health associate to any person who satisfactorily completes general and specialized training in environmental health approved by the Department of Health and Human Services, and graduates with an associate, bachelor's, or postgraduate degree either (i) from a program that is accredited by the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC), or (ii) having earned a minimum of 15 semester hours in the physical, biological, natural, life, or health sciences.

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Modify Education and Experience Qualifications for Registered Environmental Health Specialists

Under current law, to become certified as a registered environmental health specialist or a registered environmental health specialist intern, an applicant must satisfy at least one of three separate education and experience qualifications.

This bill would modify each of these three separate education and experience qualifications in the following manner:

- Applicants who graduated with a bachelor's or postgraduate degree from an EHAC-accredited program would satisfy the education and experience qualification, and would no longer have to complete one or more years of field experience in environmental health practice before meeting the qualification.
- Applicants who graduated with a bachelor's or postgraduate degree in public health would satisfy the education and experience qualification upon completing one year of experience in the field of environmental health practice, rather than completing two years.
- Applicants who graduated with a bachelor's or postgraduate degree while earning 30 semester hours (or 45 quarter hours) of the physical, biological, natural, life, or health sciences would satisfy the education and experience qualification upon completing one year of experience in the field of environmental health practice, rather than completing two years.

Furthermore, the bill would also establish a new option for satisfying the education and experience qualification for applicants who have worked five or more continuous years as a registered environmental health associate.

Limit Period of Certification for Registered Environmental Health Specialist Interns

Registered environmental health specialist interns are individuals who possess the necessary educational qualifications required for certification as a registered environmental health specialist but have not yet completed the experience and specialized training requirements. Under current law, the Board may only certify a registered environmental health specialist intern for not more than three years.

The bill would decrease the maximum time someone can be certified as a registered environmental health specialist intern from three years to two years.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Section 1 of this act becomes effective May 1, 2024. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.

Aaron McGlothlin, Legislative Analysis Division, substantially contributed to this summary.