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By: **Senators Frosh and Ruben**

Introduced and read first time: January 17, 2003

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 14, 2003

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper Plumbing**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper  
4 Plumbing; specifying the membership and duties of the Task Force; providing  
5 for the appointment of the chairman of the Task Force; providing for the staffing  
6 of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving  
7 compensation for serving on the Task Force; authorizing a member of the Task  
8 Force to receive reimbursement for certain expenses; requiring a certain report  
9 by a certain date; providing for the termination of the Task Force; and generally  
10 relating to the Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper Plumbing.

11 WHEREAS, More than 80% of domestic and commercial water pipes are made  
12 of copper; and

13 WHEREAS, Pinhole leaks in copper water pipes can cause extensive, costly  
14 damage to the buildings in which the pipes are located; and

15 WHEREAS, The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission has received ~~five~~  
16 ~~thousand~~ more than 4,600 complaints from citizens in Montgomery and Prince  
17 George's counties about pinhole leaks in copper water pipes; and

18 WHEREAS, The incidence of pinhole leaks is ~~unusually high in certain~~  
19 ~~communities~~ higher in some areas than in other areas; and

20 WHEREAS, Claims for damages caused by pinhole leaks can contribute to  
21 increased premiums or cancellation of homeowners' insurance policies; now, therefore,

22 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
23 MARYLAND, That:

1 (a) There is a Task Force to Study Pinhole Leaks in Copper Plumbing.

2 (b) (1) The Task Force consists of the following members:

3 ~~(+)~~ (i) the Chairman of the Washington Suburban Sanitary  
4 Commission, or the Chairman's designee;

5 ~~(+)~~ (ii) the Secretary of Housing and Community Development, or the  
6 Secretary's designee;

7 ~~(+)~~ (iii) the Secretary of the Environment, or the Secretary's designee;

8 ~~(+)~~ (iv) the Commissioner of the Maryland Insurance Administration,  
9 or the Commissioner's designee;

10 ~~(5)~~ (v) two representatives designated by the Maryland Association of  
11 Counties;

12 ~~(6)~~ (vi) one faculty member from the University System of Maryland  
13 with expertise in the engineering and design of plumbing and piping, designated by  
14 the Chancellor; and

15 ~~(7)~~ (vii) the following members appointed by the Governor:

16 ~~(+)~~ 1. ~~one representative of the copper plumbing industry~~  
17 master plumber who is a resident of Maryland, is licensed by the State Board of  
18 Plumbing, and has expertise in the installation and replacement of copper plumbing;

19 ~~(+)~~ 2. one person with expertise in copper corrosion; and

20 ~~(+)~~ 3. two consumer representatives from areas of the State  
21 served by different water suppliers.

22 (2) The Task Force shall invite participation of a representative of the  
23 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with expertise in water chemistry, as  
24 designated by the EPA Administrator.

25 (c) The Governor shall designate the chairman of the Task Force.

26 (d) The Department of Housing and Community Development shall staff the  
27 Task Force.

28 (e) A member of the Task Force:

29 (1) may not receive compensation; but

30 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State  
31 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

32 (f) The Task Force shall:

1 (1) determine the extent, patterns, and trends of pinhole leaks in  
2 Maryland;

3 (2) investigate the possible causes of pinhole leaks in copper plumbing,  
4 ~~including water chemistry, water treatment practices, water additives, copper~~  
5 ~~plumbing design and installation practices, including: water chemistry requirements~~  
6 ~~adopted by the EPA; water treatment practices; water additives; copper plumbing~~  
7 ~~design, manufacturing, and installation practices;~~ and copper plumbing cleaning and  
8 lining practices;

9 (2) (3) investigate the effect of pinhole leaks in copper plumbing on  
10 homeowners' insurance coverage; and

11 (3) (4) make recommendations regarding possible remedies for pinhole  
12 leaks in copper plumbing and possible steps for Maryland residents to take if they  
13 experience a problem with pinhole leaks.

14 (g) The Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
15 General Assembly on or before December 31, ~~2003~~ 2004.

16 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take  
17 effect June 1, 2003. It shall remain effective for a period of ~~7~~ 1 year and 8 months and,  
18 at the end of ~~December 31, 2003~~ January 31, 2005, with no further action required by  
19 the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.