

13:9-25 et al

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

NJSA 13:9-25 et al. ("Forest Fire Prevention and Control Act")

LAWS 1981 CHAPTER 369

Bill No. A3092

Sponsor(s) Stewart

Date Introduced Feb. 9, 1981

Committee: Assembly Agriculture and Environment

Senate Natural Resources & Agriculture

Amended during passage Yes No

Date of Passage: Assembly Nov. 16, 1981

Senate Dec. 10, 1981

Date of approval Dec. 30, 1981

Following statements are attached if available:

Sponsor statement Yes No (Below)

Committee Statement: Assembly Yes No

Senate Yes No

Fiscal Note Yes No

Veto Message Yes No

Message on signing Yes No

Following were printed:

Reports Yes No

Hearings Yes No

Sponsor's statement:

This bill amends, supplements and repeals portions of the statutes concerning the prevention and control of forest fires.

6/22/81

ASSEMBLY, No. 3092

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 9, 1981

By Assemblyman STEWART

Referred to Committee on Agriculture and Environment

AN ACT concerning the prevention and control of forest fires;
amending, supplementing and repealing certain sections of
Title 13 of the Revised Statutes.

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. (New section) Sections 1 through 10 inclusive of this act shall
2 be cited and may be known as the "Forest Fire Prevention and
3 Control Act."

1 2. (New section) The Legislature declares it to be the policy of
2 this State to prevent, control and manage wildfires on or threaten-
3 ing the forest or wildlands of New Jersey in order to preserve
4 forests and other natural resources; to enhance the growth and
5 maintenance of forests; to protect recreational, residential, wild-
6 life, plant life, watershed, airshed, and other values; to promote the
7 stability of forest using industries; and to prevent loss of life,
8 bodily injury and damage to property from wildfire and con-
9 flagrations.

1 3. (New section) As used in this amendatory and supplementary
2 act:

3 a. "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Environmental
4 Protection or an official designated by the commissioner.

5 b. "Back fire" means a controlled fire purposely ignited in the
6 path of wildfire along the inner edge of a control line.

7 c. "Department" means the Department of Environmental
8 Protection.

9 d. "Forest" means and includes any forest, bushland, grass-
10 land, salt marsh, and any combination thereof.

11 e. "Wildfire" means an uncontrolled fire burning the different
12 types of vegetation that cover the land.

1 4. (New section) The Department of Environmental Protection
2 is authorized to make, conduct or participate in any investigation

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill
is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

3 or survey designed to established the cause of and responsibility
4 for a particular wildfire and to cooperate with any law enforcement
5 officers of this State with respect to violations of this act.

1 5. (New section) The Department of Environmental Protection is
2 authorized to formulate, promulgate, amend, and repeal rules and
3 regulations and to issue orders to carry out the purposes of this
4 act.

1 6. (New section) No person shall discharge or cause to be dis-
2 charged any incendiary device on or across any forest land, or
3 operate a welding torch or other mechanism which may cause a
4 wildfire, without clearing flammable material surrounding the
5 operation or without taking such other precautions as prescribed
6 by the department to insure against the ignition and spread of
7 wildfire, or cause to be operated any engine, locomotive, powered
8 vehicle, equipment, or other machinery not equipped with spark
9 arrestors or other suitable controls, approved by the department
10 by rule to prevent the escape of fire or sparks. Spark arrestors or
11 devices must be in good working order and in use. The department
12 may prohibit the operation of any locomotive, rapid transit, engine,
13 equipment, or other motorized unit not properly equipped with
14 department approved fire protection devices. Escape of fire from
15 such equipment shall be presumed to be evidence that it was not
16 maintained properly in compliance with this section. Any person
17 in violation thereof may be put upon his proof to rebut such pre-
18 sumption in any civil proceeding under this act.

1 7. (New section) No person shall throw or drop any object within
2 forests which is likely to cause a wildfire, including but not limited
3 to a lighted cigarette, lighted cigar, match or live ashes.

1 8. (New section) The rights-of-way of all railroads which are
2 operated through forests shall be prescribed burned by the railroad
3 during the fall and winter months and kept cleared of all obsolete
4 ties or other flammable material. The department shall notify the
5 owner of such property that failure to comply will result in the
6 property being declared a public nuisance which by reason of its
7 conditions or operations is a special forest fire hazard and as such
8 endangers other property or human life. The department shall
9 notify the owner of such property or the person responsible for
10 the condition or operation thereof, that it has been declared a
11 public nuisance and order him to abate it.

1 9. (New section) The department may, in the name of the State,
2 recover costs of extinguishment and costs associated therewith
3 from any person or agency, public or private, whose negligence or

4 whose knowing violation of any provision of this act caused any
5 fire in the State for the services of persons and equipment under
6 the provisions of this act to control, confine, extinguish, or suppress
7 such fire. The claim shall be paid within 60 days and if not paid
8 within that time, the department may bring suit against the person
9 or agency in a court of competent jurisdiction for the collection of
10 the claim.

1 10. (New section) If any person violates any of the provisions of
2 this act or any rule, regulation or order promulgated pursuant to
3 provisions of this act, the department may :

4 (a) Institute a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction
5 for injunctive relief to prohibit and prevent such violation and the
6 court may proceed in the action in a summary manner. Any person
7 who violates the provisions of this act or any rule, regulation or
8 order promulgated pursuant to this act shall be liable to a penalty
9 of not more than \$5,000.00 for each offense, to be collected in a
10 civil action by a summary proceeding under "the penalty enforce-
11 ment law" (N. J. S. 2A:58-1 et seq.) or in any case before a court
12 of competent jurisdiction wherein injunctive relief has been re-
13 quested. The Superior Court, municipal court and county district
14 court shall have jurisdiction to enforce "the penalty enforcement
15 law." The Attorney General or the prosecuting attorney of the
16 municipality or county in which the offense was committed may
17 prosecute the case. If the violation is of a continuing nature, each
18 day during which it continues shall constitute an additional, sepa-
19 rate and distinct offense. The department is authorized to settle
20 any claim for a penalty under this section in such amount in the
21 discretion of the department as may appear appropriate and
22 equitable under all of the circumstances.

23 (b) Petition the Attorney General to bring a criminal action
24 against any person who knowingly violates any of the provisions
25 of this act or any rule, regulation or order promulgated pursuant to
26 the provisions of this act and thereby causes a wildfire. Such
27 person shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a crime of the fourth
28 degree and notwithstanding the provisions of N. J. S. 2C:43-3 shall
29 be subject to a fine of not more than \$100,000.00 for each offense; or

30 (c) Levy a civil administrative remedy of not more than
31 \$5,000.00 for each violation and additional penalties of not more
32 than \$500.00 for each day during which such violation continues
33 after receipt of an order from the department. No penalty shall be
34 levied pursuant to this section until the person has been notified by
35 certified mail or personal service. The notice shall include a refer-

36 ence to the section of the statute violated; a concise statement of the
 37 facts alleged to constitute a violation; a statement of the person's
 38 right to a hearing. The person shall have 20 days from receipt of
 39 the notice within which to deliver to the commissioner a written
 40 request for a hearing. After the hearing and upon finding that a
 41 violation has occurred, the commissioner may issue a final order
 42 after assessing the amount of the fine specified in the notice. If no
 43 hearing is requested, then the notice shall become a final order
 44 after the expiration of the 20 day period. Payment is due when
 45 the final order is issued or the notice becomes a final order.

1 11. R. S. 13:9-1 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-1. The [board of conservation and development, hereinafter
 3 in this chapter designated as the "board"] *Department of Environ-*
 4 *mental Protection* shall maintain a forest fire service for the pro-
 5 tection of [such] forests, [brush lands, and salt marshes of the
 6 State,] and property adjacent thereto, wherever the [board] *de-*
 7 *partment* shall determine the necessity therefor[, which shall be
 8 known as the State forest fire service].

1 12. R. S. 13:9-2 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-2. The [board] *department*, through its agents, shall have
 3 power to:
 4 a. Determine forest fire hazards;
 5 b. Remove or cause to be removed brush, undergrowth or other
 6 material which contributes to forest fire hazards;
 7 c. Maintain or cause to be maintained fire breaks;
 8 d. [Set] *Plough lands, set prescribed fires and back fires, order*
 9 *any highway or road closed to traffic and [make] adopt regulations*
 10 *for burning [brush] forests or any forest material;*
 11 e. Summon any [male] person between the ages of 18 and 50,
 12 who may be within the jurisdiction of the State, to assist in ex-
 13 tinguishing fires; and
 14 f. Require the use of *materials, equipment or property needed*
 15 *for extinguishing [fires] wildfires when required to abate an*
 16 *emergency.*

1 13. R. S. 13:9-3 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-3. The [board] *department* shall have power from time to
 3 time, subject to the limitations of this chapter, to prescribe such
 4 duties and make such regulations for the government of firewardens
 5 for the prevention and extinguishing of forest fires, and for the
 6 employment, discharge and pay of firewardens, as, in its judgment,
 7 shall be efficacious to that purpose. *Firewardens shall perform*
 8 *such service and have such authority as shall be determined by the*
 9 *department.*

1 14. R. S. 13:9-4 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-4. The [board] department may purchase and distribute
3 to the firewardens such material, *supplies* and equipment and pur-
4 chase such other property as it may deem necessary to effectuate
5 the provisions of this chapter. *The department shall be custodian*
6 *of all property, equipment and supplies used in the protection of*
7 *forests.*

1 15. R. S. 13:9-5 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-5. All expenses incurred by the [board] department in
3 carrying out the provisions of this chapter, including the compen-
4 sation of officers and employees in the forest fire service, shall be
5 paid by the State [Treasurer on the warrant of the comptroller,
6 upon vouchers duly approved by the board]; but such sums shall
7 not exceed the amount [annually] appropriated therefor by the
8 Legislature with the amount available from cooperative forest fire
9 funds received from the Federal Government or any county, mu-
10 nicipality, corporation or person.

1 16. R. S. 13:9-6 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-6. The [board] department shall divide the forest[, wood-
3 land and salt marsh] areas of the State into divisions, sections and
4 districts.

1 17. R. S. 13:9-7 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-7. The [board] department may appoint, removable by the
3 [board] department after charges have been preferred and hearing
4 granted, a State firewarden, [not more than eight division fire-
5 wardens, not more than 70 section firewardens, and not more than
6 400 district firewardens with pay, and such division, section and
7 district firewardens, without pay, as may be necessary, and such
8 clerical force as may be necessary to conduct the business of the
9 service, subject to the provisions of section 13:9-8 of this Title]
10 *and such supervisors, deputies, assistants, other officers and em-*
11 *ployees as may be needed and fix their compensation. The depart-*
12 *ment may create job titles and appoint with or without annual*
13 *salary, a work force necessary to conduct the business of the ser-*
14 *vice.*

1 18. R. S. 13:9-9 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-9. The [board] department shall, when the emergency
3 arises, employ [helpers] work crews and purchase equipment to
4 fight forest fires as may be deemed necessary. *The department may*
5 *enter into cooperative or contractual agreements with the United*
6 *States or any agency or department thereof, other State depart-*
7 *ments and any subdivisions of this State or any other person or*
8 *body politic for the accomplishment of the purposes of this amend-*

9 *atory and supplementary act. The department shall cooperate with*
 10 *any public and private agencies or persons in the conduct of fire*
 11 *management plans and other matters of mutual interest.*

1 19. R. S. 13:9-10 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-10. Each [district] firewarden, subject to the approval of
 3 the [State firewarden] *department*, may designate one or more
 4 proper persons to act as deputy or deputies in case of his absence
 5 or disability from any cause.

1 20. R. S. 13:9-13 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-13. The State firewarden, under the direction of the
 3 [board] *commissioner*, shall administer *and supervise* the forest fire
 4 service, *cooperating agencies* and such laws as shall deal with the
 5 protection of forests[, brush land and salt marshes] from [fires]
 6 *wildfire*. [He shall be the custodian of all property used in forest
 7 fire protection.]

1 21. R. S. 13:9-15 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-15. Firewardens *shall be trained law enforcement officers*
 3 *and* shall enforce the laws of this State for the protection of
 4 forests[, brush land and salt marshes] from [fire] *wildfire*. They
 5 shall have control and direction of all persons and apparatus en-
 6 gaged in extinguishing fires in forests[, brush land and salt
 7 marshes]. They may plough lands or set back fires to check any
 8 fire. They may summon any [male] person between the ages of 18
 9 and 50 years, living or being within their jurisdiction, to assist in
 10 extinguishing fires, and may require the use of any property
 11 needed for such purpose. No physically fit person so summoned
 12 shall refuse or neglect to assist, nor shall any person refuse the
 13 use of any property, *equipment* or material required.

1 22. R. S. 13:9-16 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-16. No person shall obstruct, *threaten, abuse, assault, in-*
 3 *jure* or in anywise interfere with any firewarden, his deputies or
 4 assistants, or any one or more of them, in the performance of any
 5 duty under this chapter.

1 23. R. S. 13:9-17 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-17. No action for trespass shall lie against any person
 3 crossing or working upon lands of another to extinguish [fire]
 4 *wildfire*. *Any duly authorized employee of the department and*
 5 *any law enforcement officer or fire protection officer having juris-*
 6 *isdiction to enforce any provision of this amendatory and supple-*
 7 *mentary act shall have power to enter upon any forest lands at any*
 8 *time in order to inspect the same and to ascertain the degree of*
 9 *compliance with this act and rule, regulation or order adopted*
 10 *pursuant to this act.*

1 24. R. S. 13:9-19 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-19. In any district for which firewardens have been ap-
 3 pointed under the provisions of this chapter, no person shall set
 4 fire to or *cause to be set on fire in any manner whatsoever; or to*
 5 *start fires anywhere and permit them to spread to forests, thereby,*
 6 *causing damage to or threat to life or property, either accidentally*
 7 *or otherwise, directly or indirectly, in person or by agent, or cause*
 8 *to be burned, wasted, fallows, stumps, logs, brush, dry grass, fallen*
 9 *timber or any property, material, or vegetation being grown there-*
 10 *on, or anything that may cause a forest fire, without first obtaining*
 11 *the writtten permission of the [State firewarden, or a division,*
 12 *section or district firewarden] department. Within the designated*
 13 *protection area this requirement supersedes any law, rule, regula-*
 14 *tion or ordinance inconsistent therewith. No such permission shall*
 15 *be granted [by any firewarden,] if, in [his] the department's*
 16 *opinion, any forest [or woodland] will be endangered thereby;*
 17 *or if it violates the air pollution statutes; nor shall any such per-*
 18 *mission, if granted, relieve or exonerate any person from any*
 19 *penalties provided by this chapter, if by reason of such [fire]*
 20 *wildfire, any forest[, brush land or salt marsh] be burned. [Per-*
 21 *mits shall not be necessary for burning any of the above enumer-*
 22 *ated materials when the fire is set at a distance of not less than 200*
 23 *feet from any forest, brush land, salt marsh, or field containing dry*
 24 *grass or other inflammable material, from which fire may be*
 25 *transmitted to any forest, brush land or salt marsh.]*

1 25. R. S. 13:9-20 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-20. No person shall, *unless granted a permit by the depart-*
 3 *ment, set fire to or burn, or cause to be burned, any forest, [brush*
 4 *land or salt marsh,] but nothing in this section shall be interpreted*
 5 *to forbid any person from setting a back fire upon his own property*
 6 *to protect the same; but, if such permitted back fire be [permitted]*
 7 *allowed to escape or does escape to adjoining property, the person*
 8 *setting such back fire, or causing it to be set, shall be [deemed to*
 9 *have violated the provisions of this chapter] subject to costs of ex-*
 10 *tinguishment and all damage incurred upon the property of an-*
 11 *other. Any firewarden, however, shall have power to set any back*
 12 *fire. Any person maintaining a recreational fire or a permitted fire*
 13 *or a fire to burn any brush, grass, litter, undergrowth or other*
 14 *material shall keep and maintain a competent watch. All reasonable*
 15 *precautions must be taken to prevent its escape from control. No*
 16 *such fire shall be left until extinguished or certified by a firewarden*
 17 *to be safely contained.*

1 26. R. S. 13:9-21 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-21. In any district in which a fire service is established,
3 any person finding a **[fire]** *wildfire* burning in a forest**[, brush**
4 **land or salt marsh,]** or where the forest**[, brush land, or salt**
5 **marsh]** is endangered, shall immediately extinguish the same**[, or,**
6 **being unable to do so,]** *and* shall notify a firewarden *as soon as*
7 *possible.*

1 27. R. S. 13:9-22 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-22. No person shall willfully or maliciously *steal*, mutilate,
3 tear down or destroy any *forest fire service property, equipment or*
4 *any* notice concerning forest fires, which has been posted under
5 regulations of the **[State firewarden]** *department.*

1 28. R. S. 13:9-23 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-23. The owner or lessee of any **[woodlands]** *forest*, any
3 contractor or employee with authority of the owner of, or any
4 person doing public work in or upon, such **[woodlands]** *forest*, who
5 shall permit or suffer the accumulation *by human activity* of
6 **[brush or tree tops, or]** any litter from **[felled]** trees, to lie or be
7 upon such **[woodlands]** *forest within 100 feet of any road trail or*
8 *fire break*, to such an extent or in such manner as to facilitate either
9 the origin or spread of forest fires, **[or who shall establish or permit**
10 **any dump or area for the disposal of waste, rubbish, or debris of**
11 **any nature, the maintenance, use or disposal of which will facilitate**
12 **either the origin or spread of forest fires,]** shall be deemed thereby
13 to have created an extraordinary fire hazard, *which endangers life*
14 *and property* and to have made and maintained a public nuisance.

1 29. R. S. 13:9-24 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-24. On the complaint of a firewarden or any citizen, the
3 **[board]** *department* shall cause an investigation to be made of the
4 alleged nuisance mentioned in section 13:9-23 of this Title. If, in
5 its judgment, a situation endangering the security of adjacent
6 property, either with reference to the possible origin or spread of
7 forest fires, exists, it shall require the responsible party to remove
8 such menace within a reasonable specified time, in manner as
9 directed and at his own cost. *If he neglects to do so, he shall be*
10 *subject to penalties provided for in this act. When the depart-*
11 *ment considers it necessary to prevent danger to life or prop-*
12 *erty, it may abate such public nuisance and charge the costs to the*
13 *responsible person, owner, lessee, firm, corporation or public*
14 *agency.* If the removal is done by burning, all the provisions and
15 requirements of this chapter shall be observed. If fire escapes and
16 damages the property of another, nothing done under this chapter

17 shall operate as a release of responsibility therefor. [Failure to
 18 comply with any requirement of the board shall subject the offender
 19 to the penalty imposed by section 13:9-26 of this Title, which
 20 penalty shall be imposed for every period of 5 days, or portion
 21 thereof, during which the requirement of the board shall be un-
 22 observed.]

1 30. R. S. 13:9-25 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-25. Compliance with the provisions of this chapter shall not
 3 bar any action for damages for which any person or corporation
 4 would otherwise be liable; but conformance with the provisions of
 5 this chapter and with the terms of any notice or order issued by the
 6 [State firewarden] *department* may be shown and considered as
 7 evidence of the use of due care on the part of such person or cor-
 8 poration.

1 31. R. S. 13:9-28 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-28. All payments on account of penalties under this chapter
 3 shall be made to the [director of Conservation and development]
 4 *Department of Environmental Protection for the support of the*
 5 *fire service.*

1 32. R. S. 13:9-29 is amended to read as follows:

2 13:9-29. Any firewarden [or deputy acting in the absence or dis-
 3 ability of a firewarden] may arrest, without warrant, any person
 4 [taken by him in the act of violating any of the provisions of this
 5 chapter, and shall proceed against such person in the manner pre-
 6 scribed by this chapter] *whom he has probable cause to believe is*
 7 *committing a violation of this act.*

1 33. Section 1 of P. L. 1948, c. 11 (C. 13:9-52) is amended to read
 2 as follows:

3 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law to the con-
 4 trary:

5 Whenever, by reason of drought, the forests of the State are in
 6 danger of fires, the [Governor] *commissioner* shall have the au-
 7 thority to forbid by proclamation any person or persons, except
 8 those authorized by such proclamation, from entering forests[,
 9 woodlands or open lands] in such parts of the State as [he] *the*
 10 *department* deems the public interest requires, and may by such
 11 proclamation suspend or curtail any open season for taking fish,
 12 game birds, game animals and furbearing animals, or any of them,
 13 therein. Such proclamation shall be in [full force and] effect at
 14 [the expiration of 24 hours] *such time as the commissioner may*
 15 *determine* after notice is given in the manner the [Governor] *com-*
 16 *missioner* may determine and remain in force and effect until
 17 rescinded by the [Governor] *commissioner*. It shall be unlawful

18 for any person or persons, except those authorized by [such
19 proclamation] *written permission of the commissioner*, to enter
20 such forests[, woodlands or open lands] while such proclamation
21 shall be in [force and] effect.

1 34. The following are repealed:

2 R. S. 13:8-17;

3 R. S. 13:8-18;

4 R. S. 13:9-8;

5 R. S. 13:9-11;

6 R. S. 13:9-14;

7 R. S. 13:9-18;

8 R. S. 13:9-26 and 13:9-27;

9 R. S. 13:9-30;

10 R. S. 13:9-36;

11 R. S. 13:9-43;

12 R. S. 13:9-45 through 13:9-51, inclusive.

1 35. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill amends, supplements and repeals portions of the statutes concerning the prevention and control of forest fires.

SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 3092

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 3, 1981

This bill amends, supplements and repeals portions of the statutes which have been in existence for decades concerning the prevention and control of forest fires.

The bill specifically defines activities which are illegal and constitute a threat to the forests of the State, such as: using a welding torch, or other mechanism which may cause wildfire, without securing the area immediately surrounding the area of work; using any machinery which could be fitted with spark arrestors without such a device; and, throwing or dropping a lighted cigarette or cigar in a forest area. The bill requires that railroads owning rights of way through forests must keep the area clear of any fire hazards.

The bill also enables the Department of Environmental Protection to: institute a civil action against violators and levy fines of up to \$5,000.00 for each offense; petition the Attorney General to bring a criminal action against the violator, who, upon conviction, would be subject to a fine of up to \$100,000.00; and, levy a civil administrative remedy of up to \$5,000.00 for each violation, plus \$500.00 each day the violation continues.

The amendatory sections of the bill update the statutory language concerning the prevention and control of forest fires. These sections further specify particular fire fighting techniques which will be used to combat wildfire. Finally, these sections designate firewardens as law enforcement officers and permit the department to hire additional personnel.

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A-1147, sponsored by Assemblyman William E. Flynn (D-Monmouth), allowing a county or municipality to place a lien on the property of an indigent where the county or municipality was required to cover the cost of the indigent's defense counsel. The bill applies to non-indictable offenses--disorderly persons or motor vehicle offenses, for example where court costs or counsel fees exceed \$150. Liens on the property of indigents are already allowed in indictable offenses.

A-2031, also sponsored by Assemblyman Flynn, permitting municipal courts to allow an indigent defendant convicted of a traffic offense to pay his fine in installments. The payment period is not to exceed six months.

The bill is in response to a court ruling that an indigent may not be jailed because of an inability to pay a fine, and must be given the opportunity to make installments payments.

A-2297, sponsored by Assemblyman Joseph D. Patero (D-Somerset), appropriating \$6,347,704 from the "1978 Emergency Flood Control Bond Fund" to the Department of Environmental Protection for grants to local governments engaged in flood control projects. The grants may not exceed fifty percent of the cost of any project.

A-3068, sponsored by Assemblyman Willie B. Brown (D-Essex), appropriating \$8,264,361 from the "Mortgage Assistance Fund" to fourteen non profit, moderate-income urban housing projects previously financed by the Housing Finance Agency.

Monies from the MAF bond fund will be used to provide "financial feasibility and stability" at projects threatened with default.

A-3083, sponsored by Assemblyman Walter Rand (D-Camden), appropriating \$2 million from the "Natural Resources Bond Fund" for harbor cleanup operations in the Delaware River. \$950,400 of the appropriation will be granted to the South Jersey Port Corporation for removal of the Spruce Street pier in Camden.

A-3092, sponsored by Assemblyman H. Donald Stewart (D-Salem), commonly known as the "Forest Fire Prevention and Control Act," the bill codifies and updates the statutes concerning the fighting of forest fires.

The bill makes little substantive change in present law. Current statutes are instead updated and enforcement is placed under the supervision of the Department of Environmental Protection