

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2017 SESSION

## CHAPTER 349

*An Act to amend and reenact § 62.1-44.15:27, as it is currently effective and as it shall become effective, of the Code of Virginia, relating to stormwater and erosion management; administration of program by third party.*

[H 2009]

Approved March 13, 2017

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 62.1-44.15:27, as it is currently effective and as it shall become effective, of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 62.1-44.15:27. (For expiration date, see Acts 2016, cc. 68 and 758) Establishment of Virginia Stormwater Management Programs.**

A. Any locality that operates a regulated MS4 or that notifies the Department of its decision to participate in the establishment of a VSMP shall be required to adopt a VSMP for land-disturbing activities consistent with the provisions of this article according to a schedule set by the Department. Such schedule shall require implementation no later than July 1, 2014. Thereafter, the Department shall provide an annual schedule by which localities can submit applications to implement a VSMP. Localities subject to this subsection are authorized to coordinate plan review and inspections with other entities in accordance with subsection H. The Department shall operate a VSMP on behalf of any locality that does not operate a regulated MS4 and that does not notify the Department, according to a schedule set by the Department, of its decision to participate in the establishment of a VSMP. A locality that decides not to establish a VSMP shall still comply with the requirements set forth in this article and attendant regulations as required to satisfy the stormwater flow rate capacity and velocity requirements set forth in the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.). A locality that is subject to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) also shall adopt requirements set forth in this article and attendant regulations as required to regulate Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act land-disturbing activities in accordance with § 62.1-44.15:28.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, any county that operates an MS4 that became a regulated MS4 on or after January 1, 2014 may elect, on a schedule set by the Department, to defer the implementation of the county's VSMP until no later than January 1, 2015. During this deferral period, when such county thus lacks the legal authority to operate a VSMP, the Department shall operate a VSMP on behalf of the county and address post-construction stormwater runoff and the required design criteria for stormwater runoff controls. Any such county electing to defer the establishment of its VSMP shall still comply with the requirements set forth in this article and attendant regulations as required to satisfy the stormwater flow rate capacity and velocity requirements set forth in the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.).

B. Any town, including a town that operates a regulated MS4, lying within a county that has adopted a VSMP in accordance with subsection A may decide, but shall not be required, to become subject to the county's VSMP. Any town lying within a county that operates an MS4 that became a regulated MS4 on or after January 1, 2014 may elect to become subject to the county's VSMP according to the deferred schedule established in subsection A. During the county's deferral period, the Department shall operate a VSMP on behalf of the town and address post-construction stormwater runoff and the required design criteria for stormwater runoff controls for the town as provided in subsection A. If a town lies within the boundaries of more than one county, the town shall be considered to be wholly within the county in which the larger portion of the town lies. Towns shall inform the Department of their decision according to a schedule established by the Department. Thereafter, the Department shall provide an annual schedule by which towns can submit applications to adopt a VSMP.

C. In support of VSMP authorities, the Department shall:

1. Provide assistance grants to localities not currently operating a local stormwater management program to help the localities to establish their VSMP.

2. Provide technical assistance and training.

3. Provide qualified services in specified geographic areas to a VSMP to assist localities in the administration of components of their programs. The Department shall actively assist localities in the establishment of their programs and in the selection of a contractor or other entity that may provide support to the locality or regional support to several localities.

D. The Department shall develop a model ordinance for establishing a VSMP consistent with this article and its associated regulations, including the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities.

E. Each locality that administers an approved VSMP shall, by ordinance, establish a VSMP that shall

be administered in conjunction with a local MS4 program and a local erosion and sediment control program if required pursuant to the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.), and which shall include the following:

1. Consistency with regulations adopted in accordance with provisions of this article;
2. Provisions for long-term responsibility for and maintenance of stormwater management control devices and other techniques specified to manage the quality and quantity of runoff; and
3. Provisions for the integration of the VSMP with local erosion and sediment control, flood insurance, flood plain management, and other programs requiring compliance prior to authorizing construction in order to make the submission and approval of plans, issuance of permits, payment of fees, and coordination of inspection and enforcement activities more convenient and efficient both for the local governments and those responsible for compliance with the programs.

F. The Board may approve a state entity, including the Department, federal entity, or, for linear projects subject to annual standards and specifications, electric, natural gas, and telephone utility companies, interstate and intrastate natural gas pipeline companies, railroad companies, or authorities created pursuant to § 15.2-5102 to operate a Virginia Stormwater Management Program consistent with the requirements of this article and its associated regulations and the VSMP authority's Department-approved annual standards and specifications. For these programs, enforcement shall be administered by the Department and the Board where applicable in accordance with the provisions of this article.

G. The Board shall approve a VSMP when it deems a program consistent with this article and associated regulations, including the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities.

H. A VSMP authority may enter into agreements or contracts with soil and water conservation districts, adjacent localities, or other public or private entities to carry out or assist with the responsibilities of this article. *A VSMP authority may enter into contracts with third-party professionals who hold certificates of competence in the appropriate subject areas, as provided in subsection A of § 62.1-44.15:30, to carry out any or all of the responsibilities that this article requires of a VSMP authority, including plan review and inspection but not including enforcement.*

I. If a locality establishes a VSMP, it shall issue a consolidated stormwater management and erosion and sediment control permit that is consistent with the provisions of the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.). When available in accordance with subsection J, such permit, where applicable, shall also include a copy of or reference to state VSMP permit coverage authorization to discharge.

J. Upon the development of an online reporting system by the Department, but no later than July 1, 2014, a VSMP authority shall then be required to obtain evidence of state VSMP permit coverage where it is required prior to providing approval to begin land disturbance.

K. Any VSMP adopted pursuant to and consistent with this article shall be considered to meet the stormwater management requirements under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) and attendant regulations, and effective July 1, 2014, shall not be subject to local program review under the stormwater management provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

L. All VSMP authorities shall comply with the provisions of this article and the stormwater management provisions of the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.) and related regulations. The VSMP authority responsible for regulating the land-disturbing activity shall require compliance with the issued permit, permit conditions, and plan specifications. The state shall enforce state permits.

**§ 62.1-44.15:27. (For effective date, see Acts 2016, cc. 68 and 758) Virginia Programs for Erosion Control and Stormwater Management.**

A. Any locality that operates a regulated MS4 or that administers a Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) as of July 1, 2017, shall be required to adopt and administer a VESMP consistent with the provisions of this article that regulates any land-disturbing activity that (i) disturbs 10,000 square feet or more or (ii) disturbs 2,500 square feet or more in an area of a locality designated as a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.). The VESMP shall be adopted according to a process established by the Department.

B. Any locality that does not operate a regulated MS4 and for which the Department administers a VSMP as of July 1, 2017, shall choose one of the following options and shall notify the Department of its choice according to a process established by the Department:

1. Adopt and administer a VESMP consistent with the provisions of this article that regulates any land-disturbing activity that (i) disturbs 10,000 square feet or more or (ii) disturbs 2,500 square feet or more in an area of a locality designated as a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.);

2. Adopt and administer a VESMP consistent with the provisions of this article that regulates any land-disturbing activity that (i) disturbs 10,000 square feet or more or (ii) disturbs 2,500 square feet or more in an area of a locality designated as a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.), except that the Department shall provide the

locality with review of the plan required by § 62.1-44.15:34 and provide a recommendation to the locality on the plan's compliance with the water quality and water quantity technical criteria; or

3. Adopt and administer a VESCP pursuant to Article 2.4 (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.) that regulates any land-disturbing activity that (i) disturbs 10,000 square feet or more or (ii) disturbs 2,500 square feet or more in an area of a locality designated as a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.). For such a land-disturbing activity in a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area, the VESCP authority also shall adopt requirements set forth in this article and attendant regulations as required to regulate those activities in accordance with §§ 62.1-44.15:28 and 62.1-44.15:34.

The Board shall administer a VSMP on behalf of each VESCP authority for any land-disturbing activity that (a) disturbs one acre or more of land or (b) disturbs less than one acre of land and is part of a larger common plan of development or sale that results in one acre or greater of land disturbance.

C. Any town that is required to or elects to adopt and administer a VESMP or VESCP, as applicable, may choose one of the following options and shall notify the Department of its choice according to a process established by the Department:

1. Any town, including a town that operates a regulated MS4, lying within a county may enter into an agreement with the county to become subject to the county's VESMP. If a town lies within the boundaries of more than one county, it may enter into an agreement with any of those counties that operates a VESMP.

2. Any town that chooses not to adopt and administer a VESMP pursuant to subdivision B 3 and that lies within a county may enter into an agreement with the county to become subject to the county's VESMP or VESCP, as applicable. If a town lies within the boundaries of more than one county, it may enter into an agreement with any of those counties.

3. Any town that is subject to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) may enter into an agreement with a county pursuant to subdivision C 1 or 2 only if the county administers a VESMP for land-disturbing activities that disturb 2,500 square feet or more.

D. Any locality that chooses not to implement a VESMP pursuant to subdivision B 3 may notify the Department at any time that it has chosen to implement a VESMP pursuant to subdivision B 1 or 2. Any locality that chooses to implement a VESMP pursuant to subdivision B 2 may notify the Department at any time that it has chosen to implement a VESMP pursuant to subdivision B 1. A locality may petition the Board at any time for approval to change from fully administering a VESMP pursuant to subdivision B 1 to administering a VESMP in coordination with the Department pursuant to subdivision B 2 due to a significant change in economic conditions or other fiscal emergency in the locality. The provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) shall govern any appeal of the Board's decision.

E. In support of VESMP authorities, the Department shall provide technical assistance and training and general assistance to localities in the establishment and administration of their individual or regional programs.

F. The Department shall develop a model ordinance for establishing a VESMP consistent with this article.

G. Each locality that operates a regulated MS4 or that chooses to administer a VESMP shall, by ordinance, establish a VESMP that shall be administered in conjunction with a local MS4 management program, if applicable, and which shall include the following:

1. Ordinances, policies, and technical materials consistent with regulations adopted in accordance with this article;

2. Requirements for land-disturbance approvals;

3. Requirements for plan review, inspection, and enforcement consistent with the requirements of this article, including provisions requiring periodic inspections of the installation of stormwater management measures. A VESMP authority may require monitoring and reports from the person responsible for meeting the permit conditions to ensure compliance with the permit and to determine whether the measures required in the permit provide effective stormwater management;

4. Provisions charging each applicant a reasonable fee to defray the cost of program administration for a regulated land-disturbing activity that does not require permit coverage. Such fee may be in addition to any fee charged pursuant to the statewide fee schedule established in accordance with subdivision 9 of § 62.1-44.15:28, although payment of fees may be consolidated in order to provide greater convenience and efficiency for those responsible for compliance with the program. A VESMP authority shall hold a public hearing prior to establishing such fees. The fee shall not exceed an amount commensurate with the services rendered, taking into consideration the time, skill, and the VESMP authority's expense involved;

5. Provisions for long-term responsibility for and maintenance of stormwater management control devices and other techniques specified to manage the quality and quantity of runoff; and

6. Provisions for the coordination of the VESMP with flood insurance, flood plain management, and other programs requiring compliance prior to authorizing land disturbance in order to make the

submission and approval of plans, issuance of land-disturbance approvals, payment of fees, and coordination of inspection and enforcement activities more convenient and efficient both for the local governments and those responsible for compliance with the programs.

H. The Board shall approve a VESMP when it deems a program consistent with this article and associated regulations.

I. A VESMP authority may enter into agreements or contracts with the Department, soil and water conservation districts, adjacent localities, planning district commissions, or other public or private entities to carry out or assist with plan review and inspections. *A VESMP authority may enter into contracts with third-party professionals who hold certifications in the appropriate subject areas, as provided in subsection A of § 62.1-44.15:30, to carry out any or all of the responsibilities that this article requires of a VESMP authority, including plan review and inspection but not including enforcement.*

J. A VESMP authority shall be required to obtain evidence of permit coverage from the Department's online reporting system, where such coverage is required, prior to providing land-disturbance approval.

K. The VESMP authority responsible for regulating the land-disturbing activity shall require compliance with its applicable ordinances and the conditions of its land-disturbance approval and plan specifications. The Board shall enforce permits and require compliance with its applicable regulations, including when serving as a VSMP authority in a locality that chose not to adopt a VESMP in accordance with subdivision B 3.