

## VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

*An Act to amend and reenact §§ 62.1-44.15:24, 62.1-44.15:27, 62.1-44.15:28, 62.1-44.15:33, 62.1-44.15:34, 62.1-44.15:44, 62.1-44.15:45, and 62.1-44.15:46 of the Code of Virginia, relating to stormwater management programs.*

[S 423]

Approved

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

**1. That §§ 62.1-44.15:24, 62.1-44.15:27, 62.1-44.15:28, 62.1-44.15:33, 62.1-44.15:34, 62.1-44.15:44, 62.1-44.15:45, and 62.1-44.15:46 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 62.1-44.15:24. Definitions.**

As used in this article, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Agreement in lieu of a stormwater management plan" means a contract between the VSMP authority and the owner or permittee that specifies methods that shall be implemented to comply with the requirements of a VSMP for the construction of a single-family residence; such contract may be executed by the VSMP authority in lieu of a stormwater management plan.

"Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act land-disturbing activity" means a land-disturbing activity including clearing, grading, or excavation that results in a land disturbance equal to or greater than 2,500 square feet and less than one acre in all areas of jurisdictions designated as subject to the regulations adopted pursuant to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation provisions of this chapter.

"CWA" means the federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq.), formerly referred to as the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, P.L. 92-500, as amended by P.L. 95-217, P.L. 95-576, P.L. 96-483, and P.L. 97-117, or any subsequent revisions thereto.

"Department" means the Department of Environmental Quality.

"Director" means the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality.

"Flooding" means a volume of water that is too great to be confined within the banks or walls of the stream, water body, or conveyance system and that overflows onto adjacent lands, thereby causing or threatening damage.

"Land disturbance" or "land-disturbing activity" means a man-made change to the land surface that potentially changes its runoff characteristics including clearing, grading, or excavation, except that the term shall not include those exemptions specified in § 62.1-44.15:34.

"Municipal separate storm sewer" means a conveyance or system of conveyances otherwise known as a municipal separate storm sewer system or "MS4," including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels, or storm drains:

1. Owned or operated by a federal, state, city, town, county, district, association, or other public body, created by or pursuant to state law, having jurisdiction or delegated authority for erosion and sediment control and stormwater management, or a designated and approved management agency under § 208 of the CWA that discharges to surface waters;

2. Designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater;

3. That is not a combined sewer; and

4. That is not part of a publicly owned treatment works.

"Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Management Program" means a management program covering the duration of a state permit for a municipal separate storm sewer system that includes a comprehensive planning process that involves public participation and intergovernmental coordination, to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, to protect water quality, and to satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the CWA and regulations, and this article and its attendant regulations, using management practices, control techniques, and system, design, and engineering methods, and such other provisions that are appropriate.

"Nonpoint source pollution" means pollution such as sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, hydrocarbons, heavy metals, and toxics whose sources cannot be pinpointed but rather are washed from the land surface in a diffuse manner by stormwater runoff.

"Peak flow rate" means the maximum instantaneous flow from a prescribed design storm at a particular location.

"Permit" or "VSMP authority permit" means an approval to conduct a land-disturbing activity issued by the VSMP authority for the initiation of a land-disturbing activity after evidence of state VSMP general permit coverage has been provided where applicable.

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57 "Permittee" means the person to which the permit or state permit is issued.

58 "Runoff volume" means the volume of water that runs off the land development project from a  
59 prescribed storm event.

60 "State permit" means an approval to conduct a land-disturbing activity issued by the Board in the  
61 form of a state stormwater individual permit or coverage issued under a state general permit or an  
62 approval issued by the Board for stormwater discharges from an MS4. Under these permits, the  
63 Commonwealth imposes and enforces requirements pursuant to the federal Clean Water Act and  
64 regulations and this article and its attendant regulations.

65 "Stormwater" means precipitation that is discharged across the land surface or through conveyances  
66 to one or more waterways and that may include stormwater runoff, snow melt runoff, and surface runoff  
67 and drainage.

68 "Stormwater management plan" means a document containing material describing methods for  
69 complying with the requirements of a VSMP.

70 "Subdivision" means the same as defined in § 15.2-2201.

71 "Virginia Stormwater Management Program" or "VSMP" means a program approved by the Soil and  
72 Water Conservation Board after September 13, 2011, and until June 30, 2013, or the State Water  
73 Control Board on and after June 30, 2013, that has been established by a VSMP authority to manage the  
74 quality and quantity of runoff resulting from land-disturbing activities and shall include such items as  
75 local ordinances, rules, permit requirements, annual standards and specifications, policies and guidelines,  
76 technical materials, and requirements for plan review, inspection, enforcement, where authorized in this  
77 article, and evaluation consistent with the requirements of this article and associated regulations.

78 "Virginia Stormwater Management Program authority" or "VSMP authority" means an authority  
79 approved by the Board after September 13, 2011, to operate a Virginia Stormwater Management  
80 Program or, ~~until such approval is given,~~ the Department. An authority may include a locality; state  
81 entity, including the Department; federal entity; or, for linear projects subject to annual standards and  
82 specifications in accordance with subsection B of § 62.1-44.15:31, electric, natural gas, and telephone  
83 utility companies, interstate and intrastate natural gas pipeline companies, railroad companies, or  
84 authorities created pursuant to § 15.2-5102.

85 "Water quality volume" means the volume equal to the first one-half inch of runoff multiplied by the  
86 impervious surface of the land development project.

87 "Watershed" means a defined land area drained by a river or stream, karst system, or system of  
88 connecting rivers or streams such that all surface water within the area flows through a single outlet. In  
89 karst areas, the karst feature to which water drains may be considered the single outlet for the  
90 watershed.

# **91 § 62.1-44.15:27. Establishment of Virginia Stormwater Management Programs.**

92 A. Any locality, ~~excluding towns, unless such town that~~ operates a regulated MS4, ~~or that notifies~~  
93 ~~the Department of its decision to participate in the establishment of a VSMP~~ shall be required to adopt a  
94 VSMP for land-disturbing activities consistent with the provisions of this article according to a schedule  
95 set by the ~~Board~~ Department. Such schedule shall require ~~adoption no sooner than 15 months and not~~  
96 ~~more than 21 months following the effective date of the regulation that establishes local program criteria~~  
97 ~~and delegation procedures, unless the Board deems that the Department's review of the VSMP warrants~~  
98 ~~an extension up to an additional 12 months, provided the locality has made substantive progress~~  
99 ~~implementation no later than July 1, 2014. Thereafter, the Department shall provide an annual schedule~~  
100 ~~by which localities can submit applications to implement a VSMP.~~ Localities subject to this subsection  
101 are authorized to coordinate plan review and inspections with other entities in accordance with  
102 subsection H. ~~The Department shall operate a VSMP on behalf of any locality that does not operate a~~  
103 ~~regulated MS4 and that does not notify the Department, according to a schedule set by the Department,~~  
104 ~~of its decision to participate in the establishment of a VSMP.~~ A locality that decides not to establish a  
105 VSMP shall still comply with the requirements set forth in this article and attendant regulations as  
106 required to satisfy the stormwater flow rate capacity and velocity requirements set forth in the Erosion  
107 and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.). A locality that is subject to the provisions of the  
108 Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) also shall adopt requirements set forth in  
109 this article and attendant regulations as required to regulate Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act  
110 land-disturbing activities in accordance with § 62.1-44.15:28.

111 Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, any county that operates an MS4 that became  
112 a regulated MS4 on or after January 1, 2014 may elect, on a schedule set by the Department, to defer  
113 the implementation of the county's VSMP until no later than January 1, 2015. During this deferral  
114 period, when such county thus lacks the legal authority to operate a VSMP, the Department shall  
115 operate a VSMP on behalf of the county and address post-construction stormwater runoff and the  
116 required design criteria for stormwater runoff controls. Any such county electing to defer the  
117 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 ~~adopt its own program or shall decide, but shall not be required, to become subject to the county program~~ 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 ~~Article 2-4~~ 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.

I. ~~Localities~~ 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 ~~Article 2-4 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.*

M. VSMPs adopted in accordance with this section shall become effective July 1, 2014, unless otherwise specified by the Board.

**§ 62.1-44.15:28. Development of regulations.**

A. The Board is authorized to adopt regulations that specify minimum technical criteria and administrative procedures for Virginia Stormwater Management Programs. The regulations shall:

1. Establish standards and procedures for administering a VSMP;

2. Establish minimum design criteria for measures to control nonpoint source pollution and localized flooding, and incorporate the stormwater management regulations adopted pursuant to the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.), as they relate to the prevention of stream channel erosion. These criteria shall be periodically modified as required in order to reflect current engineering methods;

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

4. Require as a minimum the inclusion in VSMPs of certain administrative procedures that include, but are not limited to, specifying the time period within which a VSMP authority shall grant land-disturbing activity approval, the conditions and processes under which approval shall be granted, the procedures for communicating disapproval, the conditions under which an approval may be changed, and requirements for inspection of approved projects;

5. Establish by regulations a statewide permit fee schedule to cover all costs associated with the implementation of a VSMP related to land-disturbing activities of one acre or greater. Such fee attributes include the costs associated with plan review, VSMP registration statement review, permit issuance, state-coverage verification, inspections, reporting, and compliance activities associated with the land-disturbing activities as well as program oversight costs. The fee schedule shall also include a provision for a reduced fee for land-disturbing activities between 2,500 square feet and up to one acre in Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) localities. The fee schedule shall be governed by the following:

a. The revenue generated from the statewide stormwater permit fee shall be collected utilizing, where practicable, an online payment system, and the Department's portion shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the Virginia Stormwater Management Fund established pursuant to § 62.1-44.15:29. However, whenever the Board has approved a VSMP, no more than 30 percent of the total revenue generated by the statewide stormwater permit fees collected shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the Virginia Stormwater Management Fund, with the balance going to the VSMP authority.

b. Fees collected pursuant to this section shall be in addition to any general fund appropriation made to the Department or other supporting revenue from a VSMP; however, the fees shall be set at a level sufficient for the Department and the VSMP to fully carry out their responsibilities under this article and its attendant regulations and local ordinances or standards and specifications where applicable. When establishing a VSMP, the VSMP authority shall assess the statewide fee schedule and shall have the authority to reduce or increase such fees, and to consolidate such fees with other program-related charges, but in no case shall such fee changes affect the amount established in the regulations as available to the Department for program oversight responsibilities pursuant to subdivision 5 a. A VSMP's portion of the fees shall be used solely to carry out the VSMP's responsibilities under this article and its attendant regulations, ordinances, or annual standards and specifications.

c. Until July 1, 2014, the fee for coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities issued by the Board, or where the Board has issued an individual permit or coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities for an entity for which it has approved annual standards and specifications, shall be \$750 for each large construction activity with sites or common plans of development equal to or greater than five acres and \$450 for each small construction activity with sites or common plans of development equal to or greater than one acre and less than five acres. On and after July 1, 2014, such fees shall only apply where coverage has been issued under the Board's General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities to a state agency or federal entity for which it has approved annual standards and specifications. After establishment, such fees may be modified in the future through regulatory actions.

d. Until July 1, 2014, the Department is authorized to assess a \$125 reinspection fee for each visit to a project site that was necessary to check on the status of project site items noted to be in noncompliance and documented as such on a prior project inspection.

e. *In establishing the fee schedule under this subdivision, the Department shall ensure that the VSMP authority portion of the state permit fee for coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater for Construction Activities for small construction activity involving a single family detached residential structure with a site or area, within or outside a common plan of development or sale, that is equal to or greater than one acre but less than five acres shall be no greater than the VSMP authority portion of the fee for coverage of sites or areas with a land-disturbance acreage of less than one acre within a common plan of development or sale.*

f. When any fees are collected pursuant to this section by credit cards, business transaction costs associated with processing such payments may be additionally assessed;

6. Establish statewide standards for stormwater management from land-disturbing activities of one acre or greater, except as specified otherwise within this article, and allow for the consolidation in the permit of a comprehensive approach to addressing stormwater management and erosion and sediment control, consistent with the provisions of the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.) and this article. However, such standards shall also apply to land-disturbing activity exceeding an area of 2,500 square feet in all areas of the jurisdictions designated as subject to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations;

7. *Establish a procedure by which a stormwater management plan that is approved for a residential, commercial, or industrial subdivision shall govern the development of the individual parcels, including those parcels developed under subsequent owners;*

8. *Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision A 5, establish a procedure by which neither a registration statement nor payment of the Department's portion of the state permit fee established pursuant to that subdivision shall be required for coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities for construction activity involving a single-family detached residential structure, within or outside a common plan of development or sale;*

9. *Provide for reciprocity with programs in other states for the certification of proprietary best management practices;*

10. Require that VSMPs maintain after-development runoff rate of flow and characteristics that replicate, as nearly as practicable, the existing predevelopment runoff characteristics and site hydrology, or improve upon the contributing share of the existing predevelopment runoff characteristics and site hydrology if stream channel erosion or localized flooding is an existing predevelopment condition. Except where more stringent requirements are necessary to address total maximum daily load requirements or to protect exceptional state waters, any land-disturbing activity that provides for stormwater management shall satisfy the conditions of this subsection if the practices are designed to (i) detain the water quality volume and to release it over 48 hours; (ii) detain and release over a 24-hour period the expected rainfall resulting from the one year, 24-hour storm; and (iii) reduce the allowable peak flow rate resulting from the 1.5-year, two-year, and 10-year, 24-hour storms to a level that is less than or equal to the peak flow rate from the site assuming it was in a good forested condition, achieved through multiplication of the forested peak flow rate by a reduction factor that is equal to the runoff volume from the site when it was in a good forested condition divided by the runoff volume from the site in its proposed condition, and shall be exempt from any flow rate capacity and velocity requirements for natural or man-made channels as defined in any regulations promulgated pursuant to this section or any ordinances adopted pursuant to § 62.1-44.15:27 or 62.1-44.15:33;

8- 11. Encourage low-impact development designs, regional and watershed approaches, and nonstructural means for controlling stormwater;

9- 12. Promote the reclamation and reuse of stormwater for uses other than potable water in order to protect state waters and the public health and to minimize the direct discharge of pollutants into state waters;

13. *Establish procedures to be followed when a locality that operates a VSMP wishes to transfer administration of the VSMP to the Department;*

~~10-~~ 14. Establish a statewide permit fee schedule for stormwater management related to municipal separate storm sewer system permits; and

~~11-~~ 15. Provide for the evaluation and potential inclusion of emerging or innovative stormwater control technologies that may prove effective in reducing nonpoint source pollution.

B. The Board may integrate and consolidate components of the regulations implementing the Erosion and Sediment Control program and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management program with the regulations governing the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) Permit program or repeal components so that these programs may be implemented in a consolidated manner that provides greater consistency, understanding, and efficiency for those regulated by and administering

301 a VSMP.

302 **§ 62.1-44.15:33. Authorization for more stringent ordinances.**

303 A. Localities *that are VSMP authorities* are authorized to adopt more stringent stormwater  
 304 management ordinances than those necessary to ensure compliance with the Board's minimum  
 305 regulations, provided that the more stringent ordinances are based upon factual findings of local or  
 306 regional comprehensive watershed management studies or findings developed through the  
 307 implementation of a MS4 permit or a locally adopted watershed management study and are determined  
 308 by the locality to be necessary to prevent any further degradation to water resources, to address TMDL  
 309 requirements, to protect exceptional state waters, or to address specific existing water pollution including  
 310 nutrient and sediment loadings, stream channel erosion, depleted groundwater resources, or excessive  
 311 localized flooding within the watershed and that prior to adopting more stringent ordinances a public  
 312 hearing is held after giving due notice.

313 B. Localities *that are VSMP authorities* shall submit a letter report to the Department when more  
 314 stringent stormwater management ordinances or more stringent requirements authorized by such  
 315 ordinances, such as may be set forth in design manuals, policies, or guidance documents developed by  
 316 the localities, are determined to be necessary pursuant to this section within 30 days after adoption  
 317 thereof. Any such letter report shall include a summary explanation as to why the more stringent  
 318 ordinance or requirement has been determined to be necessary pursuant to this section. Upon the request  
 319 of an affected landowner or his agent submitted to the Department with a copy to be sent to the locality,  
 320 within 90 days after adoption of any such ordinance or derivative requirement, localities shall submit the  
 321 ordinance or requirement and all other supporting materials to the Department for a determination of  
 322 whether the requirements of this section have been met and whether any determination made by the  
 323 locality pursuant to this section is supported by the evidence. The Department shall issue a written  
 324 determination setting forth its rationale within 90 days of submission. Such a determination, or a failure  
 325 by the Department to make such a determination within the 90-day period, may be appealed to the  
 326 Board.

327 C. Localities shall not prohibit or otherwise limit the use of any best management practice (BMP)  
 328 approved for use by the Director or the Board except as follows:

329 1. When the Director or the Board approves the use of any BMP in accordance with its stated  
 330 conditions, the locality serving as a VSMP authority shall have authority to preclude the onsite use of  
 331 the approved BMP, or to require more stringent conditions upon its use, for a specific land-disturbing  
 332 project based on a review of the stormwater management plan and project site conditions. Such  
 333 limitations shall be based on site-specific concerns. Any project or site-specific determination  
 334 purportedly authorized pursuant to this subsection may be appealed to the Department and the  
 335 Department shall issue a written determination regarding compliance with this section to the requesting  
 336 party within 90 days of submission. Any such determination, or a failure by the Department to make  
 337 any such determination within the 90-day period, may be appealed to the Board.

338 2. When a locality is seeking to uniformly preclude jurisdiction-wide or otherwise limit  
 339 geographically the use of a BMP approved by the Director or Board, or to apply more stringent  
 340 conditions to the use of a BMP approved by the Director or Board, upon the request of an affected  
 341 landowner or his agent submitted to the Department, with a copy submitted to the locality, within 90  
 342 days after adoption, such authorizing ordinances, design manuals, policies, or guidance documents  
 343 developed by the locality that set forth the BMP use policy shall be provided to the Department in such  
 344 manner as may be prescribed by the Department that includes a written justification and explanation as  
 345 to why such more stringent limitation or conditions are determined to be necessary. The Department  
 346 shall review all supporting materials provided by the locality to determine whether the requirements of  
 347 this section have been met and that any determination made by the locality pursuant to this section is  
 348 reasonable under the circumstances. The Department shall issue its determination to the locality in  
 349 writing within 90 days of submission. Such a determination, or a failure by the Department to make  
 350 such a determination within the 90-day period, may be appealed to the Board.

351 D. Based on a determination made in accordance with subsection B or C, any ordinance or other  
 352 requirement enacted or established by a locality that is found to not comply with this section shall be  
 353 null and void, replaced with state minimum standards, and remanded to the locality for revision to  
 354 ensure compliance with this section. Any such ordinance or other requirement that has been proposed  
 355 but neither enacted nor established shall be remanded to the locality for revision to ensure compliance  
 356 with this section.

357 E. Any provisions of a local stormwater management program in existence before January 1, 2013,  
 358 that contains more stringent provisions than this article shall be exempt from the requirements of this  
 359 section. However, such provisions shall be reported to the Board at the time of the locality's VSMP  
 360 approval package.

361 **§ 62.1-44.15:34. Regulated activities; submission and approval of a permit application; security**

**for performance; exemptions.**

A. A person shall not conduct any land-disturbing activity until he has submitted a permit application to the VSMP authority that includes a state VSMP permit registration statement, *if such statement is required*, and, after July 1, 2014, a stormwater management plan *or an executed agreement in lieu of a stormwater management plan*, and has obtained VSMP authority approval to begin land disturbance. A locality that is not a VSMP authority shall provide a general notice to applicants of the state permit coverage requirement and report all approvals pursuant to the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq.) to begin land disturbance of one acre or greater to the Department at least monthly. Upon the development of an online reporting system by the Department, but no later than July 1, 2014, a VSMP authority shall be required to obtain evidence of state VSMP permit coverage where it is required prior to providing approval to begin land disturbance. The VSMP authority shall act on any permit application within 60 days after it has been determined by the VSMP authority to be a complete application. The VSMP authority may either issue project approval or denial and shall provide written rationale for the denial. The VSMP authority shall act on any permit application that has been previously disapproved within 45 days after the application has been revised, resubmitted for approval, and deemed complete. Prior to issuance of any approval, the VSMP authority may also require an applicant, excluding state and federal entities, to submit a reasonable performance bond with surety, cash escrow, letter of credit, any combination thereof, or such other legal arrangement acceptable to the VSMP authority, to ensure that measures could be taken by the VSMP authority at the applicant's expense should he fail, after proper notice, within the time specified to initiate or maintain appropriate actions that may be required of him by the permit conditions as a result of his land-disturbing activity. If the VSMP authority takes such action upon such failure by the applicant, the VSMP authority may collect from the applicant the difference should the amount of the reasonable cost of such action exceed the amount of the security held. Within 60 days of the completion of the requirements of the permit conditions, such bond, cash escrow, letter of credit, or other legal arrangement, or the unexpended or unobligated portion thereof, shall be refunded to the applicant or terminated. These requirements are in addition to all other provisions of law relating to the issuance of permits and are not intended to otherwise affect the requirements for such permits.

B. A Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Land-Disturbing Activity shall be subject to coverage under the Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities until July 1, 2014, at which time it shall no longer be considered a small construction activity but shall be then regulated under the requirements of this article by a VSMP authority.

C. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this article, the following activities are exempt, unless otherwise required by federal law:

1. Permitted surface or deep mining operations and projects, or oil and gas operations and projects conducted under the provisions of Title 45.1;

2. Clearing of lands specifically for agricultural purposes and the management, tilling, planting, or harvesting of agricultural, horticultural, or forest crops, livestock feedlot operations, or as additionally set forth by the Board in regulations, including engineering operations as follows: construction of terraces, terrace outlets, check dams, desilting basins, dikes, ponds, ditches, strip cropping, lister furrowing, contour cultivating, contour furrowing, land drainage, and land irrigation; however, this exception shall not apply to harvesting of forest crops unless the area on which harvesting occurs is reforested artificially or naturally in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 11 (§ 10.1-1100 et seq.) or is converted to bona fide agricultural or improved pasture use as described in subsection B of § 10.1-1163;

3. Single-family residences separately built and disturbing less than one acre and not part of a larger common plan of development or sale, including additions or modifications to existing single-family detached residential structures. However, localities subject to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) may regulate these single-family residences where land disturbance exceeds 2,500 square feet;

4. Land-disturbing activities that disturb less than one acre of land area except for land-disturbing activity exceeding an area of 2,500 square feet in all areas of the jurisdictions designated as subject to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations adopted pursuant to the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 62.1-44.15:67 et seq.) or activities that are part of a larger common plan of development or sale that is one acre or greater of disturbance; however, the governing body of any locality that administers a VSMP may reduce this exception to a smaller area of disturbed land or qualify the conditions under which this exception shall apply;

5. Discharges to a sanitary sewer or a combined sewer system;

6. Activities under a state or federal reclamation program to return an abandoned property to an agricultural or open land use;

7. Routine maintenance that is performed to maintain the original line and grade, hydraulic capacity,

or original construction of the project. The paving of an existing road with a compacted or impervious surface and reestablishment of existing associated ditches and shoulders shall be deemed routine maintenance if performed in accordance with this subsection; and

8. Conducting land-disturbing activities in response to a public emergency where the related work requires immediate authorization to avoid imminent endangerment to human health or the environment. In such situations, the VSMP authority shall be advised of the disturbance within seven days of commencing the land-disturbing activity, and compliance with the administrative requirements of subsection A is required within 30 days of commencing the land-disturbing activity.

**§ 62.1-44.15:44. Right to hearing.**

Any permit applicant, permittee, or person subject to state permit requirements under this article aggrieved by any action of the VSMP authority, Department, or Board taken without a formal hearing, or by inaction of the VSMP authority, Department, or Board, may demand in writing a formal hearing by the Board or VSMP authority causing such grievance, provided a petition requesting such hearing is filed with the Board or the VSMP authority within 30 days after notice of such action.

**§ 62.1-44.15:45. Hearings.**

*VSMP authorities When holding hearings under this article, the Board shall do so in a manner consistent with § 62.1-44.26. A locality holding hearings under this article shall do so in a manner consistent with local hearing procedures.*

**§ 62.1-44.15:46. Appeals.**

Any permittee or party aggrieved by a state permit or enforcement decision of the Department or Board under this article, or any person who has participated, in person or by submittal of written comments, in the public comment process related to a final decision of the Department or Board under this article, whether such decision is affirmative or negative, is entitled to judicial review thereof in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) if such person meets the standard for obtaining judicial review of a case or controversy pursuant to Article III of the Constitution of the United States. A person shall be deemed to meet such standard if (i) such person has suffered an actual or imminent injury that is an invasion of a legally protected interest and that is concrete and particularized; (ii) such injury is fairly traceable to the decision of the Department or the Board and not the result of the independent action of some third party not before the court; and (iii) such injury will likely be redressed by a favorable decision by the court.

The provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) shall not apply to decisions rendered by localities ~~but~~ appeals. *Appeals of decisions rendered by localities shall be conducted in accordance with local appeal procedures and shall include an opportunity for judicial review in the circuit court of the locality in which the land disturbance occurs or is proposed to occur. Unless otherwise provided by law, the circuit court shall conduct such review in accordance with the standards established in § 2.2-4027, and the decisions of the circuit court shall be subject to review by the Court of Appeals, as in other cases under this article.*

**2. That amendments to regulations of the State Water Control Board necessary to implement the provisions of this act shall be exempt from the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), provided that there is a public comment period of at least 30 days on the proposed amendments prior to Board adoption.**

**3. That the consolidation into Virginia's General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater from Construction Activities of state post-construction requirements exceeding minimum federal requirements shall not be construed to modify the scope of federal agency or citizen suit enforcement pursuant to the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq.).**

**4. That an emergency exists and this act is in force from its passage.**