

Article 6.

Delegation and Exercise of the General Police Power.

**§ 153A-121. General ordinance-making power.**

(a) A county may by ordinance define, regulate, prohibit, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of its citizens and the peace and dignity of the county; and may define and abate nuisances.

(b) This section does not authorize a county to regulate or control vehicular or pedestrian traffic on a street or highway under the control of the Board of Transportation, nor to regulate or control any right-of-way or right-of-passage belonging to a public utility, electric or telephone membership corporation, or public agency of the State. In addition, no county ordinance may regulate or control a highway right-of-way in a manner inconsistent with State law or an ordinance of the Board of Transportation.

(c) This section does not impair the authority of local boards of health to adopt rules and regulations to protect and promote public health. (1963, c. 1060, ss. 1, 1 1/2; 1965, cc. 388, 567, 1083, 1158; 1967, c. 495, s. 2; 1969, c. 36, s. 1; 1971, c. 702, ss. 1-3; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; c. 822, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-122. Territorial jurisdiction of county ordinances.**

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this Article, the board of commissioners may make any ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article applicable to any part of the county not within a city.

(b) The governing board of a city may by resolution permit a county ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article to be applicable within the city. In the resolution permitting the county ordinance to be applicable within the city, the governing board of the city may specify that any signage required by the county ordinance be in compliance with city ordinances. The city may by resolution withdraw its permission to such an ordinance. If it does so, the city shall give written notice to the county of its withdrawal of permission; 30 days after the day the county receives this notice the county ordinance ceases to be applicable within the city. (1963, c. 1060, ss. 1, 1 1/2; 1965, cc. 388, 567, 1083, 1158; 1967, c. 495, s. 2; 1969, c. 36, s. 1; 1971, c. 702, ss. 1-3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 2015-166, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-123. Enforcement of ordinances.**

(a) A county may provide for fines and penalties for violation of its ordinances and may secure injunctions and abatement orders to further insure compliance with its ordinances, as provided by this section.

(b) Except for the types of ordinances listed in subsection (b1) of this section, violation of a county ordinance may be a misdemeanor or infraction as provided by G.S. 14-4 only if the county specifies such in the ordinance. An ordinance may provide by express statement that the maximum fine, term of imprisonment, or infraction penalty to be imposed for a violation is some amount of money or number of days less than the maximum imposed by G.S. 14-4. Notwithstanding G.S. 153A-45, no ordinance specifying a criminal penalty may be enacted at the meeting in which it is first introduced.

(b1) No ordinance of the following types may impose a criminal penalty:

- (1) Any ordinance adopted under Article 18 of this Chapter, Planning and Regulation of Development or, its successor, Chapter 160D of the General Statutes, except for those ordinances related to unsafe buildings.
- (2) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-134, Regulating and licensing businesses, trades, etc.

- (3) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-138, Registration of mobile homes, house trailers, etc.
- (4) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-140.1, Stream-clearing programs.
- (5) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-143, Regulation of outdoor advertising or, its successor, G.S. 160D-912, Outdoor advertising.
- (6) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-144, Limitations on regulating solar collectors or, its successor, G.S. 160D-914, Solar collectors.
- (7) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 153A-145, Limitations on regulating cisterns and rain barrels.
- (8) Any ordinance regulating trees.

(c) An ordinance may provide that violation subjects the offender to a civil penalty to be recovered by the county in a civil action in the nature of debt if the offender does not pay the penalty within a prescribed period of time after he has been cited for violation of the ordinance.

(c1) An ordinance may provide for the recovery of a civil penalty by the county for violation of the fire prevention code of the State Building Code as authorized under G.S. 143-139.

(d) An ordinance may provide that it may be enforced by an appropriate equitable remedy issuing from a court of competent jurisdiction. In such a case, the General Court of Justice has jurisdiction to issue any order that may be appropriate, and it is not a defense to the county's application for equitable relief that there is an adequate remedy at law.

(e) An ordinance that makes unlawful a condition existing upon or use made of real property may provide that it may be enforced by injunction and order of abatement, and the General Court of Justice has jurisdiction to issue such an order. When a violation of such an ordinance occurs, the county may apply to the appropriate division of the General Court of Justice for a mandatory or prohibitory injunction and order of abatement commanding the defendant to correct the unlawful condition upon or cease the unlawful use of the property. The action shall be governed in all respects by the laws and rules governing civil proceedings, including the Rules of Civil Procedure in general and Rule 65 in particular.

In addition to an injunction, the court may enter an order of abatement as a part of the judgment in the cause. An order of abatement may direct that buildings or other structures on the property be closed, demolished, or removed; that fixtures, furniture, or other movable property be removed from buildings on the property; that grass and weeds be cut; that improvements or repairs be made; or that any other action be taken that is necessary to bring the property into compliance with the ordinance. If the defendant fails or refuses to comply with an injunction or with an order of abatement within the time allowed by the court, he may be cited for contempt and the county may execute the order of abatement. If the county executes the order, it has a lien on the property, in the nature of a mechanic's and materialman's lien, for the costs of executing the order. The defendant may secure cancellation of an order of abatement by paying all costs of the proceedings and posting a bond for compliance with the order. The bond shall be given with sureties approved by the clerk of superior court in an amount approved by the judge before whom the matter was heard and shall be conditioned on the defendant's full compliance with the terms of the order of abatement within the time fixed by the judge. Cancellation of an order of abatement does not suspend or cancel an injunction issued in conjunction with the order.

(f) Subject to the express terms of the ordinance, a county ordinance may be enforced by any one or more of the remedies authorized by this section.

(g) A county ordinance may provide, when appropriate, that each day's continuing violation is a separate and distinct offense.

(h) Notwithstanding any authority under this Article or any local act of the General Assembly, no ordinance regulating trees may be enforced on land owned or operated by a public airport authority. (1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1985, c. 764, s. 34; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 852, s. 17; 1993, c. 329, s. 5; 2013-331, s. 1; 2021-138, s. 13(a).)

#### **§ 153A-124. Enumeration not exclusive.**

The enumeration in this Article or other portions of this Chapter of specific powers to define, regulate, prohibit, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions is not exclusive, nor is it a limit on the general authority to adopt ordinances conferred on counties by G.S. 153A-121. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

#### **§ 153A-125. Regulation of solicitation campaigns, flea markets and itinerant merchants.**

A county may by ordinance regulate, restrict, or prohibit the solicitation of contributions from the public for charitable or eleemosynary purposes, and also the business activities of itinerant merchants, salesmen, promoters, drummers, peddlers, flea market operators and flea market vendors and hawkers. These ordinances may include, but are not limited to, requirements that an application be made and a permit issued, that an investigation be made, that activities be reasonably limited as to time and place, that proper credentials and proof of financial stability be submitted, that not more than a stated percentage of contributions to solicitation campaigns be retained for administrative expenses, and that an adequate bond be posted to protect the public from fraud. A county may charge a fee for a permit issued pursuant to such an ordinance. (1967, c. 80, ss. 1-2 1/2; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1987, c. 708, s. 7.)

#### **§ 153A-126. Regulation of begging.**

A county may by ordinance prohibit or regulate begging or otherwise canvassing the public for contributions for the private benefit of the solicitor or any other person. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

#### **§ 153A-127. Abuse of animals.**

A county may by ordinance define and prohibit the abuse of animals. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

#### **§ 153A-128. Regulation of explosive, corrosive, inflammable, or radioactive substances.**

A county may by ordinance regulate, restrict, or prohibit the sale, possession, storage, use or conveyance of any explosive, corrosive, inflammable, or radioactive substance or of any weapon or instrumentality of mass death and destruction. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

#### **§ 153A-129. Firearms.**

(a) Except as provided in this section, a county may by ordinance regulate, restrict, or prohibit the discharge of firearms at any time or place except in any of the following instances:

- (1) When used to take birds or animals pursuant to Chapter 113, Subchapter IV.
- (2) When used in defense of person or property.
- (3) When used pursuant to lawful directions of law-enforcement officers.

(b) A county may by ordinance prohibit hunting on Sunday as allowed under G.S. 103-2, provided the ordinance complies with all of the following:

- (1) The ordinance shall be applicable from January 1 until December 31 of any year of effectiveness.

- (2) The ordinance shall allow for individuals hunting in an adjacent county with no restriction on Sunday hunting to retrieve any animal lawfully shot from the adjacent county.
  - (3) The ordinance shall be applicable to the entire county.
  - (4) The ordinance shall not be effective unless approved by a majority of those voting in a county-wide referendum held as provided in G.S. 163-287. Such special election shall only be held at the time provided by G.S. 163-287(a)(1).
- (c) A county may regulate the display of firearms on the public roads, sidewalks, alleys, or other public property.
- (d) This section does not limit a county's authority to take action under Article 1A of Chapter 166A of the General Statutes. (1973, c. 822, s. 1; 2006-264, s. 16; 2012-12, s. 2(yy); 2015-144, s. 5(b); 2017-6, s. 3; 2017-182, s. 3(a); 2018-146, ss. 3.1(a), (b), 6.1.)

**§ 153A-130. Pellet guns.**

A county may by ordinance regulate, restrict, or prohibit the sale, possession, or use of pellet guns or any other mechanism or device designed or used to project a missile by compressed air or mechanical action with less than deadly force. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-131. Possession or harboring of dangerous animals.**

A county may by ordinance regulate, restrict, or prohibit the possession or harboring of animals which are dangerous to persons or property. No such ordinance shall have the effect of permitting any activity or condition with respect to a wild animal which is prohibited or more severely restricted by regulations of the Wildlife Resources Commission. (1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1977, c. 407, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-132. Removal and disposal of abandoned and junked motor vehicles; abandoned vessels.**

(a) Grant of Power. – A county may by ordinance prohibit the abandonment of motor vehicles on public grounds and private property within the county's ordinance-making jurisdiction and on county-owned property wherever located. The county may enforce the ordinance by removing and disposing of abandoned or junked motor vehicles according to the procedures prescribed in this section.

(b) Definitions. – "Motor vehicle" includes any machine designed or intended to travel over land or water by self-propulsion or while attached to self-propelled vehicle.

- (1) An "abandoned motor vehicle" is one that:
  - a. Is left on public grounds or county-owned property in violation of a law or ordinance prohibiting parking; or
  - b. Is left for longer than 24 hours on property owned or operated by the county; or
  - c. Is left for longer than two hours on private property without the consent of the owner, occupant, or lessee of the property; or
  - d. Is left for longer than seven days on public grounds.
- (2) A "junked motor vehicle" is an abandoned motor vehicle that also:
  - a. Is partially dismantled or wrecked; or
  - b. Cannot be self-propelled or moved in the manner in which it originally was intended to move; or

- c. Is more than five years old and appears to be worth less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00); or
- d. Does not display a current license plate.

(c) **Removal of Vehicles.** – A county may remove to a storage garage or area an abandoned or junked motor vehicle found to be in violation of an ordinance adopted pursuant to this section. A vehicle may not be removed from private property, however, without the written request of the owner, lessee, or occupant of the premises unless the board of commissioners or a duly authorized county official or employee has declared the vehicle to be a health or safety hazard. Appropriate county officers and employees have a right, upon presentation of proper credentials, to enter on any premises within the county ordinance-making jurisdiction at any reasonable hour in order to determine if any vehicles are health or safety hazards. The county may require a person requesting the removal from private property of an abandoned or junked motor vehicle to indemnify the county against any loss, expense, or liability incurred because of the vehicle's removal, storage, or sale.

When an abandoned or junked motor vehicle is removed, the county shall give notice to the owner as required by G.S. 20-219.11(a) and (b).

(d) **Hearing Procedure.** – Regardless of whether a county does its own removal and disposal of motor vehicles or contracts with another person to do so, the county shall provide a hearing procedure for the owner. For purposes of this subsection, the definitions in G.S. 20-219.9 apply.

- (1) If the county operates in such a way that the person who tows the vehicle is responsible for collecting towing fees, all provisions of Article 7A, Chapter 20, apply.
- (2) If the county operates in such a way that it is responsible for collecting towing fees, it shall:
  - a. Provide by contract or ordinance for a schedule of reasonable towing fees,
  - b. Provide a procedure for a prompt fair hearing to contest the towing,
  - c. Provide for an appeal to district court from that hearing,
  - d. Authorize release of the vehicle at any time after towing by the posting of a bond or paying of the fees due, and
  - e. Provide a sale procedure similar to that provided in G.S. 44A-4, 44A-5, and 44A-6, except that no hearing in addition to the probable cause hearing is required. If no one purchases the vehicle at the sale and if the value of the vehicle is less than the amount of the lien, the county may destroy it.

(e), (f) Repealed by Session Laws 1983, c. 420, s. 10.

(g) **No Liability.** – No person nor any county may be held to answer in a civil or criminal action to any owner or other person legally entitled to the possession of an abandoned, junked, lost, or stolen motor vehicle for disposing of the vehicle as provided in this section.

(h) **Exceptions.** – This section does not apply to any vehicle in an enclosed building, to any vehicle on the premises of a business enterprise being operated in a lawful place and manner if the vehicle is necessary to the operation of the enterprise, or to any vehicle in an appropriate storage place or depository maintained in a lawful place and manner by the county.

(i) A county may by ordinance prohibit the abandonment of vessels in navigable waters within the county's ordinance-making jurisdiction, subject to the provisions of this subsection. The

provisions of this section shall apply to abandoned vessels in the same manner that they apply to abandoned or junked motor vehicles to the extent that the provisions may apply to abandoned vessels. For purposes of this subsection, an "abandoned vessel" is one that meets any of the following:

- (1) A vessel that is moored, anchored, or otherwise located for more than 30 consecutive days in any 180 consecutive-day period without permission of the dock owner.
- (2) A vessel that is in danger of sinking, has sunk, is resting on the bottom, or is located such that it is a hazard to navigation or is an immediate danger to other vessels.

Shipwrecks, vessels, cargoes, tackle, and other underwater archeological remains that have been in place for more than 10 years shall not be considered abandoned vessels and shall not be removed under the provisions of this section without the approval of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, which is the legal custodian of these properties pursuant to G.S. 121-22 and G.S. 121-23. (1971, c. 489; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1975, c. 716, s. 5; 1983, c. 420, ss. 8-10; 1997-456, s. 27; 2013-182, s. 2; 2015-241, ss. 14.6(n), (o), 14.30(s); 2023-27, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-132.1. To provide for the removal and disposal of trash, garbage, etc.**

The board of county commissioners of any county is hereby authorized to enact ordinances governing the removal, method or manner of disposal, depositing or dumping of any trash, debris, garbage, litter, discarded cans or receptacles or any waste matter whatsoever within the rural areas of the county and outside and beyond the corporate limits of any municipality of said county. An ordinance adopted pursuant hereto may make it unlawful to place, discard, dispose, leave or dump any trash, debris, garbage, litter, discarded cans or receptacles or any waste matter whatsoever upon a street or highway located within that county or upon property owned or operated by the county unless such trash, debris, garbage, litter, discarded cans or receptacles or any waste matter is placed in a designated location or container for removal by a specific garbage or trash service collector.

Boards of county commissioners may also provide by ordinance enacted pursuant to this section, that the placing, discarding, disposing, leaving or dumping of the articles forbidden by this section shall, for each day or portion thereof the articles or matter are left, constitute a separate offense, and that a person in violation of the ordinance may be punished by a fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) or imprisoned not exceeding 30 days, or both, for each offense. (1973, c. 952.)

**§ 153A-132.2. Regulation, restraint and prohibition of abandonment of junked motor vehicles.**

(a) A county may by ordinance regulate, restrain or prohibit the abandonment of junked motor vehicles on public grounds and on private property within the county's ordinance-making jurisdiction upon a finding that such regulation, restraint or prohibition is necessary and desirable to promote or enhance community, neighborhood or area appearance, and may enforce any such ordinance by removing and disposing of junked motor vehicles subject to the ordinance according to the procedures prescribed in this section. The authority granted by this section shall be supplemental to any other authority conferred upon counties. Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize a county to require the removal or disposal of a motor vehicle kept or stored at a bona fide "automobile graveyard" or "junkyard" as defined in G.S. 136-143.

For purposes of this section, the term "junked motor vehicle" means a vehicle that does not display a current license plate and that:

- (1) Is partially dismantled or wrecked; or
- (2) Cannot be self-propelled or moved in the manner in which it originally was intended to move; or
- (3) Is more than five years old and appears to be worth less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

(a1) Any junked motor vehicle found to be in violation of an ordinance adopted pursuant to this section may be removed to a storage garage or area, but no such vehicle shall be removed from private property without the written request of the owner, lessee, or occupant of the premises unless the board of commissioners or a duly authorized county official or employee finds in writing that the aesthetic benefits of removing the vehicle outweigh the burdens imposed on the private property owner. Such finding shall be based on a balancing of the monetary loss of the apparent owner against the corresponding gain to the public by promoting or enhancing community, neighborhood or area appearance. The following, among other relevant factors, may be considered:

- (1) Protection of property values;
- (2) Promotion of tourism and other economic development opportunities;
- (3) Indirect protection of public health and safety;
- (4) Preservation of the character and integrity of the community; and
- (5) Promotion of the comfort, happiness, and emotional stability of area residents.

(a2) The county may require any person requesting the removal of a junked or abandoned motor vehicle from private property to indemnify the county against any loss, expense, or liability incurred because of the removal, storage, or sale thereof. When an abandoned or junked motor vehicle is removed, the county shall give notice to the owner as required by G.S. 20-219.11(a) and (b).

(a3) Hearing Procedure. – Regardless of whether a county does its own removal and disposal of motor vehicles or contracts with another person to do so, the county shall provide a prior hearing procedure for the owner. For purposes of this subsection, the definitions in G.S. 20-219.9 apply.

- (1) If the county operates in such a way that the person who tows the vehicle is responsible for collecting towing fees, all provisions of Article 7A, Chapter 20, apply.
- (2) If the county operates in such a way that it is responsible for collecting towing fees, it shall:
  - a. Provide by contract or ordinance for a schedule of reasonable towing fees,
  - b. Provide a procedure for a prompt fair hearing to contest the towing,
  - c. Provide for an appeal to district court from that hearing,
  - d. Authorize release of the vehicle at any time after towing by the posting of a bond or paying of the fees due, and
  - e. Provide a sale procedure similar to that provided in G.S. 44A-4, 44A-5, and 44A-6, except that no hearing in addition to the probable cause hearing is required. If no one purchases the vehicle at the sale and if the value of the vehicle is less than the amount of the lien, the city may destroy it.

(a4) Any person who removes a vehicle pursuant to this section shall not be held liable for damages for the removal of the vehicle to the owner, lienholder or other person legally entitled to the possession of the vehicle removed; however, any person who intentionally or negligently damages a vehicle in the removal of such vehicle, or intentionally or negligently inflicts injury upon any person in the removal of such vehicle, may be held liable for damages.

(b) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to this section shall include a prohibition against removing or disposing of any motor vehicle that is used on a regular basis for business or personal use. (1983, c. 841, s. 1; 1985, c. 737, s. 1; 1987, c. 42, s. 1, c. 451, s. 1; 1987 (Reg. Sess., 1988), c. 902, s. 1; 1989, c. 743, s. 1.)

### **§ 153A-133. Noise regulation.**

A county may by ordinance regulate, restrict, or prohibit the production or emission of noises or amplified speech, music, or other sounds that tend to annoy, disturb, or frighten its citizens. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

### **§ 153A-134. Regulating and licensing businesses, trades, etc.**

(a) A county may by ordinance, subject to the general law of the State, regulate and license occupations, businesses, trades, professions, and forms of amusement or entertainment and prohibit those that may be inimical to the public health, welfare, safety, order, or convenience. In licensing trades, occupations, and professions, the county may, consistent with the general law of the State, require applicants for licenses to be examined and charge a reasonable fee therefor. This section does not authorize a county to examine or license a person holding a license issued by an occupational licensing board of this State as to the profession or trade that he has been licensed to practice or pursue by the State.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-237, s. 4, effective October 1, 2015.

(c) Nothing in this section shall authorize a county to regulate and license a TNC service regulated under Article 10A of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes. (1868, c. 20, s. 8; Code, s. 707; Rev., s. 1318; C.S., s. 1297; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 2013-413, s. 12.1(c); 2015-237, s. 4.)

### **§ 153A-134.1. Regulation of battery-charged security fences.**

(a) No county may adopt an ordinance, rule, or regulation that does any of the following:

- (1) Requires any type of permit, fee, review, or approval for the installation or use of a battery-charged security fence in addition to a permit that may be required by an ordinance adopted by the governing board as authorized by G.S. 74D-11(c).
- (2) Imposes installation or operational requirements for battery-charged security fences that are inconsistent with the requirements and standards described in subsection (b) of this section.
- (3) Prohibits the installation or use of a battery-charged security fence on property that has been zoned for nonresidential use.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term "battery-charged security fence" means an alarm system and ancillary components, or equipment attached to that system, including a fence, a battery-operated energizer that is intended to periodically deliver voltage impulses to the fence, and a battery charging device used exclusively to charge the battery. A battery-charged security fence shall meet the following requirements:



- (1) Interfaces with a monitored alarm device enabling the alarm system to transmit a signal intended to summon the business or law enforcement in response to an intrusion or burglary.
- (2) Is located on property that is not designated by a county or city exclusively for residential use.
- (3) Has an energizer that is powered by a commercial storage battery that is not more than 12 volts of direct current.
- (4) Has an energizer that meets the standards established by the most current version of the International Electrotechnical Commission Standard 60335-2-76.
- (5) Is surrounded by a non-electric perimeter fence or wall that is not less than 5 feet in height.
- (6) Does not exceed 10 feet in height or 2 feet higher than the non-electric perimeter fence or wall, whichever is higher.
- (7) Is marked with conspicuous warning signs that are located on the battery-charged security fence at not more than 30-foot intervals and read: "WARNING-ELECTRIC FENCE". (2023-137, s. 44(a).)

**§ 153A-135. Regulation of places of amusement.**

A county may by ordinance regulate places of amusement and entertainment, and may regulate, restrict, or prohibit the operation of pool and billiard halls, dance halls, carnivals, circuses, or itinerant shows or exhibitions of any kind. Places of amusement and entertainment include coffeeshouses, cocktail lounges, nightclubs, beer halls, and similar establishments, but any regulation of such places shall be consistent with any permit or license issued by the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission. (1963, c. 1060, ss. 1, 1 1/2; 1965, cc. 388, 567, 1083, 1158; 1967, c. 495, s. 2; 1969, c. 36, s. 1; 1971, c. 702, ss. 1-3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1981, c. 412, ss. 4, 5.)

**§ 153A-136. Regulation of solid wastes.**

(a) A county may by ordinance regulate the storage, collection, transportation, use, disposal, and other disposition of solid wastes. Such an ordinance may:

- (1) Regulate the activities of persons, firms, and corporations, both public and private.
- (2) Require each person wishing to commercially collect or dispose of solid wastes to secure a license from the county and prohibit any person from commercially collecting or disposing of solid wastes without a license. A fee may be charged for a license.
- (3) Grant a franchise to one or more persons for the exclusive right to commercially collect or dispose of solid wastes within all or a defined portion of the county and prohibit any other person from commercially collecting or disposing of solid wastes in that area. The board of commissioners may set the terms of any franchise; provided, however, no franchise shall be granted for a period of more than 30 years, except for a franchise granted to a sanitary landfill for the life-of-site of the landfill pursuant to G.S. 130A-294(b1), which may not exceed 60 years. A franchise granted for a sanitary landfill shall be subject to all requirements pertaining thereto under G.S. 130A-294. No franchise by its terms

may impair the authority of the board of commissioners to regulate fees as authorized by this section.

- (4) Regulate the fees, if any, that may be charged by licensed or franchised persons for collecting or disposing of solid wastes.
- (5) Require the source separation of materials prior to collection of solid waste for disposal.
- (6) Require participation in a recycling program by requiring separation of designated materials by the owner or occupant of the property prior to disposal. An owner of recovered materials as defined by G.S. 130A-290(a)(24) retains ownership of the recovered materials until the owner conveys, sells, donates, or otherwise transfers the recovered materials to a person, firm, company, corporation, or unit of local government. A county may not require an owner to convey, sell, donate, or otherwise transfer recovered materials to the county or its designee. If an owner places recovered materials in receptacles or delivers recovered materials to specific locations, receptacles, and facilities that are owned or operated by the county or its designee, then ownership of these materials is transferred to the county or its designee.
- (6a) Regulate the illegal disposal of solid waste, including littering on public and private property, provide for enforcement by civil penalties as well as other remedies, and provide that such regulations may be enforced by county employees specially appointed as environmental enforcement officers.
- (7) Include any other proper matter.

(b) Any ordinance adopted pursuant to this section shall be consistent with and supplementary to any rules adopted by the Commission for Public Health or the Department of Environmental Quality.

(c) The board of commissioners of a county shall consider alternative sites and socioeconomic and demographic data and shall hold a public hearing prior to selecting or approving a site for a new sanitary landfill that receives residential solid waste that is located within one mile of an existing sanitary landfill within the State. The distance between an existing and a proposed site shall be determined by measurement between the closest points on the outer boundary of each site. The definitions set out in G.S. 130A-290 apply to this subsection. As used in this subsection:

- (1) "Approving a site" refers to prior approval of a site under G.S. 130A-294(a)(4).
- (2) "Existing sanitary landfill" means a sanitary landfill that is in operation or that has been in operation within the five-year period immediately prior to the date on which an application for a permit is submitted.
- (3) "New sanitary landfill" means a sanitary landfill that includes areas not within the legal description of an existing sanitary landfill as set out in the permit for the existing sanitary landfill.
- (4) "Socioeconomic and demographic data" means the most recent socioeconomic and demographic data compiled by the United States Bureau of the Census and any additional socioeconomic and demographic data submitted at the public hearing.

(d) As used in this section, "solid waste" means nonhazardous solid waste, that is, solid waste as defined in G.S. 130A-290 but not including hazardous waste.

(e) A county that has planning jurisdiction over any portion of the site of a sanitary landfill may employ a local government landfill liaison. No person who is responsible for any aspect of the management or operation of the landfill may serve as a local government landfill liaison. A local government landfill liaison shall have a right to enter public or private lands on which the landfill facility is located at reasonable times to inspect the landfill operation in order to:

- (1) Ensure that the facility meets all local requirements.
- (2) Identify and notify the Department of suspected violations of applicable federal or State laws, regulations, or rules.
- (3) Identify and notify the Department of potentially hazardous conditions at the facility.

(f) Entry pursuant to subsection (e) of this section shall not constitute a trespass or taking of property. (1955, c. 1050; 1957, cc. 120, 376; 1961, c. 40; c. 514, s. 1; cc. 711, 803; c. 806, s. 1; 1965, c. 452; 1967, cc. 34, 90; c. 183, s. 1; cc. 304, 339; c. 495, s. 4; 1969, cc. 79, 155, 176; c. 234, s. 1; c. 452; c. 1003, s. 4; 1973, c. 476, s. 128; c. 822, s. 1; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1009, s. 1; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1013, s. 1; 1993, c. 165, s. 1; 1997-443, s. 11A.123; 2001-512, s. 5; 2007-182, s. 2; 2007-550, s. 11(a); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u); 2017-10, s. 3.2(d); 2018-114, s. 21(c).)

**§ 153A-137: Repealed by Session Laws 2006-151, s. 10, effective January 1, 2007.**

**§ 153A-138. Registration of mobile homes, house trailers, etc.**

A county may by ordinance provide for the annual registration of mobile homes, house trailers and similar vehicular equipment designed for use as living or business quarters and for the display of a sticker or other device thereon as evidence of such registration. No fee shall be charged for such registration. (1975, c. 693.)

**§ 153A-139. Regulation of traffic at parking areas and driveways.**

The governing body of any county may, by ordinance, regulate the stopping, standing, or parking of vehicles in specified areas of any parking areas or driveways of a hospital, shopping center, apartment house, condominium complex, or commercial office complex or any other privately owned public vehicular area, or prohibit such stopping, standing, or parking during any specified hours, provided the owner or person in general charge of the operation and control of that area requests in writing that such an ordinance be adopted. The owner of a vehicle parked in violation of an ordinance adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be deemed to have appointed any appropriate law-enforcement officer as his agent for the purpose of arranging for the transportation and safe storage of such vehicle. (1979, c. 745, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-140. Abatement of public health nuisances.**

A county shall have authority, subject to the provisions of Article 57 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes, to remove, abate, or remedy everything that is dangerous or prejudicial to the public health or safety. Pursuant to this section, a board of commissioners may order the removal of a swimming pool and its appurtenances upon a finding that the swimming pool or its appurtenances is dangerous or prejudicial to public health or safety. The expense of the action shall be paid by the person in default, and, if not paid, shall be a lien upon the land or premises where the nuisance arose, and shall be collected as unpaid taxes. The authority granted by this section may only be exercised upon adequate notice, the right to a hearing, and the right to appeal to the General Court of Justice. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to restrict or repeal the authority of any

municipality to abate or remedy health nuisances pursuant to G.S. 160A-174, 160A-193, or any other general or local law. This section shall not affect bona fide farms, but any use of farm property for nonfarm purposes is subject to this section. (1981 (Reg. Sess., 1982), c. 1314, s. 1; 2002-116, s. 2.)

**§ 153A-140.1. Stream-clearing programs.**

(a) A county shall have the authority to remove natural and man-made obstructions in stream channels and in the floodway of streams that may impede the passage of water during rain events.

(b) The actions of a county to clear obstructions from a stream shall not create or increase the responsibility of the county for the clearing or maintenance of the stream, or for flooding of the stream. In addition, actions by a county to clear obstructions from a stream shall not create in the county any ownership in the stream, obligation to control the stream, or affect any otherwise existing private property right, responsibility, or entitlement regarding the stream. These provisions shall not relieve a county for negligence that might be found under otherwise applicable law.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect existing rights of the State to control or regulate streams or activities within streams. In implementing a stream-clearing program, the county shall comply with all requirements in State or federal statutes and rules. (2005-441, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-140.2. Annual notice to chronic violators of public nuisance ordinance.**

A county may notify a chronic violator of the county's public nuisance ordinance that, if the violator's property is found to be in violation of the ordinance, the county shall, without further notice in the calendar year in which notice is given, take action to remedy the violation, and the expense of the action shall become a lien upon the property and shall be collected as unpaid taxes. The notice shall be sent by certified mail. A chronic violator is a person who owns property whereupon, in the previous calendar year, the county gave notice of violation at least three times under any provision of the public nuisance ordinance. (2009-287, s. 2.)

**§ 153A-141: Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 501, s. 3.**

**§ 153A-142. Curfews.**

A county may by an appropriate ordinance impose a curfew on persons of any age less than 18. (1997-189, s. 2.)

**§ 153A-143: Repealed by Session Laws 2019-111, s. 2.6(d), as amended by Session Laws 2020-3, s. 4.33(a), and Session Laws 2020-25, s. 51(a), (b), (d), effective June 19, 2020.**

**§ 153A-144: Repealed by Session Laws 2019-111, s. 2.6(f), as amended by Session Laws 2020-3, s. 4.33(a), and Session Laws 2020-25, s. 51(a), (b), (d), effective June 19, 2020.**

**§ 153A-145. Limitations on regulating cisterns and rain barrels.**

No county ordinance may prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the installation and maintenance of cisterns and rain barrel collection systems used to collect water for irrigation

purposes. A county may regulate the installation and maintenance of those cisterns and rain barrel collection systems for the purpose of protecting the public health and safety and for the purpose of preventing them from becoming a public nuisance. (2011-394, s. 12(d).)

**§ 153A-145.1. Transportation impact mitigation ordinances prohibited.**

No county may enact or enforce an ordinance, rule, or regulation that requires an employer to assume financial, legal, or other responsibility for the mitigation of the impact of his or her employees' commute or transportation to or from the employer's workplace, which may result in the employer being subject to a fine, fee, or other monetary, legal, or negative consequences. (2013-413, s. 10.1(b).)

**§ 153A-145.2. Limitations on regulating soft drink sizes.**

No county ordinance may prohibit the sale of soft drinks above a particular size. This section does not prohibit any ordinance regulating the sanitation or other operational aspect of a device for the dispensing of soft drinks. For purposes of this section, "soft drink" shall have the meaning set forth in G.S. 105-164.3. (2013-309, s. 3.)

**§ 153A-145.3. Counties enforce ordinances within public trust areas.**

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 113-131 or any other provision of law, a county may, by ordinance, define, prohibit, regulate, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions upon the State's ocean beaches and prevent or abate any unreasonable restriction of the public's rights to use the State's ocean beaches. In addition, a county may, in the interest of promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the public, regulate, restrict, or prohibit the placement, maintenance, location, or use of equipment, personal property, or debris upon the State's ocean beaches. A county may enforce any ordinance adopted pursuant to this section or any other provision of law upon the State's ocean beaches located within the county's jurisdictional boundaries to the same extent that a county may enforce ordinances within the county's jurisdictional boundaries. A county may enforce an ordinance adopted pursuant to this section by any remedy provided for in G.S. 153A-123. For purposes of this section, the term "ocean beaches" has the same meaning as in G.S. 77-20(e).

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to (i) limit the authority of the State or any State agency to regulate the State's ocean beaches as authorized by G.S. 113-131, or common law as interpreted and applied by the courts of this State; (ii) limit any other authority granted to counties by the State to regulate the State's ocean beaches; (iii) deny the existence of the authority recognized in this section prior to the date this section becomes effective; (iv) impair the right of the people of this State to the customary free use and enjoyment of the State's ocean beaches, which rights remain reserved to the people of this State as provided in G.S. 77-20(d); (v) change or modify the riparian, littoral, or other ownership rights of owners of property bounded by the Atlantic Ocean; or (vi) apply to the removal of permanent residential or commercial structures and appurtenances thereto from the State's ocean beaches. (2015-70, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-145.4. Limitations on standards of care for farm animals.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no county ordinance may regulate standards of care for farm animals. For purposes of this section, "standards of care for farm animals" includes the following: the construction, repair, or improvement of farm animal shelter or housing; restrictions on the types of feed or medicines that may be administered to farm animals; and exercise and social interaction requirements. For purposes of this section, the term "farm animals"

includes the following domesticated animals: cattle, oxen, bison, sheep, swine, goats, horses, ponies, mules, donkeys, hinnies, llamas, alpacas, lagomorphs, ratites, and poultry. (2015-192, s. 1.)

**§ 153A-145.5. Adoption of sanctuary ordinance prohibited.**

(a) No county may have in effect any policy, ordinance, or procedure that limits or restricts the enforcement of federal immigration laws to less than the full extent permitted by federal law.

(b) No county shall do any of the following related to information regarding the citizenship or immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of any individual:

- (1) Prohibit law enforcement officials or agencies from gathering such information.
- (2) Direct law enforcement officials or agencies not to gather such information.
- (3) Prohibit the communication of such information to federal law enforcement agencies. (2015-294, s. 15(a).)

**§ 153A-145.6. Requiring compliance with voluntary State regulations and rules prohibited.**

(a) If a State department or agency declares a regulation or rule to be voluntary or the General Assembly delays the effective date of a regulation or rule proposed or adopted by the Environmental Management Commission, or any other board or commission, a county shall not require or enforce compliance with the applicable regulation or rule, including any regulation or rule previously or hereafter incorporated as a condition or contractual obligation imposed by, agreed upon, or accepted by the county in any zoning, land use, subdivision, or other developmental approval, including, without limitation, a development permit issuance, development agreement, site-specific development plan, or phased development plan.

(b) This section shall apply to the following regulations and rules:

- (1) Those currently in effect.
- (2) Those repealed or otherwise expired.
- (3) Those temporarily or permanently held in abeyance.
- (4) Those adopted but not yet effective.

(c) This section shall not apply to any water usage restrictions during either extreme or exceptional drought conditions as determined by the Drought Management Advisory Council pursuant to G.S. 143-355.1. (2015-246, s. 2(a).)

**§ 153A-145.7. Hours of certain alcohol sales.**

In accordance with G.S. 18B-1004(c), a county may adopt an ordinance allowing for the sale of malt beverages, unfortified wine, fortified wine, and mixed beverages beginning at 10:00 A.M. on Sunday pursuant to the licensed premises' permit issued under G.S. 18B-1001. (2017-87, s. 4(b).)

**§ 153A-145.8. Limitations on regulation of catering by bona fide farms.**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no county may require a business located on a property used for bona fide farm purposes, as provided in G.S. 160D-903(a), that provides on- and off-site catering services, to obtain a permit to provide catering services within the county. This section shall not be construed to exempt the business from any health and safety rules adopted by a local health department, the Department of Health and Human Services, or the Commission for Public Health. (2020-18, s. 5(c); 2020-74, s. 21(a).)

**§ 153A-145.9. Authorization of social districts.**

A county may adopt an ordinance designating one or more social districts for use in accordance with G.S. 18B-300.1. (2021-150, s. 20.1; 2022-49, s. 3(d).)

**§ 153A-145.10. Authorization of expanded area for ABC licensed premises.**

In accordance with G.S. 18B-904(h), a county may adopt an ordinance authorizing permittees holding a permit under Article 10 or 11 of Chapter 18B of the General Statutes to utilize an area that is not part of the permittee's licensed premises for the outdoor possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages sold by the permittee. (2021-150, s. 21.1.)

**§ 153A-145.11. Limitations on regulation of energy choice.**

(a) A county shall not adopt an ordinance that prohibits, or has the effect of prohibiting, either of the following:

- (1) The connection, reconnection, modification, or expansion of an energy service based upon the type or source of energy to be delivered to an individual or any other person as the end-user of the energy service.
- (2) The sale, purchase, or installation of an appliance utilized for cooking, space heating, water heating, or any other appliance included under the definition of "white goods" pursuant to G.S. 130A-290(a).

(b) As used in this section, "energy service" means the energy source that a consumer may choose to use to illuminate, heat, or cool buildings; produce hot water; operate equipment; operate appliances; or any other similar activities, where the energy source is derived from one or more of a variety of sources such as natural gas, renewable gas, hydrogen, liquified petroleum gas, renewable liquified petroleum gas, or other liquid petroleum products and that is delivered to the consumer by an entity legally authorized to provide such service or electricity that is derived from one or more sources of electric generation and is delivered to the consumer by an entity legally authorized to provide such service and the distribution of the electricity occurs according to the territorial rights established by G.S. 62-110.2, 160A-331.2, or 160A-332. For purposes of this section, the terms "renewable gas" and "renewable liquified petroleum gas" shall mean gas derived from a renewable energy resource, as that term is defined by G.S. 62-133.8(a)(8).

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to (i) limit the ability of a county to choose the energy service for property owned by the county, (ii) prohibit a county from recovering reasonable costs associated with reviewing and issuing a permit, or (iii) affect the authority of a county to manage or operate a county-owned utility, including a county's authority to require persons residing within their jurisdictions to obtain energy service from a county-owned utility.

(d) Notwithstanding any authority granted to counties to adopt local ordinances, any local ordinance that prohibits or has the effect of prohibiting the activities described in subsection (a) of this section shall be invalid. (2023-58, s. 1(b).)

**§ 153A-145.12. Limitations on regulations of auxiliary containers; shopping carts.**

(a) Except as provided under subsection (b) of this section, no county may adopt an ordinance, resolution, regulation, or rule to:

- (1) Restrict, tax, charge a fee, prohibit, or otherwise regulate the use, disposition, or sale of an auxiliary container.
- (2) Regulate the use of shopping carts, including the imposition of a fee or fine on a business for failure to take possession of a shopping cart that was removed from the premises of the business.

- (b) A county is authorized to:
  - (1) Operate a recycling program, a composting program, and a solid waste disposal program as authorized by law.
  - (2) Regulate the use of auxiliary containers on property owned or maintained by the county.
- (c) The following definitions shall apply in this section:
  - (1) Auxiliary container. – A bag, cup, package, container, bottle, device, or other packaging made of cloth, paper, plastic, foamed plastic, fiber, expanded plastic, cardboard, corrugated material, aluminum, glass, post-consumer recycled material, or similar coated or laminated material that is designed for the consumption, transportation, or protection of merchandise, food, or beverage at a food service facility, manufacturing facility, distribution facility, processing facility, or retail facility.
  - (2) Shopping cart. – As defined in G.S. 14-72.3(a)(1). (2023-134, s. 5.9(d).)