

Article 3.

Regional Sewage Disposal Planning.

§ 162A-26. Title.

This Article shall be known and may be cited as the "Regional Sewage Disposal Planning Act of 1971." (1971, c. 870, s. 1.)

§ 162A-27. Definitions of "regional sewage disposal system" and "comprehensive planning."

For the purposes of this Article "regional sewage disposal system" is defined as a public sewage disposal system of a municipality, county, sanitary district, or other political subdivision of the State, or combination thereof, which provides, is intended to provide, or is capable of providing adequate collection, treatment, purification and disposal of sewage to a substantial portion of the population within a county, or a region composed of all or parts of two or more counties, or to a metropolitan area in two or more counties. "Comprehensive planning" is defined as that planning which is a prerequisite for qualifying for receipt of federal and/or State grant funds for preparation of plans and specifications and for actual construction of regional sewage disposal systems. (1971, c. 870, s. 1; 1975, c. 251, s. 1.)

§ 162A-28. Role and function of Environmental Management Commission.

The North Carolina Environmental Management Commission, in order to provide a framework for comprehensive planning of regional sewage disposal systems and for orderly coordination of local actions relating to sewage disposal, to make possible the most efficient disposal of sewage and to help realize economies of scale in sewage disposal systems, shall perform the following functions:

- (1) Identify major sources of sewage for regional systems and sewer system interconnections as may be desirable and feasible.
- (2) Identify geographical areas of the State suitable for the development of regional sewage disposal systems that meet federal and State grant requirements.
- (3) Establish priorities for regionalization.
- (4) Develop plans for connecting proposed regional sewage disposal systems to major sources of sewage and for such sewer system interconnections as may be desirable and feasible.
- (5) Review and approve plans for proposed regional sewage disposal systems and for proposed municipal and countywide systems which are compatible with a regional plan.
- (6) Administer a State program of financial assistance to local governments and regional planning agencies for the development of comprehensive plans for regional sewage disposal systems or county systems compatible with regional plans.
- (7) Provide technical assistance to local and regional planning agencies and to consulting engineering firms. (1971, c. 870, s. 1; 1973, c. 1262, s. 23; 1975, c. 251, s. 2.)

§ 162A-29. Regional Sewage Disposal Planning Revolving Fund established; conditions and procedures.

(a) There is established under the control and direction of the Department of Administration a Regional Sewage Disposal Planning Revolving Fund, to consist of any moneys

that may be appropriated for use through the fund by the General Assembly or that may be made available to it from any other source. The Department may make advances from the fund to any county, municipality, or sanitary district, or to counties and municipalities acting collectively or jointly as a regional sewer authority, for the purpose of meeting the cost of advance planning and engineering work necessary or desirable for the development of a comprehensive plan for a regional sewage disposal system as defined in this Article. Such advances shall be subject to repayment by the recipient to the Department from the proceeds of bonds or other obligations for the regional sewage disposal system, or from other funds available to the recipient including grants, except when, in the judgment of the Department of Environmental Quality, a proposed plan for development and construction of a countywide or other regional sewage disposal system is not feasible because of design and construction factors, or because of the effect that the sewage disposal system discharge will have upon water quality standards, or because construction of a proposed system is not economically feasible, (but not if the applicant decides not to proceed with construction that has been planned and which the Department of Environmental Quality has declared to be feasible).

(b) The Department of Administration shall not make any advance pursuant to this section without first referring the application and proposal to the Department of Environmental Quality for determination as to whether the following conditions have been met:

- (1) The proposed area is suitable for development of a regional sewage disposal system from the standpoint of present and projected populations, industrial growth potential, and present and future sources of sewage.
- (2) The applicant proposes to undertake long-range comprehensive planning to meet present and projected needs for high quality sewage disposal through the construction of a regional sewage disposal system as defined in this Article. The determination by the Department of Environmental Quality, that the proposed system would be a "regional system," as defined by this Article, shall be conclusive.
- (3) The applicant proposes to coordinate planning of the regional sewage disposal system with land-use planning in the area, in order that both planning efforts will be compatible.
- (4) The applicant proposes to employ an engineer licensed to practice in the State of North Carolina to prepare a comprehensive regional sewage disposal plan, which plan will provide detailed information on the source or sources of sewage; the proposed system, including all facilities and appurtenances thereto for the collection, transmission, treatment, purification and disposal of sewage; any proposed interconnection with existing systems, and provisions for interconnections with other county, municipal and regional systems; the phased development of systems to achieve ultimate objectives if economic feasibility is in question; projected sewage disposal service areas; proposed equipment; estimates of cost and projected revenues; and methods of financing.

(c) In addition to the above conditions, the Department of Administration shall not make any advance to any applicant until the following conditions have also been met:

- (1) The Department has determined that there is a reasonable prospect of federal (or State) aid in the financing of the projected work if the undertaking is one that will be dependent upon federal (or State) aid.

- (2) The Department has received firm assurances from the applicant that the work or project, if feasible, will be undertaken.
- (3) The applicant has furnished evidence that it does not have funds available to finance the plan.

(d) All advances made pursuant to this section shall be repaid in full, upon receipt of any sewage disposal facilities planning grant funds from federal or State sources, or within one year of the start of construction on the projected system, or within six months after the issuance of bonds for the financing of construction of the system, or within six years from the date of the making of the advance, whichever comes first. The Department may, in its discretion, require the repayment of any advance in installments.

(e) The Department of Administration may adopt such rules and regulations with respect to the making of applications or the receipt of advances as are consistent with the terms and purpose of this section.

(f) The provisions of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina (Local Government Acts) shall not apply to advances made from the Regional Sewage Disposal Planning Revolving Fund as authorized in this Article. (1971, c. 870, s. 1; 1975, c. 251, ss. 3, 4; 1989, c. 727, ss. 216, 217; 1997-443, s. 11A.123; 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)

§ 162A-30. Construction of Article.

This Article shall be construed as providing supplemental authority in addition to the powers of the North Carolina Utilities Commission under Chapter 62 of the North Carolina General Statutes, the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission under Articles 21 and 38 of Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes, and the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality under General Statutes Chapter 130A, and any other provisions of law concerning local and regional sewage disposal. (1971, c. 870, s. 1; 1973, c. 476, s. 128; c. 1262, s. 23; 1997-443, s. 11A.116; 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)