

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

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HOUSE DRH30177-RT-1* (02/25)

Short Title: Improve Environmental Enforcement. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Culpepper.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO IMPROVE THE ENFORCEMENT OF VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 113A-64(a)(1) reads as rewritten:

"(1) Any person who violates any of the provisions of this Article or any ordinance, rule, or order adopted or issued pursuant to this Article by the Commission or by a local government, or who initiates or continues a land-disturbing activity for which an erosion and sedimentation control plan is required except in accordance with the terms, conditions, and provisions of an approved plan, is subject to a civil penalty. The maximum civil penalty for a violation is five thousand dollars ~~(\$5,000)~~. (\$5,000), except that, in order to deter violations, the Secretary may assess a civil penalty of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the first day of a violation. A civil penalty may be assessed from the date of the violation. Each day of a continuing violation shall constitute a separate violation."

SECTION 2. G.S. 113A-126(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) (1) A civil penalty of not more than ~~two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00)~~ one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for a minor development violation and ~~two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500)~~ ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for a major development violation may be assessed by the Commission against any person who:

a. Is required but fails to apply for or to secure a permit required by G.S. 113A-118, or who violates or fails to act in accordance with the terms, conditions, or requirements of such permit.

- 1 b. Fails to file, submit, or make available, as the case may be, any
2 documents, data or reports required by the Commission
3 pursuant to this Article.
- 4 c. Refuses access to the Commission or its duly designated
5 representative, who has sufficiently identified himself by
6 displaying official credentials, to any premises, not including
7 any occupied dwelling house or curtilage, for the purpose of
8 conducting any investigations provided for in this Article.
- 9 d. Violates a rule of the Commission implementing this Article.
- 10 (2) For each willful action or failure to act for which a penalty may be
11 assessed under this subsection, the Commission may consider each day
12 the action or inaction continues after notice is given of the violation as
13 a separate violation; a separate penalty may be assessed for each such
14 separate violation.
- 15 (3) ~~The Commission may assess the penalties provided for in this~~
16 ~~subsection.~~ The Commission shall notify a person who is assessed a
17 penalty or investigative costs by registered or certified mail. The notice
18 shall state the reasons for the penalty. A person may contest the
19 assessment of a penalty or investigative costs by filing a petition for a
20 contested case under G.S. 150B-23 within 20 days after receiving the
21 notice of assessment. If a person fails to pay ~~a penalty, any civil~~
22 penalty or investigative cost assessed under this subsection, the
23 Commission shall refer the matter to the Attorney General for
24 collection. An action to collect a penalty must be filed within three
25 years after the date the final agency decision was served on the
26 violator.
- 27 (4) In determining the amount of the ~~penalty—civil penalty~~, the
28 Commission shall consider the degree and extent of harm caused by
29 the violation and the cost of rectifying the damage.
- 30 (4a) The Commission may also assess a person who is assessed a civil
31 penalty under this subsection the reasonable costs of any investigation,
32 inspection, or monitoring that results in the assessment of the civil
33 penalty. For a minor development violation, the amount of an
34 assessment of investigative costs shall not exceed one-half of the
35 amount of the civil penalty assessed or one thousand dollars (\$1,000),
36 whichever is less. For a major development violation, the amount of an
37 assessment of investigative costs shall not exceed one-half of the
38 amount of the civil penalty assessed or two thousand five hundred
39 dollars (\$2,500), whichever is less.
- 40 (5) The clear proceeds of penalties assessed pursuant to this subsection
41 shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in
42 accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2."

43 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 130A-18 (a) reads as rewritten:

1 "(a) If a person ~~shall violate~~ violates any provision of this ~~Chapter or the rules~~
2 Chapter, any rule adopted by the ~~Commission or rules~~ Commission, any rule adopted by
3 a local board of ~~health,~~ health, or any order issued pursuant to this Chapter, the
4 Secretary or a local health director may institute an action for injunctive relief,
5 irrespective of all other remedies at law, in the superior court of the county where the
6 violation occurred or where a defendant resides."

7 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 130A-22(a) reads as rewritten:

8 "(a) The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources may impose an
9 administrative penalty on a person who violates Article 9 of this Chapter, rules adopted
10 by the Commission pursuant to Article 9, or any order issued under Article 9. Each day
11 of a continuing violation shall constitute a separate violation. The penalty shall not
12 exceed ~~five-ten~~ thousand dollars (\$5,000)(\$10,000) per day in the case of a violation
13 involving nonhazardous waste. The penalty shall not exceed ~~twenty-five thousand~~
14 ~~dollars (\$25,000)~~ thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$37,500) per day in the
15 case of a ~~first~~ violation involving hazardous waste, as defined in G.S. ~~130A-290~~
16 ~~or 130A-290,~~ or for a failure to make a determination whether a solid waste is a
17 hazardous waste. The penalty shall not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000)
18 per day for a first violation involving the disposal of medical waste as defined in G.S.
19 130A-290 in or upon water in a manner that results in medical waste entering waters or
20 lands of the State; and shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per day for a
21 second or further violation involving the disposal of medical waste as defined in G.S.
22 130A-290 in or upon water in a manner that results in medical waste entering waters or
23 lands of the State. The penalty shall not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000)
24 per day for a violation involving a voluntary remedial action implemented pursuant to
25 G.S. 130A-310.9(c) or a violation of the rules adopted pursuant to G.S. 130A-310.12(b).
26 If a person fails to pay a civil penalty within 60 days after the final agency decision or
27 court order has been served on the violator, the Secretary of Environment and Natural
28 Resources shall request the Attorney General to institute a civil action in the superior
29 court of any county in which the violator resides or has his or its principal place of
30 business to recover the amount of the assessment. Such civil actions must be filed
31 within three years of the date the final agency decision or court order was served on the
32 violator."

33 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 130A-22(c) reads as rewritten:

34 "(c) The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources may impose an
35 administrative penalty on a person who willfully violates Article 11 of this Chapter,
36 rules adopted by the Commission pursuant to Article 11 or any condition imposed upon
37 a permit issued under Article 11. An administrative penalty may not be imposed upon a
38 person who establishes that neither the site nor the system may be improved or a new
39 system installed so as to comply with Article 11 of this Chapter. Each day of a
40 continuing violation shall constitute a separate violation. The penalty shall not exceed
41 ~~fifty dollars (\$50.00)~~ one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per day in the case of a wastewater
42 collection, treatment and disposal system with a design daily flow of no more than 480
43 gallons or in the case of any system serving a single one-family dwelling. The penalty
44 shall not exceed ~~three hundred dollars (\$300.00)~~ five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per day

1 in the case of a wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system with a design daily
2 flow of more than 480 gallons which does not serve a single one-family dwelling."

3 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 130A-26.2 reads as rewritten:

4 "**§ 130A-26.2. Penalty for false reporting under Article 9,9 and Article 10.**

5 Any person who knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or
6 certification in any application, record, report, plan, or other document filed or required
7 to be maintained under Article 9 or Article 10 of this Chapter or rules adopted under
8 Article 9 or Article 10 of this Chapter; or who knowingly makes a false statement of a
9 material fact in a rule-making proceeding or contested case under Article 9 or Article 10
10 of this Chapter; or who falsifies, tampers with, or knowingly renders inaccurate any
11 recording or monitoring device or method required to be operated or maintained under
12 Article 9 or Article 10 of this Chapter or rules adopted under Article 9 or Article 10 of
13 this Chapter is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. The maximum fine that may be
14 imposed for an offense under this section is ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)."

15 **SECTION 7.** This act becomes effective 1 December 2003 and applies to
16 violations and offenses committed on or after that date.