

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2013

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HOUSE BILL 279  
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/18/13

Short Title: Transfer Environmental Permits.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 13, 2013

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
3 RESOURCES TO TRANSFER CERTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS  
4 ASSOCIATED WITH PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT WHEN THE ORIGINAL  
5 PROPERTY OWNER IS UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO AGREE TO THE PERMIT  
6 TRANSFER.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 143-214.7 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:  
9 **"§ 143-214.7. Stormwater runoff rules and programs.**

10 ...  
11 (c5) The Department may transfer a permit issued pursuant to this section without the  
12 consent of the permit holder to a successor-owner of the property on which the permitted  
13 activity is occurring or will occur as provided in this subsection.

14 (1) The Department may transfer a permit if all of the following conditions are  
15 met:

16 a. The successor-owner of the property submits to the Department a  
17 written request for the transfer of the permit.

18 b. The Department finds all of the following:

19 1. The permit holder is one of the following:

20 I. A natural person who is deceased.

21 II. A corporation that has been dissolved.

22 III. A person who has been lawfully divested of title to the  
23 property on which the permitted activity is occurring  
24 or will occur.

25 IV. A person who has sold the property on which the  
26 permitted activity is occurring or will occur.

27 2. The successor-owner holds title to the property on which the  
28 permitted activity is occurring or will occur.

29 3. The successor-owner is the sole claimant of the right to  
30 engage in the permitted activity.

31 4. There will be no substantial change in the permitted activity.

32 (2) The permit holder shall comply with all terms and conditions of the permit  
33 until such time as the permit is transferred.

34 (3) The successor-owner shall comply with all terms and conditions of the  
35 permit once the permit has been transferred.



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1           (4) Notwithstanding changes to law made after the original issuance of the  
2           permit, the Department may not impose new or different terms and  
3           conditions in the permit without the prior express consent of the  
4           successor-owner."

5           **SECTION 2.** G.S. 143-215.1 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

6           **"§ 143-215.1. Control of sources of water pollution; permits required.**

7           ...  
8           (d3) The Department may transfer a permit issued pursuant to subsection (d) of this  
9           section without the consent of the permit holder to a successor-owner of the property on which  
10           the permitted activity is occurring or will occur as provided in this subsection.

11           (1) The Department may transfer a permit if all of the following conditions are  
12           met:

13           a. The successor-owner of the property submits to the Department a  
14           written request for the transfer of the permit.

15           b. The Department finds all of the following:

16           1. The permit holder is one of the following:

17           I. A natural person who is deceased.

18           II. A corporation that has been dissolved.

19           III. A person who has been lawfully divested of title to the  
20           property on which the permitted activity is occurring  
21           or will occur.

22           IV. A person who has sold the property on which the  
23           permitted activity is occurring or will occur.

24           2. The successor-owner holds title to the property on which the  
25           permitted activity is occurring or will occur.

26           3. The successor-owner is the sole claimant of the right to  
27           engage in the permitted activity.

28           4. There will be no substantial change in the permitted activity.

29           (2) The permit holder shall comply with all terms and conditions of the permit  
30           until such time as the permit is transferred.

31           (3) The successor-owner shall comply with all terms and conditions of the  
32           permit once the permit has been transferred.

33           (4) Notwithstanding changes to law made after the original issuance of the  
34           permit, the Department may not impose new or different terms and  
35           conditions in the permit without the prior express consent of the  
36           successor-owner.

37           ...."

38           **SECTION 3.** G.S. 113A-54.1 reads as rewritten:

39           **"§ 113A-54.1. Approval of erosion control plans.**

40           (a) A draft erosion and sedimentation control plan must contain the applicant's address  
41           and, if the applicant is not a resident of North Carolina, designate a North Carolina agent for  
42           the purpose of receiving notice from the Commission or the Secretary of compliance or  
43           noncompliance with the plan, this Article, or any rules adopted pursuant to this Article. Except  
44           as provided in subsection (a1) of this section, if the applicant is not the owner of the land to be  
45           disturbed, the draft erosion and sedimentation control plan must include the owner's written  
46           consent for the applicant to submit a draft erosion and sedimentation control plan and to  
47           conduct the anticipated land-disturbing activity. The Commission shall approve, approve with  
48           modifications, or disapprove a draft erosion and sedimentation control plan for those  
49           land-disturbing activities for which prior plan approval is required within 30 days of receipt.  
50           The Commission shall condition approval of a draft erosion and sedimentation control plan  
51           upon the applicant's compliance with federal and State water quality laws, regulations, and

1 rules. Failure to approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove a completed draft erosion  
2 and sedimentation control plan within 30 days of receipt shall be deemed approval of the plan.  
3 If the Commission disapproves a draft erosion and sedimentation control plan or a revised  
4 erosion and sedimentation control plan, it must state in writing the specific reasons that the plan  
5 was disapproved. Failure to approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove a revised  
6 erosion and sedimentation control plan within 15 days of receipt shall be deemed approval of  
7 the plan. The Commission may establish an expiration date for erosion and sedimentation  
8 control plans approved under this Article.

9 (a1) If the applicant is not the owner of the land to be disturbed and the anticipated  
10 land-disturbing activity involves the construction of utility lines for the provision of water,  
11 sewer, gas, telecommunications, or electrical service, the draft erosion and sedimentation  
12 control plan may be submitted without the written consent of the owner of the land, so long as  
13 the owner of the land has been provided prior notice of the project.

14 (b) If, following commencement of a land-disturbing activity pursuant to an approved  
15 erosion and sedimentation control plan, the Commission determines that the plan is inadequate  
16 to meet the requirements of this Article, the Commission may require any revision of the plan  
17 that is necessary to comply with this Article. Failure to approve, approve with modifications, or  
18 disapprove a revised erosion and sedimentation control plan within 15 days of receipt shall be  
19 deemed approval of the plan.

20 (c) The Commission shall disapprove an erosion and sedimentation control plan if  
21 implementation of the plan would result in a violation of rules adopted by the Environmental  
22 Management Commission to protect riparian buffers along surface waters. The Director of the  
23 Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources may disapprove an erosion and  
24 sedimentation control plan or disapprove a transfer of a plan under subsection (d1) of this  
25 section upon finding that an applicant or a parent, subsidiary, or other affiliate of the applicant:

- 26 (1) Is conducting or has conducted land-disturbing activity without an approved  
27 plan, or has received notice of violation of a plan previously approved by the  
28 Commission or a local government pursuant to this Article and has not  
29 complied with the notice within the time specified in the notice;
- 30 (2) Has failed to pay a civil penalty assessed pursuant to this Article or a local  
31 ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article by the time the payment is due;
- 32 (3) Has been convicted of a misdemeanor pursuant to G.S. 113A-64(b) or any  
33 criminal provision of a local ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article; or
- 34 (4) Has failed to substantially comply with State rules or local ordinances and  
35 regulations adopted pursuant to this Article.

36 (d) In the event that an erosion and sedimentation control plan or a transfer of a plan is  
37 disapproved by the Director pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the Director shall state in  
38 writing the specific reasons that the plan was disapproved. The applicant or the proposed  
39 transferee may appeal the Director's disapproval of the plan to the Commission. For purposes  
40 of this subsection and subsection (c) of this section, an applicant's record or a proposed  
41 transferee's record may be considered for only the two years prior to the application date.

42 (d1) The Department may transfer an erosion and sedimentation control plan approved  
43 pursuant to this section without the consent of the plan holder to a successor-owner of the  
44 property on which the permitted activity is occurring or will occur as provided in this  
45 subsection.

- 46 (1) The Department may transfer a plan if all of the following conditions are  
47 met:
  - 48 a. The successor-owner of the property submits to the Department a  
49 written request for the transfer of the plan.
  - 50 b. The Department finds all of the following:
    - 51 1. The plan holder is one of the following:

- 1 I. A natural person who is deceased.  
2 II. A corporation that has been dissolved.  
3 III. A person who has been lawfully divested of title to the  
4 property on which the permitted activity is occurring  
5 or will occur.  
6 IV. A person who has sold the property on which the  
7 permitted activity is occurring or will occur.  
8 2. The successor-owner holds title to the property on which the  
9 permitted activity is occurring or will occur.  
10 3. The successor-owner is the sole claimant of the right to  
11 engage in the permitted activity.  
12 4. There will be no substantial change in the permitted activity.  
13 (2) The plan holder shall comply with all terms and conditions of the plan until  
14 such time as the plan is transferred.  
15 (3) The successor-owner shall comply with all terms and conditions of the plan  
16 once the plan has been transferred.  
17 (4) Notwithstanding changes to law made after the original issuance of the plan,  
18 the Department may not impose new or different terms and conditions in the  
19 plan without the prior express consent of the successor-owner.

20 (e) The landowner, the financially responsible party, or the landowner's or the  
21 financially responsible party's agent shall perform an inspection of the area covered by the plan  
22 after each phase of the plan has been completed and after establishment of temporary ground  
23 cover in accordance with G.S. 113A-57(2). The person who performs the inspection shall  
24 maintain and make available a record of the inspection at the site of the land-disturbing activity.  
25 The record shall set out any significant deviation from the approved erosion control plan,  
26 identify any measures that may be required to correct the deviation, and document the  
27 completion of those measures. The record shall be maintained until permanent ground cover  
28 has been established as required by the approved erosion and sedimentation control plan. The  
29 inspections required by this subsection shall be in addition to inspections required by  
30 G.S. 113A-61.1."

31 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 113A-61 reads as rewritten:

32 **"§ 113A-61. Local approval of erosion and sedimentation control plans.**

33 (a) For those land-disturbing activities for which prior approval of an erosion and  
34 sedimentation control plan is required, the Commission may require that a local government  
35 that administers an erosion and sedimentation control program approved under G.S. 113A-60  
36 require the applicant to submit a copy of the erosion and sedimentation control plan to the  
37 appropriate soil and water conservation district or districts at the same time the applicant  
38 submits the erosion and sedimentation control plan to the local government for approval. The  
39 soil and water conservation district or districts shall review the plan and submit any comments  
40 and recommendations to the local government within 20 days after the soil and water  
41 conservation district received the erosion and sedimentation control plan or within any shorter  
42 period of time as may be agreed upon by the soil and water conservation district and the local  
43 government. Failure of a soil and water conservation district to submit comments and  
44 recommendations within 20 days or within agreed upon shorter period of time shall not delay  
45 final action on the proposed plan by the local government.

46 (b) Local governments shall review each erosion and sedimentation control plan  
47 submitted to them and within 30 days of receipt thereof shall notify the person submitting the  
48 plan that it has been approved, approved with modifications, or disapproved. A local  
49 government shall only approve a plan upon determining that it complies with all applicable  
50 State and local regulations for erosion and sedimentation control.

1 (b1) A local government shall condition approval of a draft erosion and sedimentation  
2 control plan upon the applicant's compliance with federal and State water quality laws,  
3 regulations, and rules. A local government shall disapprove an erosion and sedimentation  
4 control plan if implementation of the plan would result in a violation of rules adopted by the  
5 Environmental Management Commission to protect riparian buffers along surface waters. A  
6 local government may disapprove an erosion and sedimentation control plan or disapprove a  
7 transfer of a plan under subsection (b3) of this section upon finding that an applicant or a  
8 parent, subsidiary, or other affiliate of the applicant:

- 9 (1) Is conducting or has conducted land-disturbing activity without an approved  
10 plan, or has received notice of violation of a plan previously approved by the  
11 Commission or a local government pursuant to this Article and has not  
12 complied with the notice within the time specified in the notice.
- 13 (2) Has failed to pay a civil penalty assessed pursuant to this Article or a local  
14 ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article by the time the payment is due.
- 15 (3) Has been convicted of a misdemeanor pursuant to G.S. 113A-64(b) or any  
16 criminal provision of a local ordinance adopted pursuant to this Article.
- 17 (4) Has failed to substantially comply with State rules or local ordinances and  
18 regulations adopted pursuant to this Article.

19 (b2) In the event that an erosion and sedimentation control plan or a transfer of a plan is  
20 disapproved by a local government pursuant to subsection (b1) of this section, the local  
21 government shall so notify the Director of the Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land  
22 Resources within 10 days of the disapproval. The local government shall advise the applicant  
23 or the proposed transferee and the Director in writing as to the specific reasons that the plan  
24 was disapproved. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, the applicant  
25 may appeal the local government's disapproval of the plan directly to the Commission. For  
26 purposes of this subsection and subsection (b1) of this section, an applicant's record or the  
27 proposed transferee's record may be considered for only the two years prior to the application  
28 date.

29 (b3) A local government administering an erosion and sedimentation control program  
30 may transfer an erosion and sedimentation control plan approved pursuant to this section  
31 without the consent of the plan holder to a successor-owner of the property on which the  
32 permitted activity is occurring or will occur as provided in this subsection.

- 33 (1) The local government may transfer a plan if all of the following conditions  
34 are met:
  - 35 a. The successor-owner of the property submits to the local government  
36 a written request for the transfer of the plan.
  - 37 b. The local government finds all of the following:
    - 38 1. The plan holder is one of the following:
      - 39 I. A natural person who is deceased.
      - 40 II. A corporation that has been dissolved.
      - 41 III. A person who has been lawfully divested of title to the  
42 property on which the permitted activity is occurring  
43 or will occur.
      - 44 IV. A person who has sold the property on which the  
45 permitted activity is occurring or will occur.
    - 46 2. The successor-owner holds title to the property on which the  
47 permitted activity is occurring or will occur.
    - 48 3. The successor-owner is the sole claimant of the right to  
49 engage in the permitted activity.
    - 50 4. There will be no substantial change in the permitted activity.

- 1           (2)    The plan holder shall comply with all terms and conditions of the plan until  
2                    such time as the plan is transferred.
- 3           (3)    The successor-owner shall comply with all terms and conditions of the plan  
4                    once the plan has been transferred.
- 5           (4)    Notwithstanding changes to law made after the original issuance of the plan,  
6                    the local government may not impose new or different terms and conditions  
7                    in the plan without the prior express consent of the successor-owner.
- 8           (c)    The disapproval or modification of any proposed erosion and sedimentation control  
9            plan by a local government shall entitle the person submitting the plan to a public hearing if the  
10           person submits written demand for a hearing within 15 days after receipt of written notice of  
11           the disapproval or modification. The hearings shall be conducted pursuant to procedures  
12           adopted by the local government. If the local government upholds the disapproval or  
13           modification of a proposed erosion and sedimentation control plan following the public  
14           hearing, the person submitting the erosion and sedimentation control plan is entitled to appeal  
15           the local government's action disapproving or modifying the plan to the Commission. The  
16           Commission, by regulation, shall direct the Secretary to appoint such employees of the  
17           Department as may be necessary to hear appeals from the disapproval or modification of  
18           erosion and sedimentation control plans by local governments. In addition to providing for the  
19           appeal of local government decisions disapproving or modifying erosion and sedimentation  
20           control plans to designated employees of the Department, the Commission shall designate an  
21           erosion and sedimentation control plan review committee consisting of three members of the  
22           Commission. The person submitting the erosion and sedimentation control plan may appeal the  
23           decision of an employee of the Department who has heard an appeal of a local government  
24           action disapproving or modifying an erosion and sedimentation control plan to the erosion and  
25           sedimentation control plan review committee of the Commission. Judicial review of the final  
26           action of the erosion and sedimentation control plan review committee of the Commission may  
27           be had in the superior court of the county in which the local government is situated.
- 28           (d)    Repealed by Session Laws 1989, c. 676, s. 4."
- 29                    **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.