

§ 143-355. Powers and duties of the Department.

- (a) Repealed by Session Laws 1989, c. 603, s. 1.
- (b) Functions to Be Performed. – The Department shall:
 - (1) Request the North Carolina Congressional Delegation to apply to the Congress of the United States whenever deemed necessary for appropriations for protecting and improving any harbor or waterway in the State and for accomplishing needed flood control, shore-erosion prevention, and water-resources development for water supply, water quality control, and other purposes.
 - (2) Initiate, plan, and execute a long-range program for the preservation, development and improvement of rivers, harbors, and inland ports, and to promote the public interest therein.
 - (3) Prepare and recommend to the Governor and the General Assembly any legislation which may be deemed proper for the preservation and improvement of rivers, harbors, dredging of small inlets, provision for safe harbor facilities, and public tidewaters of the State.
 - (4) Make engineering studies, hydraulic computations, hydrographic surveys, and reports regarding shore-erosion projects, dams, reservoirs, and river-channel improvements; to develop, for budget and planning purposes, estimates of the costs of proposed new projects; to prepare bidding documents, plans, and specifications for harbor, coastal, and river projects, and to inspect materials, workmanship, and practices of contractors to assure compliance with plans and specifications.
 - (5) Cooperate with the United States Army Corps of Engineers in causing to be removed any wrecked, sunken or abandoned vessel or unauthorized obstructions and encroachments in public harbors, channels, waterways, and tidewaters of the State.
 - (6) Cooperate with the United States Coast Guard in marking out and establishing harbor lines and in placing buoys and structures for marking navigable channels.
 - (7) Cooperate with federal and interstate agencies in planning and developing water-resource projects for navigation, flood control, hurricane protection, shore-erosion prevention, and other purposes.
 - (8) Provide professional advice to public and private agencies, and to citizens of the State, on matters relating to tidewater development, river works, and watershed development.
 - (9) Discuss with federal, State, and municipal officials and other interested persons a program of development of rivers, harbors, and related resources.
 - (10) Make investigations and render reports requested by the Governor and the General Assembly.
 - (11) Participate in activity of the National Rivers and Harbors Congress, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association, the American Watershed Council, the American Water Works Association, the

American Society of Civil Engineers, the Council of State Governments, the Conservation Foundation, and other national agencies concerned with conservation and development of water resources.

- (12) Prepare and maintain climatological and water-resources records and files as a source of information easily accessible to the citizens of the State and to the public generally.
- (13) Formulate and administer a program of dune rebuilding, hurricane protection, and shore-erosion prevention.
- (14) Include in the biennial budget the cost of performing the additional functions indicated above.
- (15) Initiate, plan, study, and execute a long-range floodplain management program for the promotion of health, safety, and welfare of the public. In carrying out the purposes of this subsection, the primary responsibility of floodplain management rests with the local levels of government and it is, therefore, the policy of this State and of this Department to provide guidance, coordination, and other means of assistance, along with the other agencies of this State and with the local levels of government, to effectuate adequate floodplain management programs.

(b1) The Department is directed to pursue an active educational program of floodplain management measures, to include in each biennial report a statement of flood damages, location where floodplain management is desirable, and suggested legislation, if deemed desirable, and within its capacities to provide advice and assistance to State agencies and local levels of government.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 1961, c. 315.

(d) Investigation of Coasts, Ports and Waterways of State. – The Department is designated as the official State agency to investigate and cause investigations to be made of the coasts, ports and waterways of North Carolina and to cooperate with agencies of the federal and State government and other political subdivisions in making such investigations. The provisions of this section shall not be construed as in any way interfering with the powers and duties of the Utilities Commission, relating to the acquiring of rights-of-way for the Intra-Coastal Waterway; or to authorize the Department to represent the State in connection with such duties.

(e) Repealed by Session Laws 1998-129, s. 1, effective January 1, 2000.

(f) Samples of Cuttings to Be Furnished the Department When Requested. – Every person, firm or corporation engaged in the business of drilling, boring, coring or constructing wells in any manner by the use of power machinery shall furnish the Department samples of cuttings from such depths as the Department may require from all wells constructed by such person, firm or corporation, when such samples are requested by the Department. The Department shall bear the expense of delivering such samples. The Department shall, after an analysis of the samples submitted, furnish a copy of such analysis to the owner of the property on which the well was constructed; the Department shall not report the results of any such analysis to any other person

whatsoever until the person legally authorized to do so authorizes in writing the release of the results of the analysis.

(g) Reports of Each Well Required. – Every person, firm or corporation engaged in the business of drilling, boring, coring, or constructing wells with power machinery within the State of North Carolina shall, within 30 days of the completion of each well, report to the Department on forms furnished by the Department the location, size, depth, number of feet of casing used, method of finishing, and formation log information of each such well. In addition such person, firm or corporation shall report any tests made of each such well including the method of testing, length of test, draw-down in feet and yield in gallons per minute. The person, firm or corporation making such report to the Department shall at the time such report is made also furnish a copy thereof to the owner of the property on which the well was constructed.

(h) Drilling for Petroleum and Minerals Excepted. – The provisions of this Article shall not apply to drillings for petroleum and minerals.

(i) Penalty for Violation. – Any person violating the provisions of subsections (e), (f) and (g) of G.S. 143-355 shall be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall only be punished by a fine of fifty dollars (\$50.00). Each violation shall constitute a separate offense.

(j) Miscellaneous Duties. – The Department shall make investigations of water supplies and water powers, prepare and maintain a general inventory of the water resources of the State and take such measures as it may consider necessary to promote their development; and to supervise, guide, and control the performance of the duties set forth in subsection (b) of this section and to hold hearings with regard thereto. In connection with administration of the well-drilling law the Department may prepare analyses of well cuttings for mineral and petroleum content.

(k) Water Use Information. – Any person using, withdrawing, diverting or obtaining water from surface streams, lakes and underground water sources shall, upon the request of the Department, file a monthly report with the Department showing the amount of water used, withdrawn, diverted or obtained from such sources. Such report shall be on a form supplied by the Department and shall show the identification of the water well or other withdrawal facility, location, withdrawal rate (measured in gallons per minute), and total gallons withdrawn during the month. Reports required to be filed under this subsection shall be filed on or before the fifteenth day of the month succeeding the month during which the using, withdrawing, diverting or obtaining water required to be reported occurred. This subsection does not apply to withdrawals or uses by individuals or families for household, livestock, or gardens. All reports required under this subsection are provided solely for the purpose of the Department. Within the meaning of this subsection the term "person" means any and all persons, including individuals, firms, partnerships, associations, public or private institutions, municipalities or political subdivisions, governmental agencies, and private or public corporations organized or existing under the laws of this State or any other state or country. In the event of extreme or exceptional drought or other water shortage, the Department may require each local government water system and each large community water system in the affected area to report the amount of water used, withdrawn,

diverted, or obtained on a weekly basis and may require the reporting of additional information necessary to assess and manage the drought or water shortage.

(l) Local Water Supply Plans. – Each unit of local government that provides public water service or that plans to provide public water service and each large community water system shall, either individually or together with other units of local government and large community water systems, prepare a local water supply plan and submit it to the Department for approval. The Department shall provide technical assistance with the preparation of plans to units of local government and large community water systems upon request and to the extent that the Department has resources available to provide assistance. At a minimum, each unit of local government and large community water system shall include in local water supply plans all information that is readily available to it. Plans shall include present and projected population, industrial development, and water use within the service area; present and future water supplies; an estimate of the technical assistance that may be needed at the local level to address projected water needs; current and future water conservation and water reuse programs; a description of how the local government or large community water system will respond to drought and other water shortage emergencies and continue to meet essential public water supply needs during the emergency; and any other related information as the Department may require in the preparation of a State water supply plan. Local plans shall be revised to reflect changes in relevant data and projections at least once each five years unless the Department requests more frequent revisions. The revised plan shall include the current and anticipated reliance by the local government unit or large community water system on surface water transfers as defined by G.S. 143-215.22G. Local plans and revised plans shall be submitted to the Department once they have been approved by each unit of local government and large community water system that participated in the preparation of the plan.

(m) In order to assure the availability of adequate supplies of good quality water to protect the public health and to support desirable economic growth, the Department shall develop a State water supply plan. The State water supply plan shall include the information and projections required to be included in local plans, a summary of water conservation and water reuse programs described in local plans, a summary of the technical assistance needs indicated by local plans, and shall indicate the extent to which the various local plans are compatible. The State plan shall identify potential conflicts among the various local plans and ways in which local water supply programs could be better coordinated.

(n) The Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall report to the Environmental Review Commission on the implementation of this section and the development of the State water supply plan on or before 1 September of each year. (1959, c. 779, s. 3; 1961, c. 315; 1967, c. 1069, ss. 1-3; c. 1070, s. 1; c. 1071, ss. 3, 4; c. 1117, s. 1; 1973, c. 1262, ss. 23, 28, 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1981, c. 514, ss. 2, 3; 1989, c. 603, s. 1; 1993, c. 513, s. 7(a); c. 539, s. 1034; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1995, c. 509, s. 85; 1997-358, ss. 5, 6; 1998-129, s. 1; 1998-168, s. 5; 2001-452, s. 2.7; 2002-167, ss. 1, 2; 2003-387, s. 1; 2008-143, s. 7.)