



Ohio Revised Code

Section 6117.01 Power to establish sewer districts - sanitary engineering department.

Effective: October 16, 2009

Legislation: House Bill 1 - 128th General Assembly

(A) As used in this chapter:

(1) "Sanitary facilities" means sanitary sewers, force mains, lift or pumping stations, and facilities for the treatment, disposal, impoundment, or storage of wastes; equipment and furnishings; and all required appurtenances and necessary real estate and interests in real estate.

(2) "Drainage" or "waters" means flows from rainfall or otherwise produced by, or resulting from, the elements, storm water discharges and releases or migrations of waters from properties, accumulations, flows, and overflows of water, including accelerated flows and runoffs, flooding and threats of flooding of properties and structures, and other surface and subsurface drainage.

(3) "Drainage facilities" means storm sewers, force mains, pumping stations, and facilities for the treatment, disposal, impoundment, retention, control, or storage of waters; improvements of or for any channel, ditch, drain, floodway, or watercourse, including location, construction, reconstruction, reconditioning, widening, deepening, cleaning, removal of obstructions, straightening, boxing, culverting, tiling, filling, walling, arching, or change in course, location, or terminus; improvements of or for a river, creek, or run, including reinforcement of banks, enclosing, deepening, widening, straightening, removal of obstructions, or change in course, location, or terminus; facilities for the protection of lands from the overflow of water, including a levee, wall, embankment, jetty, dike, dam, sluice, revetment, reservoir, retention or holding basin, control gate, or breakwater; facilities for controlled drainage, regulation of stream flow, and protection of an outlet; the vacation of a ditch or drain; equipment and furnishings; and all required appurtenances and necessary real estate and interests in real estate.

(4) "County sanitary engineer" means either of the following:

(a) The registered professional engineer employed or appointed by the board of county



commissioners to be the county sanitary engineer as provided in this section³;

(b) The county engineer, if, for as long as and to the extent that engineer by agreement entered into under section 315.14 of the Revised Code is retained to discharge duties of a county sanitary engineer under this chapter.

(5) "Current operating expenses," "debt charges," "permanent improvement," "public obligations," and "subdivision" have the same meanings as in section 133.01 of the Revised Code.

(6) "Construct," "construction," or "constructing" means construction, reconstruction, enlargement, extension, improvement, renovation, repair, and replacement of sanitary or drainage facilities or of prevention or replacement facilities, but does not include any repairs, replacements, or similar actions that do not constitute and qualify as permanent improvements.

(7) "Maintain," "maintaining," or "maintenance" means repairs, replacements, and similar actions that constitute and are payable as current operating expenses and that are required to restore sanitary or drainage facilities or prevention or replacement facilities to, or to continue sanitary or drainage facilities or prevention or replacement facilities in, good order and working condition, but does not include construction of permanent improvements.

(8) "Public agency" means a state and any agency or subdivision of a state, including a county, a municipal corporation, or other subdivision.

(9) "Combined sewer" means a sewer system that is designed to collect and convey sewage, including domestic, commercial, and industrial wastewater, and storm water through a single-pipe system to a treatment works or combined sewer overflow outfall approved by the director of environmental protection.

(10) "Prevention or replacement facilities" means vegetated swales or median strips, permeable pavement, trees and tree boxes, rain barrels and cisterns, rain gardens and filtration planters, vegetated roofs, wetlands, riparian buffers, and practices and structures that use or mimic natural processes to filter or reuse storm water.



(11) "Homestead exemption" means the reduction of taxes allowed under division (A) of section 323.152 of the Revised Code.

(12) "Low- and moderate-income person" has the same meaning as in section 175.01 of the Revised Code.

(B)(1) For the purpose of preserving and promoting the public health and welfare, a board of county commissioners may lay out, establish, consolidate, or otherwise modify the boundaries of, and maintain, one or more sewer districts within the county and outside municipal corporations and may have a registered professional engineer make the surveys necessary for the determination of the proper boundaries of each district, which shall be designated by an appropriate name or number. The board may acquire, construct, maintain, and operate within any district sanitary or drainage facilities that it determines to be necessary or appropriate for the collection of sewage and other wastes originating in or entering the district, to comply with the provisions of a contract entered into for the purposes described in sections 6117.41 to 6117.44 of the Revised Code and pursuant to those sections or other applicable provisions of law, or for the collection, control, or abatement of waters originating or accumulating in, or flowing in, into, or through, the district, and other sanitary or drainage facilities, within or outside of the district, that it determines to be necessary or appropriate to conduct the wastes and waters to a proper outlet and to provide for their proper treatment, disposal, and disposition. The board may provide for the protection of the sanitary and drainage facilities and may negotiate and enter into a contract with any public agency or person for the management, maintenance, operation, and repair of any of the facilities on behalf of the county upon the terms and conditions that may be agreed upon with the agency or person and that may be determined by the board to be in the best interests of the county. By contract with any public agency or person operating sanitary or drainage facilities within or outside of the county, the board may provide a proper outlet for any of the wastes and waters and for their proper treatment, disposal, and disposition.

(2) For purposes of preventing storm water from entering a combined sewer and causing an overflow or an inflow to a sanitary sewer, the board may acquire, design, construct, operate, repair, maintain, and provide for a project or program that separates storm water from a combined sewer or for a prevention or replacement facility that prevents or minimizes storm water from entering a combined sewer or a sanitary sewer.



(C) The board of county commissioners may employ a registered professional engineer to be the county sanitary engineer for the time and on the terms it considers best and may authorize the county sanitary engineer to employ necessary assistants upon the terms fixed by the board. Prior to the initial assignment of drainage facilities duties to the county sanitary engineer, if the county sanitary engineer is not the county engineer, the board first shall offer to enter into an agreement with the county engineer pursuant to section 315.14 of the Revised Code for assistance in the performance of those duties of the board pertaining to drainage facilities, and the county engineer shall accept or reject the offer within thirty days after the date the offer is made.

The board may create and maintain a sanitary engineering department, which shall be under its supervision and which shall be headed by the county sanitary engineer, for the purpose of aiding it in the performance of its duties under this chapter and Chapter 6103. of the Revised Code or its other duties regarding sanitation, drainage, and water supply provided by law. The board shall provide suitable facilities for the use of the department and shall provide for and pay the compensation of the county sanitary engineer and all authorized necessary expenses of the county sanitary engineer and the sanitary engineering department. The county sanitary engineer, with the approval of the board, may appoint necessary assistants and clerks, and the compensation of those assistants and clerks shall be provided for and paid by the board.

(D) The board of county commissioners may adopt, publish, administer, and enforce rules for the construction, maintenance, protection, and use of county-owned or county-operated sanitary and drainage facilities and prevention or replacement facilities outside municipal corporations, and of sanitary and drainage facilities and prevention or replacement facilities within municipal corporations that are owned or operated by the county or that discharge into sanitary or drainage facilities or prevention or replacement facilities owned or operated by the county, including, but not limited to, rules for the establishment and use of any connections, the termination in accordance with reasonable procedures of sanitary service for the nonpayment of county sanitary rates and charges and, if so determined, the concurrent termination of any county water service for the nonpayment of those rates and charges, the termination in accordance with reasonable procedures of drainage service for the nonpayment of county drainage rates and charges, and the establishment and use of security deposits to the extent considered necessary to ensure the payment of county sanitary or drainage rates and charges. The rules shall not be inconsistent with the laws



of this state or any applicable rules of the director of environmental protection.

(E) No sanitary or drainage facilities or prevention or replacement facilities shall be constructed in any county outside municipal corporations by any person until the plans and specifications have been approved by the board of county commissioners, and any construction shall be done under the supervision of the county sanitary engineer. Not less than thirty days before the date drainage plans are submitted to the board for its approval, the plans shall be submitted to the county engineer. If the county engineer is of the opinion after review that the facilities will have a significant adverse effect on roads, culverts, bridges, or existing maintenance within the county, the county engineer may submit a written opinion to the board not later than thirty days after the date the plans are submitted to the county engineer. The board may take action relative to the drainage plans only after the earliest of receiving the written opinion of the county engineer, receiving a written waiver of submission of an opinion from the county engineer, or passage of thirty days from the date the plans are submitted to the county engineer. Any person constructing the facilities shall pay to the county all expenses incurred by the board in connection with the construction.

(F) The county sanitary engineer or the county sanitary engineer's authorized assistants or agents, when properly identified in writing or otherwise and after written notice is delivered to the owner at least five days in advance or is mailed at least five days in advance by first class or certified mail to the owner's tax mailing address, may enter upon any public or private property for the purpose of making, and may make, surveys or inspections necessary for the laying out of sewer districts or the design or evaluation of county sanitary or drainage facilities or prevention or replacement facilities. This entry is not a trespass and is not to be considered an entry in connection with any appropriation of property proceedings under sections 163.01 to 163.22 of the Revised Code that may be pending. No person or public agency shall forbid the county sanitary engineer or the county sanitary engineer's authorized assistants or agents to enter, or interfere with their entry, upon the property for that purpose or forbid or interfere with their making of surveys or inspections. If actual damage is done to property by the making of the surveys and inspections, the board shall pay the reasonable value of the damage to the property owner, and the cost shall be included in the cost of the facilities and may be included in any special assessments to be levied and collected to pay that cost.