

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

SESSION LAW 2024-49
SENATE BILL 166

AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; TO AMEND VARIOUS NORTH CAROLINA STATE BUILDING CODES; TO AMEND VARIOUS CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS AND DESIGN PROFESSIONALS REGULATIONS; TO AMEND VARIOUS ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REGULATIONS; AND TO REORGANIZE THE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

PROHIBIT CERTAIN BACKFLOW PREVENTER REQUIREMENTS BY PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

SECTION 1.1.(a) Article 10 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 130A-330. Local authority to require backflow preventers; testing.

(a) No public water system owned or operated by a local government unit, as that term is defined in G.S. 159G-20(13), shall require a customer to install a backflow preventer on an existing nonresidential or residential connection, including multifamily dwellings, not otherwise required by State or federal law except where the degree of hazard from the customer's connection is determined to be high by the Department.

(b) The limitation established in subsection (a) of this section shall not be construed to prohibit requirements for installation of backflow preventers pursuant to the North Carolina Plumbing Code or the North Carolina Fire Code due to retrofit or upfit/fit-up to the customer's plumbing, facility addition on the customer's property, or change in use of the property served by the connection. The single act of a retrofit or upfit/fit-up to the customer's plumbing limited to the service line between the home or building and the meter, and without a change in use or facility addition, does not necessitate a backflow preventer. An increase in the flow of water to the home or building, without a change in use or facility addition, does not necessitate a backflow preventer.

(c) A public water system owned or operated by a local government unit, and its employees, including the Cross Connection Control Operator in Responsible Charge, is immune from civil liability in tort from any loss, damage, or injury arising out of or relating to the backflow of water into potable water supply systems where a backflow preventer is not required by State or federal law, or where the degree of hazard from the customer's connection is not determined to be high by the Department.

(d) The Department shall determine whether the degree of hazard for a service connection is high when the installation of a backflow preventer is not otherwise required by State or federal law. The Department shall provide notice of such determinations on its website.

(e) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a public water system owned or operated by a local government unit from requiring the installation of a backflow preventer if the system pays all costs associated with the backflow preventer, including the device, installation, and appropriate landscaping.



become effective as provided in G.S. 150B-21.3(b1), as though 10 or more written objections had been received as provided in G.S. 150B-21.3(b2).

SECTION 4.47.(e) Sunset. – This section expires when permanent rules adopted as required by subsection (d) of this section become effective.

CLARIFY THE APPLICABILITY OF STATUTORY BUILT-UPON AREA REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT STORMWATER PROGRAMS AND SPECIFY THAT CERTAIN ARTIFICIAL TURF IS NOT BUILT-UPON AREA

SECTION 4.48.(a) G.S. 143-214.7(b2) reads as rewritten:

~~"(b2) For purposes of implementing stormwater programs, "built-upon area" means impervious surface and partially impervious surface to the extent that the partially impervious surface does not allow water to infiltrate through the surface and into the subsoil. "Built-upon area" does not include a slatted deck; the water area of a swimming pool; a surface of number 57 stone, as designated by the American Society for Testing and Materials, laid at least four inches thick over a geotextile fabric; a trail as defined in G.S. 113A-85 that is either unpaved or paved as long as the pavement is porous with a hydraulic conductivity greater than 0.001 centimeters per second (1.41 inches per hour); or landscaping material, including, but not limited to, gravel, mulch, sand, and vegetation, placed on areas that receive pedestrian or bicycle traffic or on portions of driveways and parking areas that will not be compacted by the weight of a vehicle, such as the area between sections of pavement that support the weight of a vehicle. The owner or developer of a property may opt out of any of the exemptions from "built-upon area" set out in this subsection. For State stormwater programs and local stormwater programs approved pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, all of the following shall apply:~~

- ~~(1) The volume, velocity, and discharge rates of water associated with the one-year, 24-hour storm and the difference in stormwater runoff from the predevelopment and postdevelopment conditions for the one-year, 24-hour storm shall be calculated using any acceptable engineering hydrologic and hydraulic methods.~~
- ~~(2) Development may occur within the area that would otherwise be required to be placed within a vegetative buffer required by the Commission pursuant to G.S. 143-214.1 and this section provided the stormwater runoff from the entire impervious area of the development is collected, treated, and discharged so that it passes through a segment of the vegetative buffer and is managed so that it otherwise complies with all applicable State and federal stormwater management requirements. For the purpose of this subdivision, the entire impervious area of the development shall not include any portion of a project that is within a North Carolina Department of Transportation or municipal right-of-way.~~
- ~~(3) The requirements that apply to development activities within one-half mile of and draining to Class SA waters or within one-half mile of Class SA waters and draining to unnamed freshwater tributaries shall not apply to development activities and associated stormwater discharges that do not occur within one-half mile of and draining to Class SA waters or are not within one-half mile of Class SA waters and draining to unnamed freshwater tributaries."~~

SECTION 4.48.(b) Article 21 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 143-214.7D. Limitations on built-upon area requirements.

(a) As used in this section, the term "built-upon area" means impervious surface and partially impervious surface to the extent that the partially impervious surface does not allow water to infiltrate through the surface and into the subsoil.

(b) For the purposes of implementing State or local government stormwater programs, none of the following surfaces shall be considered "built-upon area" or an impervious or partially impervious surface:

- (1) A slatted deck.
- (2) The water area of a swimming pool.
- (3) A surface of number 57 stone, as designated by the American Society for Testing and Materials, laid at least four inches thick over a geotextile fabric.
- (4) A trail as defined in G.S. 113A-85 that is either unpaved or paved as long as the pavement is porous with a hydraulic conductivity greater than 0.001 centimeters per second (1.41 inches per hour).
- (5) Landscaping material, including, but not limited to, gravel, mulch, sand, and vegetation, placed on areas that receive pedestrian or bicycle traffic or on portions of driveways and parking areas that will not be compacted by the weight of a vehicle, such as the area between sections of pavement that support the weight of a vehicle.
- (6) Artificial turf, manufactured to allow water to drain through the backing of the turf, and installed according to the manufacturer's specifications over a pervious surface.

(c) The owner or developer of a property may opt out of any of the exemptions from "built-upon area" set out in subsection (b) of this section.

(d) Except as specifically required by federal law, a local government may not enact, implement, or enforce a local government ordinance, comprehensive plan, or stormwater program that establishes a definition of "built-upon area" or impervious surface that does not comply with subsection (b) of this section. This limitation shall apply regardless of any authority granted by G.S. 143-214.5, G.S. 143-214.7, or Chapters 153A, 160A, or 160D of the General Statutes.

(e) The Commission may adopt rules to implement this section."

SECTION 4.48.(c) Each unit of local government that operates a stormwater program shall update its program to be consistent with G.S. 143-214.7D, as enacted by subsection (b) of this section.

SECTION 4.48.(d) This section is effective when it becomes law.

PROHIBIT PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER SYSTEMS FROM IMPOSING UNAUTHORIZED CONDITIONS AND IMPLEMENTING PREFERENCE SYSTEMS FOR ALLOCATING SERVICE TO RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

SECTION 4.49.(a) Chapter 162A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 11.

"Miscellaneous.

"§ 162A-900. Limitations on allocating service for residential development.

(a) For purposes of this section, "residential development" means new development of single-family or multifamily housing.

(b) A local government unit, as defined in G.S. 162A-201, shall not require an applicant for water or sewer service for residential development to agree to any condition not otherwise authorized by law, or to accept any offer by the applicant to consent to any condition not otherwise authorized by law. These conditions include, without limitation, any of the following:

- (1) Payment of taxes, impact fees or other fees, or contributions to any fund.
- (2) Adherence to any restrictions related to land development or land use, including those within the scope of G.S. 160D-702(c).
- (3) Adherence to any restrictions related to building design elements within the scope of G.S. 160D-702(b).

(f) Any person may petition to become a party by filing with the agency or hearing officer a motion to intervene in the manner provided by G.S. 1A-1, Rule 24. In addition, any person interested in a contested case under this Article may intervene and participate to the extent deemed appropriate by the agency hearing officer.

(g) When contested cases involving a common question of law or fact or multiple proceedings involving the same or related parties are pending before an agency, the agency may order a joint hearing of any matters at issue in the cases, order the cases consolidated, or make other orders to reduce costs or delay in the proceedings.

(h) Every agency shall adopt rules governing the conduct of hearings that are consistent with the provisions of this Article.

(i) Repealed by Session Laws 2021-88, s. 16(c), effective July 22, 2021."

SECTION 5.2.(u) This section becomes effective January 1, 2025.

PART VI. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE AND EFFECTIVE DATE

SEVERABILITY CLAUSE

SECTION 6.1. If any section or provision of this act is declared unconstitutional or invalid by the courts, it does not affect the validity of this act as a whole or any part other than the part declared to be unconstitutional or invalid.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 6.2. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 28th day of June, 2024.

s/ Phil Berger
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

VETO Roy Cooper
Governor

Became law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor at 3:03 p.m. this 11th day of September, 2024.

s/ Mr. James White
House Principal Clerk