



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1521.06 Construction permits for dams or levees required; exceptions.

Effective: September 30, 2021

Legislation: House Bill 110

(A) No dam may be constructed for the purpose of storing, conserving, or retarding water, or for any other purpose, nor shall any levee be constructed for the purpose of diverting or retaining flood water, unless the person or governmental agency desiring the construction has a construction permit for the dam or levee issued by the chief of the division of water resources.

A construction permit is not required under this section for:

(1) A dam that is or will be less than ten feet in height and that has or will have a storage capacity of not more than fifty acre-feet at the elevation of the top of the dam, as determined by the chief. For the purposes of this section, the height of a dam shall be measured from the natural stream bed or lowest ground elevation at the downstream or outside limit of the dam to the elevation of the top of the dam.

(2) A dam, regardless of height, that has or will have a storage capacity of not more than fifteen acre-feet at the elevation of the top of the dam, as determined by the chief;

(3) A dam, regardless of storage capacity, that is or will be six feet or less in height, as determined by the chief;

(4) A dam or levee that belongs to a class exempted by the chief;

(5) The repair, maintenance, improvement, alteration, or removal of a dam or levee that is subject to section 1521.062 of the Revised Code, unless the construction constitutes an enlargement or reconstruction of the structure as determined by the chief;

(6) A dam or impoundment constructed under Chapter 1513. of the Revised Code.

(B) Before a construction permit may be issued, three copies of the plans and specifications,



including a detailed cost estimate, for the proposed construction, prepared by a registered professional engineer, together with any filing fee specified by rules adopted by the chief in accordance with division (I) of this section and the bond or other security required by section 1521.061 of the Revised Code, shall be filed with the chief. The detailed estimate of the cost shall include all costs associated with the construction of the dam or levee, including supervision and inspection of the construction by a registered professional engineer.

All fees collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the dam safety fund, which is hereby created. Expenditures from the fund shall be made by the chief for the purpose of administering this section and sections 1521.061 and 1521.062 of the Revised Code.

(C) The chief shall, within thirty days from the date of the receipt of the application, fee, and bond or other security, issue or deny a construction permit for the construction or may issue a construction permit conditioned upon the making of such changes in the plans and specifications for the construction as the chief considers advisable if the chief determines that the construction of the proposed dam or levee, in accordance with the plans and specifications filed, would endanger life, health, or property.

(D) The chief may deny a construction permit after finding that a dam or levee built in accordance with the plans and specifications would endanger life, health, or property, because of improper or inadequate design, or for such other reasons as the chief may determine.

In the event the chief denies a permit for the construction of the dam or levee, or issues a permit conditioned upon a making of changes in the plans or specifications for the construction, the chief shall state the reasons therefor and so notify, in writing, the person or governmental agency making the application for a permit. If the permit is denied, the chief shall return the bond or other security to the person or governmental agency making application for the permit.

The decision of the chief conditioning or denying a construction permit is subject to appeal as provided in Chapter 119. of the Revised Code. A dam or levee built substantially at variance from the plans and specifications upon which a construction permit was issued is in violation of this section. The chief may at any time inspect any dam or levee, or site upon which any dam or levee is to be constructed, in order to determine whether it complies with this section.



(E) A registered professional engineer shall inspect the construction for which the permit was issued during all phases of construction and shall furnish to the chief such regular reports of the engineer's inspections as the chief may require. When the chief finds that construction has been fully completed in accordance with the terms of the permit and the plans and specifications approved by the chief, the chief shall approve the construction. When one year has elapsed after approval of the completed construction, and the chief finds that within this period no fact has become apparent to indicate that the construction was not performed in accordance with the terms of the permit and the plans and specifications approved by the chief, or that the construction as performed would endanger life, health, or property, the chief shall release the bond or other security. No bond or other security shall be released until one year after final approval by the chief, unless the dam or levee has been modified so that it will not retain water and has been approved as nonhazardous after determination by the chief that the dam or levee as modified will not endanger life, health, or property.

(F) When inspections required by this section are not being performed, the chief shall notify the person or governmental agency to which the permit has been issued that inspections are not being performed by the registered professional engineer and that the chief will inspect the remainder of the construction. Thereafter, the chief shall inspect the construction and the cost of inspection shall be charged against the owner. Failure of the registered professional engineer to submit required inspection reports shall be deemed notice that the engineer's inspections are not being performed.

(G) The chief may order construction to cease on any dam or levee that is being built in violation of this section, and may prohibit the retention of water behind any dam or levee that has been built in violation of this section.

(H) The chief may adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, for the design and construction of dams and levees for which a construction permit is required by this section or for which periodic inspection is required by section 1521.062 of the Revised Code, for deposit and forfeiture of bonds and other securities required by section 1521.061 of the Revised Code, for the periodic inspection, operation, repair, improvement, alteration, or removal of all dams and levees, as specified in section 1521.062 of the Revised Code, and for establishing classes of dams or levees that are exempt from the requirements of this section and section 1521.062 of the Revised Code as being of a size, purpose, or situation that does not present a substantial hazard to life, health, or property.



The chief may, by rule, limit the period during which a construction permit issued under this section is valid. The rules may allow for the extension of the period during which a permit is valid upon written request, provided that the written request includes a revised construction cost estimate, and may require the payment of an additional filing fee for the requested extension. If a construction permit expires without an extension before construction is completed, the person or agency shall apply for a new permit, and shall not continue construction until the new permit is issued.

(I) The chief shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code establishing a filing fee schedule for purposes of division (B) of this section.