



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 1501:21-13-01 Classification of dams.

Effective: May 18, 2023

(A) For the purpose of this chapter, dams shall be divided into four classes, which will be known as class I, class II, class III, and class IV. The chief shall establish a dams appropriate classification by using the following criteria as a guideline. Such classification shall be established by the chief during the preliminary review described by rule 1501:21-5-02 of the Administrative Code or during the periodic inspection described by rule 1501:21-21-01 of the Administrative Code. The chief reserves the right to reclassify any dam at any time as a result of circumstances not in existence or not known at the time said dam was initially classified.

(1) Dams having a total storage volume greater than five thousand acre-feet or a height of greater than sixty feet shall be placed in class I. A dam shall be placed in class I when sudden failure of the dam would result in one of the following conditions.

(a) Probable loss of human life.

(b) Structural collapse of at least one residence or one commercial or industrial business.

(2) Dams having a total storage volume greater than five hundred acre-feet or a height of greater than forty feet shall be placed in class II. A dam shall be placed in class II when sudden failure of the dam would result in at least one of the following conditions, but loss of human life is not probable.

(a) Disruption of a public water supply or wastewater treatment facility, release of health hazardous industrial or commercial waste, or other health hazards.

(b) Flooding of residential, commercial, industrial, or publicly owned structures. At the request of the dam owner, the chief may exempt dams from the criterion of this paragraph if the dam owner owns the potentially affected property.

(c) Flooding of high-value property. At the request of the dam owner, the chief may exempt dams



from the criterion of this paragraph if the dam owner owns the potentially affected property.

(d) Damage or disruption to major roads including but not limited to interstate and state highways, and the only access to residential or other critical areas such as hospitals, nursing homes, or correctional facilities as determined by the chief.

(e) Damage or disruption to railroads or public utilities.

(f) Damage to downstream class I, II or III dams or levees, or other dams or levees of high value. Damage to dams or levees can include, but is not limited to, overtopping of the structure. At the request of the dam owner, the chief may exempt dams from the criterion of this paragraph if the dam owner owns the potentially affected property.

(3) Dams having a total storage volume greater than fifty acre-feet or a height of greater than twenty-five feet shall be placed in class III. A dam shall be placed in class III when sudden failure of the dam would result in at least one of the following conditions, but loss of human life is not probable.

(a) Property losses including but not limited to rural buildings not otherwise described in paragraph (A) of this rule, and class IV dams and levees not otherwise listed as high-value property in paragraph (A) of this rule. At the request of the dam owner, the chief may exempt dams from the criterion of this paragraph if the dam owner owns the potentially affected property.

(b) Damage or disruption to local roads including but not limited to roads not otherwise listed as major roads in paragraph (A) of this rule.

(4) Dams which are twenty-five feet or less in height and have a total storage volume of fifty acre-feet or less may be placed in class IV. When sudden failure of the dam would result in property losses restricted mainly to the dam and rural lands, and loss of human life is not probable, the dam may be placed in class IV. Class IV dams are exempt from the permit requirements of section 1521.06 of the Revised Code pursuant to paragraph (C) of rule 1501:21-19-01 of the Administrative Code.

(B) All pertinent information including any unusual circumstances shall be considered by the chief



in establishing an appropriate classification for a dam. Probable future development of the area downstream from the dam that would be affected by its failure shall be considered. Completed downstream hazard mitigation such as acquisition, removal or protection of downstream property may also be considered. However, the above criteria shall in no way preclude the chief's requirement of greater safety in the interest of life, health, or property.