



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1571.14 Appeals to director of natural resources.

Effective: October 3, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 33

Any person claiming to be aggrieved or adversely affected by an order of the chief of the division of oil and gas resources management made as provided in section 1571.10 or 1571.16 of the Revised Code may appeal to the director of natural resources for an order vacating or modifying such order. Upon receipt of the appeal, the director shall appoint an individual who has knowledge of the laws and rules regarding the underground storage of gas and who shall act as a hearing officer in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code in hearing the appeal.

The person appealing to the director shall be known as appellant and the chief shall be known as appellee. The appellant and the appellee shall be deemed parties to the appeal.

The appeal shall be in writing and shall set forth the order complained of and the grounds upon which the appeal is based. The appeal shall be filed with the director within thirty days after the date upon which appellant received notice by certified mail or electronic format of the making of the order complained of, as required by section 1571.10 of the Revised Code. Notice of the filing of such appeal shall be delivered by appellant to the chief within three days after the appeal is filed with the director.

Within seven days after receipt of the notice of appeal the chief shall prepare and certify to the director at the expense of appellant a complete transcript of the proceedings out of which the appeal arises, including a transcript of the testimony submitted to the chief.

Upon the filing of the appeal the director shall fix the time and place at which the hearing on the appeal will be held, and shall give appellant and the chief at least ten days' written notice thereof by mail. The director may postpone or continue any hearing upon the director's own motion or upon application of appellant or of the chief.

The filing of an appeal provided for in this section does not automatically suspend or stay execution of the order appealed from, but upon application by the appellant the director may suspend or stay



such execution pending determination of the appeal upon such terms as the director deems proper.

The hearing officer appointed by the director shall hear the appeal de novo, and either party to the appeal may submit such evidence as the hearing officer deems admissible.

For the purpose of conducting a hearing on an appeal, the hearing officer may require the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, records, and papers, and may, and at the request of any party shall, issue subpoenas for witnesses or subpoenas duces tecum to compel the production of any books, records, or papers, directed to the sheriffs of the counties where such witnesses are found, which subpoenas shall be served and returned in the same manner as subpoenas in criminal cases are served and returned. The fees of sheriffs shall be the same as those allowed by the court of common pleas in criminal cases. Witnesses shall be paid the fees and mileage provided for under section 119.094 of the Revised Code. Such fee and mileage expenses incurred at the request of appellant shall be paid in advance by appellant, and the remainder of such expenses shall be paid out of funds appropriated for the expenses of the division of oil and gas resources management.

In case of disobedience or neglect of any subpoena served on any person, or the refusal of any witness to testify to any matter regarding which the witness may be lawfully interrogated, the court of common pleas of the county in which such disobedience, neglect, or refusal occurs, or any judge thereof, on application of the director, shall compel obedience by attachment proceedings for contempt as in the case of disobedience of the requirements of a subpoena issued from such court or a refusal to testify therein. Witnesses at such hearings shall testify under oath, and the hearing officer may administer oaths or affirmations to persons who so testify.

At the request of any party to the appeal, a record of the testimony and other evidence submitted shall be taken by an official court reporter at the expense of the party making the request for the record. The record shall include all of the testimony and other evidence and the rulings on the admissibility thereof presented at the hearing. The hearing officer shall pass upon the admissibility of evidence, but any party may at the time object to the admission of any evidence and except to the ruling of the hearing officer thereon, and if the hearing officer refuses to admit evidence, the party offering same may make a proffer thereof, and such proffer shall be made a part of the record of such hearing.



If upon completion of the hearing the hearing officer finds that the order appealed from was lawful and reasonable, the hearing officer shall make a written order affirming the order appealed from. If the hearing officer finds that such order was unreasonable or unlawful, the hearing officer shall make a written order vacating the order appealed from and making the order that it finds the chief should have made. Every order made by the hearing officer shall contain a written finding by the hearing officer of the facts upon which the order is based. Notice of the making of such order shall be given forthwith to each party to the appeal by mailing a certified copy thereof to each such party by certified mail or electronic format.