



Ohio Revised Code

Section 1571.16 Filing of complaint - hearing - injunctions.

Effective: October 3, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 33

(A) The gas storage well inspector or any person having a direct interest in the subject matter of this chapter may file with the division of oil and gas resources management a complaint in writing stating that a person is violating, or is about to violate, a provision or provisions of this chapter, or has done, or is about to do, an act, matter, or thing therein prohibited or declared to be unlawful, or has failed, omitted, neglected, or refused, or is about to fail, omit, neglect, or refuse, to perform a duty enjoined upon the person by this chapter. Upon the filing of such a complaint, the chief of the division of oil and gas resources management shall promptly fix the time for the holding of a hearing on such complaint and shall send by certified mail or electronic format to the person so complained of, a copy of such complaint together with at least five days' notice of the time and place at which such hearing will be held. Such notice of such hearing shall also be given to all persons having a direct interest in the matters complained of in such complaint. Such hearing shall be conducted in the same manner, and the chief and persons having a direct interest in the matter being heard, shall have the same powers, rights, and duties as provided in divisions (B), (C), (D), and (E) of section 1571.10 of the Revised Code, in connection with hearings by the chief, provided that if after conclusion of the hearing the chief finds that the charges against the person complained of, as stated in such complaint, have not been sustained by a preponderance of evidence, the chief shall make an order dismissing the complaint, and if the chief finds that the charges have been so sustained, the chief shall by appropriate order require compliance with those provisions.

(B) Whenever the chief is of the opinion that any person is violating, or is about to violate, any provision of this chapter, or has done, or is about to do, any act, matter, or thing therein prohibited or declared to be unlawful, or has failed, omitted, neglected, or refused, or is about to fail, omit, neglect, or refuse, to perform any duty enjoined upon the person by this chapter, or has failed, omitted, neglected, or refused, or is about to fail, omit, neglect, or refuse, to obey any lawful requirement or order made by the chief, or any final judgment, order, or decree made by any court pursuant to this chapter, then and in every such case, the chief may institute in a court of competent jurisdiction of the county or counties wherein the operation is situated, an action to enjoin or restrain such violations or to enforce obedience with law or the orders of the chief. No injunction bond shall be



required to be filed in any such proceeding. Such persons or corporations as the court may deem necessary or proper to be joined as parties in order to make its judgment, order, or writ effective may be joined as parties. An appeal may be taken as in other civil actions.

(C) In addition to the other remedies as provided in divisions (A) and (B) of this section, any reservoir operator or coal mine operator affected by this chapter may proceed by injunction or other appropriate remedy to restrain violations or threatened violations of this chapter or of orders of the chief, or of the hearing officer appointed under section 1571.14 of the Revised Code, or the judgments, orders, or decrees of any court or to enforce obedience therewith.

(D) Each remedy prescribed in divisions (A), (B), and (C) of this section is deemed concurrent or contemporaneous with each other remedy prescribed therein, and the existence or exercise of any one such remedy shall not prevent the exercise of any other such remedy.

(E) The provisions of this chapter providing for conferences, hearings by the chief, appeals to the hearing officer from orders of the chief, and appeals to the court of common pleas from orders of the hearing officer, and the remedies prescribed in divisions (A), (B), (C), and (D) of this section, do not constitute the exclusive procedure that a person, who deems the person's rights to be unlawfully affected by any official action taken thereunder, must pursue in order to protect and preserve such rights, nor does this chapter constitute a procedure that such a person must pursue before the person may lawfully proceed by other actions, legal or equitable, to protect and preserve such rights.