

2014 Legislative Session Summary

MDE submitted three Departmental Bills, all of which passed:

SB0101- Environment - Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund - Use of Funds

- This Departmental bill expands the authorized uses of the Maryland Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund to include providing financial assistance in the form of grants, negative interest loans, forgiveness of principal, subsidized interest rates, and any other form of financial assistance authorized or required under various federal laws.

HB0011- Environment - Bay Restoration Fund - Authorized Uses

- This Departmental bill expands the uses of the Septics Account of the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) to include:
 - (1) providing grants or loans for connecting a property served by a septic system to an existing biological nutrient removal (BNR) facility;
 - (2) covering the cost of the principal on debt issued by a local government for specified sewer connection projects; and
 - (3) providing assistance for specified sewer connection projects located outside of a priority funding area (PFA).
- MDE must adopt regulations establishing specified procedures for public participation and review of projects outside of a PFA, and MDE must report to specified legislative committees by December 1 of each year, beginning in 2015, on the impact of each such project funded.
- Finally, the bill repeals the requirement that a local government adopt a policy or procedure to guarantee that any future connection to an existing ENR facility meets each of several specified BRF requirements in State law.

HB0012- Bay Restoration Fund - Authorized Uses - Local Entities

- This Departmental bill requires up to 10% of the funds in the Septics Account of the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) to be distributed to a local public entity delegated by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to cover reasonable costs associated with the implementation of MDE regulations pertaining to onsite sewage disposal (septic) systems that utilize the best available technology (BAT) for the removal of nitrogen.

Other Legislation:

SB0678- Maryland Oil Disaster Containment, Clean-Up and Contingency Fund and Oil Contaminated Site Environmental Cleanup Fund

- This bill increases the fee assessed on oil transferred into the State until July 1, 2017, to 8.0 cents per barrel from 3.0 cents per barrel; beginning July 1, 2017, the fee is 5.0 cents per barrel. Until July 1, 2017, 7.75 cents of the per-barrel fee are credited to the Maryland Oil Disaster Containment, Clean-Up and Contingency Fund (Oil Fund) and 0.25 cents are credited to the Oil Contaminated Site Environmental Cleanup Fund (Reimbursement Fund).
- The bill allows owners of heating oil tanks to continue to apply for assistance from the Reimbursement Fund through June 30, 2017.
- The bill also requires the Secretary of the Environment to convene a workgroup to review and assess long-term funding needs of the State's oil pollution programs.

Stormwater language in the Budget:

- The stormwater language in the Budget is limited to Carroll and Frederick County.
- It gives them the opportunity to come into compliance with existing Maryland law by entering into a formal Memorandum of Understanding with MDE that requires the county to pass an ordinance creating a source of funding to be placed in the County's stormwater remediation fund to support County stormwater pollution control efforts.
- There will be no Memorandum of Understanding signed by MDE with either of these two Counties that does not meet the requirements of the law.