

Article 21B.

Air Pollution Control.

§ 143-215.105. Declaration of policy; definitions.

The declaration of public policy set forth in G.S. 143-211, the definitions in G.S. 143-212, and the definitions in G.S. 143-213, applicable to the control and abatement of air pollution, shall be applicable to this Article. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; 1987, c. 827, s. 203.)

§ 143-215.106. Administration of air quality program.

The Department shall administer the air quality program of the State. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1987, c. 827, s. 204.)

§ 143-215.106A. Assessments to establish Title V program.

(a) The holders of permits issued by the Commission for the control of sources of air pollution are assessed Title V program implementation fees on an annual basis in accordance with the schedule established in this section. The assessments are in addition to any other fees required to be paid by the permit holders in conjunction with the permits. The assessments shall be credited to the Title V Account. The Secretary shall issue annual notices of the assessments to permit holders on or before 1 July of each fiscal year. Each notice of assessment shall include a summary of the data on which the assessment is based. Assessments shall be payable 30 days after receipt of notice. Failure to make timely payment within 90 days shall be grounds to revoke the permit and to institute a collection action against the permit holder by the Attorney General.

(b) Assessments are made in accordance with the following schedule:

- (1) Sources emitting at least 100 tons and less than 500 tons per year, two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for fiscal year 1991-92 and two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each year thereafter;
- (2) Sources emitting at least 500 tons and less than 1,000 tons per year, four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for fiscal year 1991-92 and twelve thousand five hundred dollars (\$12,500) for each year thereafter;
- (3) Sources emitting at least 1,000 tons and less than 5,000 tons per year, six thousand dollars (\$6,000) for fiscal year 1991-92, and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for each year thereafter; and
- (4) Sources emitting at least 5,000 tons per year, six thousand dollars (\$6,000) for fiscal year 1991-92, and one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for each year thereafter.

(c) Notices of assessment shall not be issued for any fiscal year in which the permit fees for the Title V program adopted by the Commission pursuant to G.S. 143-215.3(a)(1d) are in effect. Should a Title V program permit fee become due and payable during a fiscal year when the permit holder has paid an assessment, the Title V program permit fee shall be reduced in an amount equal to the pro rata share of the assessment for the months remaining in the fiscal year. The pro rata share is determined by dividing the assessment into 12 equal parts and multiplying that sum by the number of months remaining in the fiscal year. (1991, c. 552, s. 10; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1039, s. 17.)

§ 143-215.107. Air quality standards and classifications.

(a) Duty to Adopt Plans, Standards, etc. – The Commission is hereby directed and empowered, as rapidly as possible within the limits of funds and facilities available to it, and subject to the procedural requirements of this Article and Article 21:

- (1) To prepare and develop, after proper study, a comprehensive plan or plans for the prevention, abatement and control of air pollution in the State or in any designated area of the State.
- (2) To determine by means of field sampling and other studies, including the examination of available data collected by any local, State or federal agency or any person, the degree of air contamination and air pollution in the State and the several areas of the State.
- (3) To develop and adopt, after proper study, air quality standards applicable to the State as a whole or to any designated area of the State as the Commission deems proper in order to promote the policies and purposes of this Article and Article 21 most effectively.
- (4) To collect information or to require reporting from classes of sources which, in the judgment of the Environmental Management Commission, may cause or contribute to air pollution. Any person operating or responsible for the operation of air contaminant sources of any class for which the Commission requires reporting shall make reports containing such information as may be required by the Commission concerning location, size, and height of contaminant outlets, processes employed, fuels used, and the nature and time periods or duration of emissions, and such other information as is relevant to air pollution and available or reasonably capable of being assembled.
- (5) To develop and adopt emission control standards as in the judgment of the Commission may be necessary to prohibit, abate, or control air pollution commensurate with established air quality standards. The Department shall implement rules adopted pursuant to this subsection as follows:
 - a. Except as provided in sub-subdivision b. of this subdivision, rules adopted pursuant to this subdivision that control emissions of toxic air pollutants shall not apply to an air emission source that is any of the following:
 1. Subject to an applicable requirement under 40 C.F.R. Part 61, as amended.
 2. An affected source under 40 C.F.R. Part 63, as amended.
 3. Subject to a case-by-case maximum achievable control technology (MACT) permit requirement issued by the Department pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7412(j), as amended.
 - b. Upon receipt of a permit application for a new source or facility, or for the modification of an existing source or facility, that would result in an increase in the emission of toxic air pollutants, the Department shall review the application to determine if the emission of toxic air pollutants from the source or facility would present an unacceptable risk to human health. Upon making a written finding that a source or facility presents or would present an unacceptable risk to human health, the Department shall require the owner or operator of the source or facility to submit a permit application for any or all emissions of toxic air pollutants from

the facility that eliminates the unacceptable risk to human health. The written finding may be based on modeling, epidemiological studies, actual monitoring data, or other information that indicates an unacceptable health risk. When the Department requires the owner or operator of a source or facility to submit a permit application pursuant to this sub-subdivision, the Department shall report to the Chairs of the Environmental Review Commission on the circumstances surrounding the permit requirement, including a copy of the written finding.

- (6) To adopt motor vehicle emissions standards; to adopt, when necessary and practicable, a motor vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program to improve ambient air quality; to require manufacturers of motor vehicles to furnish to the Equipment and Tool Institute and, upon request and at a reasonable charge, to any person who maintains or repairs a motor vehicle, all information necessary to fully make use of the on-board diagnostic equipment and the data compiled by that equipment; to certify to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles that ambient air quality will be improved by the implementation of a motor vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program in a county. The Commission shall implement this subdivision as provided in G.S. 143-215.107A.
- (7) To develop and adopt standards and plans necessary to implement programs for the prevention of significant deterioration and for the attainment of air quality standards in nonattainment areas.
- (8) To develop and adopt standards and plans necessary to implement programs to control acid deposition and to regulate the use of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) allowances and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) emissions in accordance with Title IV and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
- (9) To regulate the content of motor fuels, as defined in G.S. 105-449.60, to require use of reformulated gasoline as the Commission determines necessary, to implement the requirements of Title II and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and to develop standards and plans to implement this subdivision. Rules may authorize the use of marketable oxygen credits for gasoline as provided in federal requirements.
- (10) Except as provided in subsection (h) of this section, to develop and adopt standards and plans necessary to implement requirements of the federal Clean Air Act and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
- (11) To develop and adopt economically feasible standards and plans necessary to implement programs to control the emission of odors from animal operations, as defined in G.S. 143-215.10B.
- (12) To develop and adopt a program of incentives to promote voluntary reductions of emissions of air contaminants, including, but not limited to, emissions banking and trading and credit for voluntary early reduction of emissions.
- (13) To develop and adopt rules governing the certification of persons who inspect vehicle-mounted tanks used to transport motor fuel and to require that inspection of these tanks be performed only by certified personnel.

- (14) To develop and adopt rules governing the sale and service of mobile source exhaust emissions analyzers and to require that vendors of these analyzers provide adequate surety to purchasers for the performance of the vendor's contractual or other obligations related to the sale and service of analyzers.

(b) **Criteria for Standards.** – In developing air quality and emission control standards, motor vehicle emissions standards, motor vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance requirements, rules governing the content of motor fuels or requiring the use of reformulated gasoline, and other standards and plans to improve ambient air quality, the Commission shall consider varying local conditions and requirements and may prescribe uniform standards and plans throughout the State or different standards and plans for different counties or areas as may be necessary and appropriate to improve ambient air quality in the State or within a particular county or area, achieve attainment or preclude violations of state or national ambient air quality standards, meet other federal requirements, or achieve the purposes of this Article and Article 21.

(c) Chapter 150B of the General Statutes governs the adoption and publication of rules under this Article.

(d), (e) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 827, s. 205.

(f), (g) Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 507, s. 27.

(h) With respect to any regulation adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency limiting emissions from wood heaters and adopted after May 1, 2014, neither the Commission nor the Department shall do any of the following:

- (1) Issue rules limiting emissions from wood heaters to implement the federal regulations described in this subsection.
- (2) Enforce against a manufacturer, distributor, or consumer the federal regulations described in this subsection. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; 1975, c. 784; 1979, c. 545, s. 1; c. 931; 1987, c. 827, ss. 154, 205; 1989, c. 132; c. 168, s. 48; 1991, c. 403, s. 3; c. 552, s. 9; c. 761, s. 40; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 889, s. 3; 1993, c. 400, s. 7; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 686, s. 6; 1995, c. 123, s. 9; c. 507, s. 27.8(s); 1997-458, s. 3.1; 1999-328, s. 3.12; 2000-134, s. 1; 2002-4, s. 3; 2002-165, s. 1.7; 2012-91, s. 1; 2015-286, s. 4.3(a).)

§ 143-215.107A. Motor vehicle emissions testing and maintenance program.

(a) **General Provisions.** –

(1) G.S. 143-215.107(a)(6) shall be implemented as provided in this section.

(2) Motor vehicle emissions inspections shall be performed by a person who holds an emissions inspection mechanic license issued as provided in G.S. 20-183.4A(c) at a station that holds an emissions inspection station license issued under G.S. 20-183.4A(a) or at a place of business that holds an emissions self-inspector license issued as provided in G.S. 20-183.4A(d). Motor vehicle emissions inspections may be performed by a decentralized network of test-and-repair stations as described in 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 51.353 (1 July 1998 Edition). The Commission may not require that motor vehicle emissions inspections be performed by a network of centralized or decentralized test-only stations.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 2000-134, s. 2, effective July 14, 2000.

(c) **(Effective until contingency met – see note)** **Counties Covered.** – Motor vehicle emissions inspections shall be performed in the following counties: Alamance, Buncombe,

Cabarrus, Cumberland, Davidson, Durham, Forsyth, Franklin, Gaston, Guilford, Iredell, Johnston, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, New Hanover, Randolph, Rowan, Union, and Wake.

(c) **(Effective once contingency met – see note)** Counties Covered. – Motor vehicle emissions inspections shall be performed in Mecklenburg County.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 2012-200, s. 12(a), effective August 1, 2012. (1999-328, ss. 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8; 2000-134, ss. 2, 3; 2004-203, s. 5(l); 2012-200, s. 12(a); 2017-10, s. 3.5(a); 2020-5, s. 1; 2023-134, s. 12.7(b).)

§ 143-215.107B: Repealed by Session Laws 2017-10, s. 4.4(b), effective May 4, 2017.

§ 143-215.107C. State agency goals, plans, duties, and reports.

(a) As used in this section, alternative-fueled vehicle means a motor vehicle capable of operating on electricity; natural gas; propane; hydrogen; reformulated gasoline; ethanol; other alcohol fuels, separately or in mixtures of eighty-five percent (85%) or more of alcohol by volume; or fuels, other than alcohol, derived from biological materials. For purposes of this section, a vehicle that has been converted to operate on a fuel other than the fuel for which it was originally designed is not a new or replacement vehicle.

(b) It shall be the goal of the State that on and after 1 January 2004 at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the new or replacement light duty cars and trucks purchased by the State will be alternative-fueled vehicles or low emission vehicles. The Department of Administration, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Environmental Quality shall jointly develop a plan to achieve this goal and to fuel and maintain these vehicles. For purposes of this section, a light duty car or truck is one that is rated at 8,500 pounds or less Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR).

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 2006-79, s. 13, effective July 10, 2006.

(d), (e) Repealed by Session Laws 2017-10, s. 4.4(a), effective May 4, 2017.

(f) The Office of State Human Resources shall implement a policy that promotes telework/telecommuting for State employees as recommended by the report of the State Auditor entitled "Establishing a Formal Telework/telecommuting Program for State Employees" and dated October 1997. It shall be the goal of the State to reduce State employee vehicle miles traveled in commuting by twenty percent (20%) without reducing total work hours or productivity. (1999-328, ss. 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8; 2004-195, s. 2.4; 2005-386, s. 2.2; 2006-79, s. 13; 2013-382, s. 9.1(c); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u); 2017-10, s. 4.4(a).)

§ 143-215.107D. Emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂) from certain coal-fired generating units.

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Coal-fired generating unit" means a coal-fired generating unit, as defined by 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 96.2 (1 July 2001 Edition), that is located in this State and has the capacity to generate 25 or more megawatts of electricity.

(2) "Investor-owned public utility" means an investor-owned public utility, as defined in G.S. 62-3.

(b) An investor-owned public utility that owns or operates coal-fired generating units that collectively emitted more than 75,000 tons of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) in calendar year 2000:

- (1) Shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 35,000 tons of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2007.
 - (2) Shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 31,000 tons of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2009.
- (c) An investor-owned public utility that owns or operates coal-fired generating units that collectively emitted 75,000 tons or less of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) in calendar year 2000 shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 25,000 tons of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2007.
- (d) An investor-owned public utility that owns or operates coal-fired generating units that collectively emitted more than 225,000 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO2) in calendar year 2000:
- (1) Shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 150,000 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO2) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2009.
 - (2) Shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 80,000 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO2) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2013.
- (e) An investor-owned public utility that owns or operates coal-fired generating units that collectively emitted 225,000 tons or less of sulfur dioxide (SO2) in calendar year 2000:
- (1) Shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 100,000 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO2) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2009.
 - (2) Shall not collectively emit from the coal-fired generating units that it owns or operates more than 50,000 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO2) in any calendar year beginning 1 January 2013.
- (f) Each investor-owned public utility to which this section applies may determine how it will achieve the collective emissions limitations imposed by this section. Compliance with the emissions limitations set out in this section does not alter the obligation of any person to comply with any other federal or State law, regulation, or rule related to air quality or visibility. This subsection shall not be construed to limit the authority of the Commission to impose specific limitations on the emission of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and sulfur dioxide (SO2) from an individual coal-fired generating unit owned or operated by an investor-owned public utility.
- (g) A coal-fired generating unit that is subject to the collective emissions limitations set out in this section on 1 July 2002 shall remain subject to the collective emissions limitations whether or not it thereafter continues to be owned or operated by an investor-owned public utility.
- (h) The Commission shall require that any permit or modified permit issued for a coal-fired generating unit that is subject to this section include conditions that provide for testing, monitoring, record keeping, and reporting adequate to assure compliance with the requirements of this section.
- (i) The Governor may enter into an agreement with an investor-owned public utility under which the investor-owned public utility voluntarily agrees to transfer to the State any emissions allowances acquired or that may be acquired by the investor-owned public utility pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 7651-7651o, as implemented by 40 Code of Federal Regulations §§ 73.1 through 73.90 (1 July 2001 Edition); 42 U.S.C. 7410(a)(2)(D)(i)(I), as implemented by 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 51.121 (1 July 2001 Edition), related federal regulations, and the associated State Implementation Plan; 42 U.S.C. § 7426, as implemented by 40 Code of Federal Regulations §

52.34 (1 July 2001 Edition) and related federal regulations; or any similar program established under federal law that result from compliance with the emissions limitations set out in this section. An agreement entered into pursuant to this subsection shall be binding and shall be enforceable by specific performance. If the Governor enters into an agreement that provides for the transfer of emissions allowances to the State, the Governor shall file verified copies of the agreement with the Attorney General, the Secretary of State, the State Treasurer, the Secretary of Environmental Quality, and the Utilities Commission. The State Treasurer shall hold all emissions allowances that are transferred to the State as provided in this subsection in trust for the people of this State and shall sell, trade, transfer, or otherwise dispose of the emissions allowances only as the General Assembly shall provide by law.

(j) An investor-owned public utility that is subject to the emissions limitations set out in this section shall submit to the Utilities Commission and to the Department on or before 1 April of each year a verified statement pursuant to subsection (i) of G.S. 62-133.6. (2002-4, s. 1; 2015-241, s. 14.30(v).)

§ 143-215.107E. Prohibit cap and trade requirements for carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Neither the Governor, nor any of the agencies of the State, including the Utilities Commission, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Environmental Management Commission, may require an electric public utility, as defined in G.S. 62-126.3(7), or persons who operate an electric generating facility the primary purpose of which is for the person's own use and not for the primary purpose of producing electricity for sale to or for the public for compensation, to participate in a program that requires such utilities to obtain allowances to offset their CO₂ emissions, commonly characterized as emissions cap-and-trade programs, CO₂ budget trading programs, or cap-and-invest initiatives. In addition, the Governor and the Department are expressly prohibited from entering into any agreement with other states obligating North Carolina's participation in any program requiring acquisition of allowances to offset CO₂ emissions by such utilities. (2023-134, s. 12.5(a).)

§ 143-215.107F. Prohibit requirements for control of emissions from new motor vehicles.

Notwithstanding any authorization granted under 42 U.S.C. § 7507, no agency of the State, including the Department of Environmental Quality, the Environmental Management Commission, the Department of Transportation, or the Department of Administration, may adopt and enforce standards relating to control of emissions from new motor vehicles or new motor vehicle engines, including requirements that mandate the sale or purchase of "zero-emission vehicles," or electric vehicles as defined in G.S. 20-4.01. The prohibitions of this section shall not be construed to affect requirements for the vehicle emissions testing and maintenance program established pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107A. (2023-134, s. 12.6(a); 2024-1, s. 4.3(a).)

§ 143-215.108. Control of sources of air pollution; permits required.

(a) Except as provided in subsections (a1) and (a2) of this section, no person shall do any of the following things or carry out any of the following activities that contravene or will be likely to contravene standards established pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107 or set out in G.S. 143-215.107D unless that person has obtained a permit for the activity from the Commission and has complied with any conditions of the permit:

- (1) Establish or operate any air contaminant source, except as provided in G.S. 143-215.108A.

- (2) Build, erect, use, or operate any equipment that may result in the emission of an air contaminant or that is likely to cause air pollution, except as provided in G.S. 143-215.108A.
- (3) Alter or change the construction or method of operation of any equipment or process from which air contaminants are or may be emitted.
- (4) Repealed by Session Laws 2003-428, s. 1, effective August 19, 2003.

(a1) The Commission may by rule establish procedures that meet the requirements of section 502(b)(10) of Title V (42 U.S.C. § 7661a(b)(10)) and 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 70.4(b)(12) (1 July 1993 Edition) to allow a permittee to make changes within a permitted facility without requiring a revision of the permit.

(a2) The Commission may adopt rules that provide for a minor modification of a permit. At a minimum, rules that provide for a minor modification of a permit shall meet the requirements of 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 70.7(e)(2) (1 July 1993 Edition). If the Commission adopts rules that provide for a minor modification of a permit, a permittee shall not make a change in the permitted facility while the application for the minor modification is under review unless the change is authorized under the rules adopted by the Commission.

(b) The Commission shall act upon all applications for permits so as to effectuate the purposes of this Article by reducing existing air pollution and preventing, so far as reasonably possible, any increased pollution of the air from any additional or enlarged sources.

(c) The Commission shall have the power:

- (1) To grant and renew a permit with any conditions attached that the Commission believes necessary to achieve the purposes of this Article or the requirements of the Clean Air Act and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency;
- (2) To grant and renew any temporary permit for such period of time as the Commission shall specify even though the action allowed by such permit may result in pollution or increase pollution where conditions make such temporary permit essential;
- (3) To terminate, modify, or revoke and reissue any permit upon not less than 60 days' written notice to any person affected;
- (3a) To suspend any permit pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 150B-3(c);
- (4) To require all applications for permits and renewals to be in writing and to prescribe the form of such applications;
- (5) To request such information from an applicant and to conduct such inquiry or investigation as it may deem necessary and to require the submission of plans and specifications prior to acting on any application for a permit;
- (5a) To require that an applicant satisfy the Department that the applicant, or any parent, subsidiary, or other affiliate of the applicant or parent:
 - a. Is financially qualified to carry out the activity for which a permit is required under subsection (a); and
 - b. Has substantially complied with the air quality and emission control standards applicable to any activity in which the applicant has previously engaged, and has been in substantial compliance with federal and state laws, regulations, and rules for the protection of the environment.

As used in this subdivision, the words "affiliate," "parent," and "subsidiary" have the same meaning as in 17 Code of Federal Regulations 240.12b-2 (1 April 1990 Edition);

- (6) To adopt rules, as it deems necessary, establishing the form of applications and permits and procedures for the granting or denial of permits and renewals pursuant to this section; and all permits, renewals and denials shall be in writing;
 - (7) To prohibit any stationary source within the State from emitting any air pollutant in amounts that will prevent attainment or maintenance by any other state of any national ambient air quality standard or that will interfere with measures required to be included in the applicable implementation plan for any other state to prevent deterioration of air quality or protect visibility; and
 - (8) To designate certain classes of activities for which a general permit may be issued, after considering the environmental impact of an activity, the frequency of the activity, the need for individual permit oversight, and the need for public review and comment on individual permits.
- (d)(1) The Commission may conduct any inquiry or investigation it considers necessary before acting on an application and may require an applicant to submit plans, specifications, and other information the Commission considers necessary to evaluate the application. A permit application may not be deemed complete unless it is accompanied by a copy of the request for determination as provided in subsection (f) of this section that bears a date of receipt entered by the clerk of the local government and until the 15-day period for issuance of a determination has elapsed.
- (2) **(Effective until contingency met – see note)** The Commission shall adopt rules specifying the times within which it must act upon applications for permits required by Title V and other permits required by this section. The times specified shall be extended for the period during which the Commission is prohibited from issuing a permit under subdivisions (3) and (4) of this subsection. The Commission shall inform a permit applicant as to whether or not the application is complete within the time specified in the rules for action on the application. If the Commission fails to act on an application for a permit required by Title V or this section within the time period specified, the failure to act on the application constitutes a final agency decision to deny the permit. A permit applicant, permittee, or other person aggrieved, as defined in G.S. 150B-2, may seek judicial review of a failure to act on the application as provided in G.S. 143-215.5 and Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 150B-51, upon review of a failure to act on an application for a permit required by Title V or this section, a court may either: (i) affirm the denial of the permit or (ii) remand the application to the Commission for action upon the application within a specified time.
 - (2) **(Effective once contingency met – see note)** The Commission shall adopt rules specifying the times within which it must act upon applications for permits required by Title V and other permits required by this section. The rules shall provide, at a minimum, that the Department shall issue the permit, deny the permit, or publish the permit for public notice and comment within 90 calendar

days of receipt of an administratively complete application for a minor modification, or within 270 calendar days of receipt of an administratively complete application for a major modification. The Commission shall inform a permit applicant as to whether or not the application is complete within the time specified in the rules for action on the application. If the Commission fails to act on an application for a permit required by Title V or this section within the time period specified, the permit applicant, permittee, or other person aggrieved, as defined in G.S. 150B-2, may commence a contested case under G.S. 150B-23(a4).

- (3) If the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency validly objects to the issuance of a permit required by Title V within 45 days after the Administrator receives the proposed permit and the required portions of the permit application, the Commission shall not issue the permit until the Commission revises the proposed permit to meet all objections noted by the Administrator or otherwise satisfies all objections consistent with Title V and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
- (4) If the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency validly objects to the issuance of a permit required by Title V after the expiration of the 45-day review period specified in subdivision (3) of this subsection as a result of a petition filed pursuant to section 505(b)(2) of Title V (42 U.S.C. § 7661d(b)(2)) and prior to the issuance of the permit by the Commission, the Commission shall not issue the permit until the Commission revises the proposed permit to meet all objections noted by the Administrator or otherwise satisfies all objections consistent with Title V and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

(d1) No Title V permit issued pursuant to this section shall be issued or renewed for a term exceeding five years. All other permits issued pursuant to this section shall be issued for a term of eight years.

(e) A permit applicant or permittee who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Commission on a permit application may commence a contested case by filing a petition under G.S. 150B-23 within 30 days after the Commission notifies the applicant or permittee of its decision. If the permit applicant or permittee does not file a petition within the required time, the Commission's decision on the application is final and is not subject to review. The filing of a petition under this subsection will stay the Commission's decision until resolution of the contested case.

(e1) A person other than a permit applicant or permittee who is a person aggrieved by the Commission's decision on a permit application may commence a contested case by filing a petition under G.S. 150B-23 within 30 days after the Commission provides notice of its decision on a permit application, as provided in G.S. 150B-23(f), or by posting the decision on a publicly available Web site. The filing of a petition under this subsection does not stay the Commission's decision except as ordered by the administrative law judge under G.S. 150B-33(b).

(f) An applicant for a permit under this section for a new facility or for the expansion of a facility permitted under this section shall request each local government having jurisdiction over any part of the land on which the facility and its appurtenances are to be located to issue a determination as to whether the local government has in effect a zoning or subdivision ordinance applicable to the facility and whether the proposed facility or expansion would be consistent with

the ordinance. The request to the local government shall be accompanied by a copy of the draft permit application and shall be delivered to the clerk of the local government personally or by certified mail. The determination shall be verified or supported by affidavit signed by the official designated by the local government to make the determination and, if the local government states that the facility is inconsistent with a zoning or subdivision ordinance, shall include a copy of the ordinance and the specific reasons for the determination of inconsistency. A copy of any such determination shall be provided to the applicant when it is submitted to the Commission. The Commission shall not act upon an application for a permit under this section until it has received a determination from each local government requested to make a determination by the applicant. If a local government determines that the new facility or the expansion of an existing facility is inconsistent with a zoning or subdivision ordinance, and unless the local government makes a subsequent determination of consistency with all ordinances cited in the determination or the proposed facility is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be consistent with the cited ordinances, the Commission shall attach as a condition of the permit a requirement that the applicant, prior to construction or operation of the facility under the permit, comply with all lawfully adopted local ordinances, including those cited in the determination, that apply to the facility at the time of construction or operation of the facility. If a local government fails to submit a determination to the Commission as provided by this subsection within 15 days after receipt of the request, the Commission may proceed to consider the permit application without regard to local zoning and subdivision ordinances. This subsection shall not be construed to affect the validity of any lawfully adopted franchise, local zoning, subdivision, or land-use planning ordinance or to affect the responsibility of any person to comply with any lawfully adopted franchise, local zoning, subdivision, or land-use planning ordinance. This subsection shall not be construed to limit any opportunity a local government may have to comment on a permit application under any other law or rule. This subsection shall not apply to any facility with respect to which local ordinances are subject to review under either G.S. 104E-6.2 or G.S. 130A-293.

(g) Repealed by Session Laws 2014-120, s. 38(c), effective September 18, 2014.

(h) Expedited Review of Applications Certified by a Professional Engineer. – The Commission shall adopt rules governing the submittal of permit applications certified by a professional engineer, including draft permits, that can be sent to public notice and hearing upon receipt and subjected to technical review by personnel within the Department. These rules shall specify, at a minimum, any forms to be used; a checklist for applicants that lists all items of information required to prepare a complete permit application; the form of the certification required on the application by a professional engineer; and the information that must be included in the draft permit. The Department shall process an application that is certified by a professional engineer as provided in subdivisions (1) through (7) of this subsection.

- (1) Initiation of Review. – Upon receipt of an application certified by a professional engineer in accordance with this subsection and the rules adopted pursuant to this subsection, the Department shall determine whether the application is complete as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection. Within 30 days after the date on which an application is determined to be complete, the Department shall:
 - a. Publish any required notices, using the draft permit included with the application;
 - b. Schedule any required public meetings or hearings on the application and permit; and

- c. Initiate any and all technical review of the application in a manner to ensure substantial completion of the technical review by the time of any public hearing on the application, or if there is no hearing, by the close of the notice period.
- (2) **Completeness Review.** – Within 10 working days of receipt of the permit application certified by a professional engineer under this subsection, the Department shall determine whether the application is complete for purposes of this subsection. The Department shall determine whether the permit application certified by a professional engineer is complete by comparing the information provided in the application with the checklist contained in the rules adopted by the Commission pursuant to this subsection.
- a. If the application is not complete, the Department shall promptly notify the applicant in writing of all deficiencies of the application, specifying the items that need to be included, modified, or supplemented in order to make the application complete, and the 10-day time period is suspended after this request for further information. If the applicant submits the requested information within the time specified, the 10-day time period shall begin again on the day the additional information was submitted. If the additional information is not submitted within the time periods specified, the Department shall return the application to the applicant, and the applicant may treat the return of the application as a denial of the application or may resubmit the application at a later time.
 - b. If the Department fails to notify the applicant that an application is not complete within the time period set forth in this subsection, the application shall be deemed to be complete.
- (3) **Time for Permit Decision.** – For any application found to be complete under subdivision (2) of this subsection, the Department shall issue a permit decision within 30 days of the last day of any public hearing on the application, or if there is no hearing, within 30 days of the close of the notice period.
- (4) **Rights if Permit Decision Not Made in Timely Fashion.** If the Department fails to issue a permit decision within the time periods specified in subdivision (3) of this subsection, the applicant may:
- a. Take no action, thereby consenting to the continued review of the application; or
 - b. Treat the failure to issue a permit decision as a denial of the application and appeal the denial as provided in subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of this section.
- (5) **Power to Halt Review.** – At any time after the permit application certified by a professional engineer has been determined to be complete under subdivision (2) of this subsection, the Department may immediately terminate review of that application, including technical review and any hearings or meetings scheduled on the application, upon a determination of one of the following:
- a. The permit application is not in substantial compliance with the applicable rules; or
 - b. The applicant failed to pay all permit application fees.

- (6) Rights if Review Halted. – If the Department terminates review of an application under subdivision (5) of this subsection, the applicant may take any of the following actions:
 - a. Revise and resubmit the application; or
 - b. Treat the action as a denial of the application and appeal the denial under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.
- (7) Option; No Additional Fee. – The submittal of a permit application certified by a professional engineer to be considered under this subsection shall be an option and shall not be required of any applicant. The Department shall not impose any additional fees for the receipt or processing of a permit application certified by a professional engineer.
 - (i) Rules for Review of Applications Other Than Those Certified by a Professional Engineer. – The Commission shall adopt rules governing the times of review for all permit applications submitted pursuant to this section other than those certified by a professional engineer pursuant to subsection (h) of this section. Those rules shall specify maximum times for, among other things, the following actions in reviewing the permit applications covered by this subsection:
 - (1) Determining that the permit application is complete;
 - (2) Requesting additional information to determine completeness;
 - (3) Determining that additional information is needed to conduct a technical review of the application;
 - (4) Completing all technical review of the permit application;
 - (5) Holding and completing all public meetings and hearings required for the application;
 - (6) Completing the record from reviewing and acting on the application; and
 - (7) Taking final action on the permit, including granting or denying the application.
 - (j) No Power to Regulate Residential Combustion. – Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to give the Commission or the Department the power to regulate the emissions from any combustion heater, appliance, or fireplace in private dwellings, except to the extent required by federal law. For purposes of this subsection, "combustion heater, appliance, or fireplace" means any heater, appliance, or fireplace that burns combustion fuels, including, but not limited to, natural or liquefied petroleum gas, fuel oil, kerosene, wood, or coal, for heating, cooking, drying, or decorative purposes. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; 1979, c. 545, ss. 2, 3; 1987, c. 461, s. 2; c. 827, ss. 154, 206; 1989, c. 168, s. 30; c. 492; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1037, s. 2; 1991, c. 552, s. 5; c. 629, s. 1; c. 761, s. 27(a)-(c); 1993, c. 400, s. 8; 1995, c. 484, s. 2; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 728, s. 1; 2002-4, s. 2; 2003-340, s. 1.8(b); 2003-428, ss. 1, 2; 2011-398, s. 60(a); 2013-413, s. 29; 2014-115, s. 17; 2014-120, ss. 24(g), 38(c); 2015-286, s. 4.17(a); 2023-134, s. 12.11(a), (f), (g); 2024-1, s. 4.13(a).)

§ 143-215.108A. (Effective until contingency met – see note) Control of sources of air pollution; construction of new facilities; alteration or expansion of existing facilities.

(a) New Facilities. – A person may not, without obtaining a permit under G.S. 143-215.108, construct or operate an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a site or facility where, at the time of the construction, there is no other air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device for which a permit is required

under G.S. 143-215.108. A person may, however, undertake the following activities prior to obtaining a permit if the person complies with the requirements of this section:

- (1) Clearing and grading.
- (2) Construction of access roads, driveways, and parking lots.
- (3) Construction and installation of underground pipe work, including water, sewer, electric, and telecommunications utilities.
- (4) Construction of ancillary structures, including fences and office buildings, that are not a necessary component of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device for which a permit is required under G.S. 143-215.108.

(b) Permitted Facilities. – A person who holds a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 may apply to the Commission for a modification of the permit to allow the person to alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device in a manner that alters the emission of air contaminants. The permittee may not operate the altered, expanded, or additional air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device in a manner that alters the emission of any air contaminant without obtaining a permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108. A permittee may, however, alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a facility permitted under G.S. 143-215.108 if the permittee complies with the requirements of this section. At least 15 days prior to commencing alteration or expansion under this subsection, the permittee shall give notice by publication and shall submit to the Commission a notice of the permittee's intent to alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device. Notice by publication shall be in a newspaper having general circulation in the county or counties where the facility is to be located; shall be at the permittee's own expense; shall include a statement that written comment may be submitted to the Commission, that the Commission will consider any comment that it receives, and the Commission's address for submission of written comment; and shall include all the information required by subdivisions (1) through (6) of this subsection. The permittee shall submit a proof of publication of the notice to the Commission within 15 days of the date of publication. The notice of intent to the Commission shall include all of the following:

- (1) The name and location of the facility and the name and address of the permittee.
- (2) The permit number of each permit issued under G.S. 143-215.108 for the facility.
- (3) The nature of the air contaminant sources and equipment associated with the proposed modification of the permit.
- (4) An estimate of total regulated air contaminant emissions associated with the proposed modification of the permit.
- (5) The air cleaning devices that are to be employed to address each of the air contaminant sources associated with the modification of the permit.
- (6) The schedule for alteration or expansion of the facility associated with the proposed modification of the permit.
- (7) An acknowledgment by the permittee that the air contaminant sources, equipment, and associated air cleaning devices may not be operated in a manner that alters the emission of any air contaminant until the permittee has obtained a modified permit under G.S. 143-215.108.

- (8) An acknowledgment by the permittee that any alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device prior to the modification of a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 is undertaken at the permittee's own risk and with the knowledge that the permittee may be denied a modification of the permit under G.S. 143-215.108 without regard to the permittee's financial investment or alteration or expansion of the facility.
 - (9) A certification under oath that all of the information contained in the notice of intent is complete and accurate to the best of the permittee's knowledge and ability, executed by the permittee or, if the permittee is a corporation, by the appropriate officers of the corporation.
- (c) Review and Determination by the Commission. –
- (1) Upon receipt of a complete notice of intent required under subsection (b) of this section, the Commission shall determine whether:
 - a. The permittee is and has been in substantial compliance with other permits issued the permittee.
 - b. The facility will be altered or expanded so that it will be used for either the same or a similar use as the use already permitted.
 - c. The alteration or expansion will not result in a disproportionate increase in the size of the facility already permitted.
 - d. The alteration or expansion will result in the same or substantially similar emissions as that of the facility already permitted.
 - e. The alteration or expansion will not have a significant effect on air quality.
 - f. The Commission is likely to issue the permit modification.
 - (2) Within 15 days after the Commission receives a complete notice of intent required under subsection (b) of this section, the Commission shall notify the permittee of its determination as to whether each of the conditions set out in subdivision (1) of this subsection has or has not been met. If the Commission finds that all of the conditions have been met, the notice shall state that the alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device may begin. If the Commission finds that one or more of the conditions has not been met, the notice shall state that the alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device may not begin.

(d) Order to Cease Construction, Alteration, or Expansion. – If at any time during the construction, alteration, or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device, the Commission determines that the permittee will not qualify for a permit or permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108, the Commission may order that the construction, alteration, or expansion cease until the Commission makes a decision on the application for a permit or permit modification. If the Commission orders that construction, alteration, or expansion cease, then construction, alteration, or expansion may resume only if the Commission either makes a subsequent determination that the circumstances that resulted in the order to cease construction, alteration, or expansion have been adequately

addressed or if the Commission issues a permit or permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108 that authorizes construction, alteration, or expansion to resume.

(e) Evaluation of Permit Applications; Administrative and Judicial Review of Permit Decisions. – The Commission shall evaluate an application for a permit or permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108 and make its decision on the same basis as if the construction, alteration, or expansion allowed under this section had not occurred. The Commission shall consider any written comment that it receives in response to a notice by publication given pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. No evidence regarding any contract entered into, financial investment made, construction, alteration, or expansion undertaken, or economic loss incurred by any person or permittee who proceeds under this section without first obtaining a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 is admissible in any contested case or judicial proceeding involving any permit required under G.S. 143-215.108. No evidence as to any determination or order by the Commission pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section shall be admissible in any contested case or judicial proceeding related to any permit required under G.S. 143-215.108.

(f) State, Commission, and Employees Not Liable. – Every person, permittee, and owner of a facility who proceeds under this section shall hold the State, the Commission, and the officials, agents, and employees of the State and the Commission harmless and not liable for any loss resulting from any contract entered into, financial investment made, construction, alteration, or expansion undertaken, or economic loss incurred by any person, permittee, or owner of any facility pursuant to this section.

(g) Local Zoning Ordinances Not Affected. – This section shall not be construed to affect the validity of any lawfully adopted franchise, local zoning, subdivision, or land-use planning ordinance or to affect the responsibility of any person to comply with any lawfully adopted franchise, local zoning, subdivision, or land-use planning ordinance.

(h) Compliance With Other State Laws Not Affected. – This section does not relieve any person of the obligation to comply with any other requirement of State law, including any requirement to obtain any other permit or approval prior to undertaking any activity associated with preparation of the site or the alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a facility for which a permit is required under G.S. 143-215.108.

(i) Federal Air Quality Programs Not Affected. – This section does not relieve any person from any preconstruction or construction prohibition imposed by any federal requirement, federal delegation, federally approved requirement in any State Implementation Plan, or federally approved requirement under the Title V permitting program, as determined solely by the Commission or by a local air pollution control program certified by the Commission as provided in G.S. 143-215.112. This section does not apply to any construction, alteration, or expansion that is subject to requirements for prevention of significant deterioration or federal nonattainment new source review, as determined solely by the Commission or by a local air pollution control program certified by the Commission as provided in G.S. 143-215.112. This section does not apply if it is inconsistent with any federal requirement, federal delegation, federally approved requirement in any State Implementation Plan, or federally approved requirement under the Title V permitting program, as determined solely by the Commission or by a local air pollution control program certified by the Commission as provided in G.S. 143-215.112.

(j) Fee. – A permittee who submits a notice of intent under subsection (b) of this section shall pay a fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for each notice of intent submitted to cover a

portion of the administrative costs of implementing this section. (2003-428, s. 3; 2023-134, s. 12.11(e)-(g).)

§ 143-215.108A. (Effective once contingency met – see note) Control of sources of air pollution; construction of new facilities; alteration or expansion of existing facilities.

(a) **New Facilities.** – Except as provided in subsection (b1) of this section, a person may not, without obtaining a permit under G.S. 143-215.108, construct or operate an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a site or facility where, at the time of the construction, there is no other air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device for which a permit is required under G.S. 143-215.108.

(b) **Permitted Facilities.** – A person who holds a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 may apply to the Commission for a modification of the permit to allow the person to alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device in a manner that alters the emission of air contaminants. Except as provided in subsection (b1) of this section, the permittee may not operate the altered, expanded, or additional air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device in a manner that alters the emission of any air contaminant without obtaining a permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108. A permittee may, however, alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a facility permitted under G.S. 143-215.108 if the permittee complies with the requirements of this section. At least 15 days prior to commencing alteration or expansion under this subsection, the permittee shall give notice by publication and shall submit to the Commission a notice of the permittee's intent to alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device. Notice by publication shall be in a newspaper having general circulation in the county or counties where the facility is to be located; shall be at the permittee's own expense; shall include a statement that written comment may be submitted to the Commission, that the Commission will consider any comment that it receives, and the Commission's address for submission of written comment; and shall include all the information required by subdivisions (1) through (6) of this subsection. The permittee shall submit a proof of publication of the notice to the Commission within 15 days of the date of publication. The notice of intent to the Commission shall include all of the following:

- (1) The name and location of the facility and the name and address of the permittee.
- (2) The permit number of each permit issued under G.S. 143-215.108 for the facility.
- (3) The nature of the air contaminant sources and equipment associated with the proposed modification of the permit.
- (4) An estimate of total regulated air contaminant emissions associated with the proposed modification of the permit.
- (5) The air cleaning devices that are to be employed to address each of the air contaminant sources associated with the modification of the permit.
- (6) The schedule for alteration or expansion of the facility associated with the proposed modification of the permit.
- (7) An acknowledgment by the permittee that the air contaminant sources, equipment, and associated air cleaning devices may not be operated in a manner

that alters the emission of any air contaminant until the permittee has obtained a modified permit under G.S. 143-215.108.

- (8) An acknowledgment by the permittee that any alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device prior to the modification of a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 is undertaken at the permittee's own risk and with the knowledge that the permittee may be denied a modification of the permit under G.S. 143-215.108 without regard to the permittee's financial investment or alteration or expansion of the facility.
- (9) A certification under oath that all of the information contained in the notice of intent is complete and accurate to the best of the permittee's knowledge and ability, executed by the permittee or, if the permittee is a corporation, by the appropriate officers of the corporation.

(b1) A person who (i) has filed an application under this Article to construct or operate an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a site or facility or (ii) holds a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 and who has applied to the Commission for a modification of the permit to allow the person to alter or expand the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device in a manner that alters the emission of air contaminants may undertake the following activities prior to obtaining a permit if the person complies with the requirements of this section:

- (1) Clearing and grading.
- (2) Construction of access roads, driveways, and parking lots.
- (3) Construction and installation of underground pipe work, including water, sewer, electric, and telecommunications utilities.
- (4) Construction of ancillary structures, including fences and office buildings, that are not a necessary component of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device for which a permit is required under G.S. 143-215.108.
- (5) Upon determination that an application for a permit or permit modification is administratively complete, the construction (but not operation) of a new air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning or emissions control devices prior to permit issuance. The exception in this subdivision applies only to an application for the addition or modification of an emissions source that is not subject to (i) permit limits set pursuant to programs for the prevention of significant deterioration and for the attainment of air quality standards in nonattainment areas under G.S. 143-215.107(a)(7), (ii) a residual risk-based hazardous air pollutant standard under 42 U.S.C. § 7412(f), as amended, or (iii) a case-by-case maximum achievable control technology (MACT) permit requirement issued by the Department pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 7412(j), as amended. The undertaking of pre permitting activities under this subdivision shall not entitle the permit or permit modification applicant to operate any air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning or emissions control devices prior to permit issuance.

(c) Review and Determination by the Commission. –

- (1) Upon receipt of a complete notice of intent required under subsection (b) of this section, the Commission shall determine whether:

- a. The permittee is and has been in substantial compliance with other permits issued the permittee.
 - b. The facility will be altered or expanded so that it will be used for either the same or a similar use as the use already permitted.
 - c. The alteration or expansion will not result in a disproportionate increase in the size of the facility already permitted.
 - d. The alteration or expansion will result in the same or substantially similar emissions as that of the facility already permitted.
 - e. The alteration or expansion will not have a significant effect on air quality.
 - f. The Commission is likely to issue the permit modification.
- (2) Within 15 days after the Commission receives a complete notice of intent required under subsection (b) of this section, the Commission shall notify the permittee of its determination as to whether each of the conditions set out in subdivision (1) of this subsection has or has not been met. If the Commission finds that all of the conditions have been met, the notice shall state that the alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device may begin. If the Commission finds that one or more of the conditions has not been met, the notice shall state that the alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device may not begin.

(d) Order to Cease Construction, Alteration, or Expansion. – If at any time during the construction, alteration, or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device, the Commission determines that the permittee will not qualify for a permit or permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108, the Commission may order that the construction, alteration, or expansion cease until the Commission makes a decision on the application for a permit or permit modification. If the Commission orders that construction, alteration, or expansion cease, then construction, alteration, or expansion may resume only if the Commission either makes a subsequent determination that the circumstances that resulted in the order to cease construction, alteration, or expansion have been adequately addressed or if the Commission issues a permit or permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108 that authorizes construction, alteration, or expansion to resume.

(e) Evaluation of Permit Applications; Administrative and Judicial Review of Permit Decisions. – The Commission shall evaluate an application for a permit or permit modification under G.S. 143-215.108 and make its decision on the same basis as if the construction, alteration, or expansion allowed under this section had not occurred. The Commission shall consider any written comment that it receives in response to a notice by publication given pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. No evidence regarding any contract entered into, financial investment made, construction, alteration, or expansion undertaken, or economic loss incurred by any person or permittee who proceeds under this section without first obtaining a permit under G.S. 143-215.108 is admissible in any contested case or judicial proceeding involving any permit required under G.S. 143-215.108. No evidence as to any determination or order by the Commission pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section shall be admissible in any contested case or judicial proceeding related to any permit required under G.S. 143-215.108.

(f) State, Commission, and Employees Not Liable. – Every person, permittee, and owner of a facility who proceeds under this section shall hold the State, the Commission, and the officials, agents, and employees of the State and the Commission harmless and not liable for any loss resulting from any contract entered into, financial investment made, construction, alteration, or expansion undertaken, or economic loss incurred by any person, permittee, or owner of any facility pursuant to this section.

(g) Local Zoning Ordinances Not Affected. – This section shall not be construed to affect the validity of any lawfully adopted franchise, local zoning, subdivision, or land-use planning ordinance or to affect the responsibility of any person to comply with any lawfully adopted franchise, local zoning, subdivision, or land-use planning ordinance.

(h) Compliance With Other State Laws Not Affected. – This section does not relieve any person of the obligation to comply with any other requirement of State law, including any requirement to obtain any other permit or approval prior to undertaking any activity associated with preparation of the site or the alteration or expansion of the physical arrangement or operation of an air contaminant source, equipment, or associated air cleaning device at a facility for which a permit is required under G.S. 143-215.108.

(i) Federal Air Quality Programs Not Affected. – This section does not relieve any person from any preconstruction or construction prohibition imposed by any federal requirement, federal delegation, federally approved requirement in any State Implementation Plan, or federally approved requirement under the Title V permitting program, as determined solely by the Commission or by a local air pollution control program certified by the Commission as provided in G.S. 143-215.112. This section does not apply to any construction, alteration, or expansion that is subject to requirements for prevention of significant deterioration or federal nonattainment new source review, as determined solely by the Commission or by a local air pollution control program certified by the Commission as provided in G.S. 143-215.112. This section does not apply if it is inconsistent with any federal requirement, federal delegation, federally approved requirement in any State Implementation Plan, or federally approved requirement under the Title V permitting program, as determined solely by the Commission or by a local air pollution control program certified by the Commission as provided in G.S. 143-215.112.

(j) Fee. – A permittee who submits a notice of intent under subsection (b) of this section shall pay a fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for each notice of intent submitted to cover a portion of the administrative costs of implementing this section. (2003-428, s. 3; 2023-134, s. 12.11(e)-(g); 2024-1, s. 4.13(a).)

§ 143-215.109. Control of complex sources.

(a) The Commission may by rule establish criteria for controlling the effects of complex sources on air quality. The rules shall set forth such basic minimum criteria or standards under which the Commission shall approve or disapprove any such construction or modification. The rules shall further provide for the submission of plans, specifications and such other information as may be necessary for the review and evaluation of proposed or modified complex sources.

(b) If the Commission shall determine that the construction or modification of any complex sources will result in a violation of ambient air quality standards or interfere with the attainment of such standards in any area where an air pollution abatement control program has been established, the Commission shall have authority to disapprove such construction or modification or to approve such construction or modification under such conditions as the Commission shall deem necessary or appropriate.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 827, s. 207. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; 1987, c. 827, ss. 154, 207; 2013-413, s. 27.)

§ 143-215.110. Special orders.

(a) Issuance. – The Commission is hereby empowered, after the effective date of standards and classifications adopted pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107, to issue (and from time to time to modify or revoke) a special order or other appropriate instrument, to any person whom it finds responsible for causing or contributing to any pollution of the air within the area for which standards have been established. Such an order or instrument may direct such person to take or refrain from taking such action, or to achieve such results, within a period of time specified by such special order, as the Commission deems necessary and feasible in order to alleviate or eliminate such pollution. The Commission is authorized to enter into consent special orders, assurances of voluntary compliance or other similar documents by agreement with the person responsible for pollution of the air, subject to the provisions of subsection (a1) of this section regarding proposed orders, and such consent order, when entered into by the Commission after public review, shall have the same force and effect as a special order of the Commission issued pursuant to hearing.

(a1) Public Notice and Review of Consent Orders.

- (1) The Commission shall give notice of a proposed consent order to the proper State, interstate, and federal agencies, to interested persons, and to the public. The Commission may also provide any other data it considers appropriate to those notified. The Commission shall prescribe the form and content of the notice. The notice shall be given at least 30 days prior to any final action regarding the consent order. Public notice shall be given by publication of the notice for 30 days on the regulatory agency Web site.
- (2) Any person who desires a public meeting on any proposed consent order may request one in writing to the Commission within 30 days following date of the notice of the proposed consent order. The Commission shall consider all such requests for meetings. If the Commission determines that there is significant public interest in holding a meeting, the Commission shall schedule a meeting and shall give notice of such meeting at least 30 days in advance to all persons to whom notice of the proposed consent order was given and to any other person requesting notice. At least 30 days prior to the date of meeting, the Commission shall also have a copy of the notice of the meeting published for 30 days on the regulatory agency Web site. The Commission shall prescribe the form and content of notices under this subsection.
- (3) The Commission shall prescribe the procedures to be followed in such meetings. If the meeting is not conducted by the Commission, detailed minutes of the meeting shall be kept and shall be submitted, along with any other written comment, exhibits or other documents presented at the meeting, to the Commission for its consideration prior to final action granting or denying the consent order.
- (4) The Commission shall take final action on a proposed consent not later than 60 days following notice of the proposed consent order or, if a public meeting is held, within 90 days following such meeting.

(b) Procedure to Contest Certain Orders. – A special order that is issued without the consent of the person affected may be contested by that person by filing a petition for a contested

case under G.S. 150B-23 within 30 days after the order is issued. If the person affected does not file a petition within the required time, the order is final and is not subject to review.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 827, s. 208.

(d) Effect of Compliance. – Any person who installs an air-cleaning device for purpose of alleviating or eliminating air pollution in compliance with the terms of, or as result of the conditions specified in, a permit issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.108, or a special order, consent special order, assurance of voluntary compliance or similar document issued pursuant to this section, or a final decision of the Commission or a court, rendered pursuant to either of said sections, shall not be required to take or refrain from any further action nor be required to achieve any further results under the terms of this or any other State law relating to the control of air pollution, for a period to be fixed by the Commission or court as it shall deem fair and reasonable in the light of all the circumstances after the date such special order, consent special order, assurance of voluntary compliance, other document or decision, or the conditions of such permit become finally effective, if:

- (1) The air-cleaning devices result in the elimination or alleviation of air pollution to the extent required by such permit, special order, consent special order, assurance of voluntary compliance, or other document or decision and complies with any other terms thereof; and
- (2) Such person complies with the terms and conditions of such permit, special order, consent special order, assurance of voluntary compliance, other document or decision within the time limit, if any, specified therein or as the same may be extended, and thereafter remains in compliance.

(e) Compliance Bonds. – A special order or other instrument authorized by this section may provide that a bond or other surety be posted to ensure compliance. In determining the amount of such bond the Commission shall consider the degree and extent of harm which may result if the person to whom the special order is directed fails to comply with the terms of the order, the cost of rectifying such harm, the economic consequences to the person to whom the special order is directed if the special order is issued as compared to the consequences of a denial, suspension, or revocation of the special order or permit, and the person's history of compliance with pollution control requirements, other special orders, history of payment of any penalties which may have been previously assessed by the Commission. In the event of noncompliance with the special order or other instrument, the bond shall be forfeited and the clear proceeds of the bond shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; 1987, c. 827, ss. 154, 208; 1989, c. 133; c. 766, s. 2; 1998-215, s. 72; 2015-286, s. 4.27.)

§ 143-215.111. General powers of Commission; auxiliary powers.

In addition to the specific powers prescribed elsewhere in this Article and the applicable general powers prescribed in G.S. 143-215.3, and for the purpose of carrying out its duties, the Commission shall have the power:

- (1) To make a continuing study of the effects of the emission of air contaminants from motor vehicles on the quality of the outdoor atmosphere of the State and the several areas thereof, and make recommendations to the General Assembly and other appropriate public and private bodies for the control of such air contaminants.
- (2) To consult, upon request, with any person proposing to construct, install, or otherwise acquire an air pollution source or air-cleaning device for the control

of air contaminants concerning the efficacy of such device, or the air problem which may be related to such source, or device; provided, however, that nothing in any such consultation shall be construed to relieve any person from compliance with this Article and Article 21, rules adopted pursuant thereto, or any other provision of law.

- (3) To encourage local units of government to handle air pollution problems within their respective jurisdictions and on a cooperative basis, and to provide such local units technical and consultative assistance to the maximum extent possible.
- (4) To establish procedures providing for public notice, public comment, and public hearings on applications for permits required by Title V to meet the requirements of Title V and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
- (5) To establish procedures providing for notice to the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and affected states of proposals to issue permits required by Title V and allowing affected states the opportunity to submit written comment as required by section 505(a) of Title V (42 U.S.C. § 7661d) and implementing regulations adopted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; 1987, c. 827, ss. 154, 209; 1993, c. 400, s. 9.)

§ 143-215.112. Local air pollution control programs.

(a) The Commission is authorized and directed to review and have general oversight and supervision over all local air pollution control programs and to this end shall review and certify such programs as being adequate to meet the requirements of this Article and Article 21 of this Chapter and any applicable standards and rules adopted pursuant thereto. The Commission shall certify any local program which:

- (1) Provides by ordinance or local law for requirements compatible with those imposed by the provisions of this Article and Article 21 of this Chapter, and the standards and rules issued pursuant thereto; provided, however, the Commission upon request of a municipality or other local unit may grant special permission for the governing body of such unit to adopt a particular class of air contaminant regulations which would result in more effective air pollution control than applicable standards or rules promulgated by the Commission;
- (2) Provides for the adequate enforcement of such requirements by appropriate administrative and judicial process;
- (3) Provides for an adequate administrative organization, staff, financial and other resources necessary to effectively and efficiently carry out its programs; and
- (4) Is approved by the Commission as adequate to meet the requirements of this Article and any applicable rules pursuant thereto.

(b) No municipality, county, local board or commission or group of municipalities and counties may establish and administer an air pollution control program unless such program meets the requirements of this section and is so certified by the Commission.

- (c) (1) The governing body of any county, municipality, or group of counties and municipalities within a designated area of the State, as defined in this Article

and Article 21, subject to the approval of the Commission, is hereby authorized to establish, administer, and enforce a local air pollution control program for the county, municipality, or designated area of the State which includes but is not limited to:

- a. Development of a comprehensive plan for the control and abatement of new and existing sources of air pollution;
 - b. Air quality monitoring to determine existing air quality and to define problem areas, as well as to provide background data to show the effectiveness of a pollution abatement program;
 - c. An emissions inventory to identify specific sources of air contamination and the contaminants emitted, together with the quantity of material discharged into the outdoor atmosphere;
 - d. Adoption, after notice and public hearing, of air quality and emission control standards, or adoption by reference, without public hearing, of any applicable rules and standards duly adopted by the Commission; and administration of such rules and standards in accordance with provisions of this section.
 - e. Provisions for the establishment or approval of time schedules for the control or abatement of existing sources of air pollution and for the review of plans and specifications and issuance of approval documents covering the construction and operation of pollution abatement facilities at existing or new sources;
 - f. Provision for adequate administrative staff, including an air pollution control officer and technical personnel, and provision for laboratory and other necessary facilities.
- (2) Subject to the approval of the Commission as provided in this Article and Article 21, the governing body of any county or municipality may establish, administer, and enforce an air pollution control program by any of the following methods:
- a. Establishing a program under the administration of the duly elected governing body of the county or municipality.
 - b. Appointing an air pollution control board consisting of not less than five nor more than seven members who shall serve for terms of six years each and until their successors are appointed and qualified. Two members shall be appointed for two-year terms, two shall be appointed for four-year terms, and the remaining member or members shall be appointed for six-year terms. Where the term "governing body" is referred to in this section, it shall include the air pollution control board. Such board shall have all the powers and authorities granted to any local air pollution control program. The board shall elect a chairman and shall meet at least quarterly or upon the call of the chairman or any two members of the board.
 - c. Appointing an air pollution control board as provided in this subdivision, and by appropriate written agreement designating the local health department or other department of county or municipal

government as the administrative agent for the air pollution control board.

- d. Designating, by appropriate written agreement, the local board of health and the local health department as the air pollution control board and agency.
- (2a) Any board or body which approves permits or enforcement orders shall have at least a majority of members who represent the public interest and do not derive any significant portion of their income from persons subject to permits or enforcement orders under the Clean Air Act and any potential conflicts of interest by members of such board or body or the head of an executive agency with similar powers shall be adequately disclosed.
 - (3) If the Commission finds that the location, character or extent of particular concentrations of population, air contaminant sources, the geographic, topographic or meteorological considerations, or any combinations thereof, are such as to make impracticable the maintenance of appropriate levels of air quality without an area-wide air pollution control program, the Commission may determine the boundaries within which such program is necessary and require such area-wide program as the only acceptable alternative to direct State administration. Subject to the provisions of this section, each governing body of a county or municipality is hereby authorized and empowered to establish by contract, joint resolution, or other agreement with any other governing body of a county or municipality, upon approval by the Commission, an air pollution control region containing any part or all of the geographical area within the jurisdiction of those boards or governing bodies which are parties to such agreement, provided the counties involved in the region are contiguous or lie in a continuous boundary and comprise the total area contained in any region designated by the Commission for an area-wide program. The participating parties are authorized to appoint a regional air pollution control board which shall consist of at least five members who shall serve for terms of six years and until their successors are appointed and qualified. Two members shall be appointed for two-year terms, two shall be appointed for four-year terms and the remaining member or members shall be appointed for six-year terms. A participant's representation on the board shall be in relation to its population to the total population of the region based on the latest official United States census with each participant in the region having at least one representative; provided, that where the region is comprised of less than five counties, each participant will be entitled to appoint members in relation to its population to that of the region so as to provide a board of at least five members. Where the term "governing body" is used, it shall include the governing board of a region. The regional board is hereby authorized to exercise any and all of the powers provided in this section. The regional air pollution control board shall elect a chairman and shall meet at least quarterly or upon the call of the chairman or any two members of the board. In lieu of employing its own staff, the regional air pollution control board is authorized, through appropriate written agreement, to designate a local health department as its administrative agent.

- (4) Each governing body is authorized to adopt any ordinances, resolutions, rules or regulations which are necessary to establish and maintain an air pollution control program and to prescribe and enforce air quality and emission control standards, a copy of which must be filed with the Commission and with the clerk of court of any county affected. Provisions may be made therein for the registration of air contaminant sources; for the requirement of a permit to do or carry out specified activities relating to the control of air pollution, including procedures for application, issuance, denial and revocation; for notification of violators or potential violators about requirements or conditions for compliance; for procedures to grant temporary permits or variances from requirements or standards; for the declaration of an emergency when it is found that a generalized condition of air pollution is causing imminent danger to the health or safety of the public and the issuance of an order to the responsible person or persons to reduce or discontinue immediately the emission of air contaminants; for notice and hearing procedures for persons aggrieved by any action or order of any authorized agent; for the establishment of an advisory council and for other administrative arrangements; and for other matters necessary to establish and maintain an air pollution control program.
- (5) No permit required by section 305(e) of Title III (42 U.S.C. § 7429(e)) for a solid waste incineration unit combusting municipal waste shall be issued by a local air pollution control program that is administered by the governing body of a unit of local government that is responsible, in whole or in part, for the design, construction, or operation of the unit.
- (6) No local air pollution control program may limit or otherwise regulate any combustion heater, appliance, or fireplace in private dwellings. For purposes of this subdivision, "combustion heater, appliance, or fireplace" means any heater, appliance, or fireplace that burns combustion fuels, including, but not limited to, natural or liquefied petroleum gas, fuel oil, kerosene, wood, or coal, for heating, cooking, drying, or decorative purposes.
- (d) (1) Violation of any ordinances, resolutions, rules or regulations duly adopted by a governing body are punishable as provided in G.S. 143-215.114B.
- (1a) Each governing body, or its authorized agent, shall have the power to assess civil penalties under G.S. 143-215.114A. Any person assessed shall be notified of the assessment by registered or certified mail, and the notice shall specify the reasons for the assessment. If the person assessed fails to pay the amount of the assessment to the governing body or its authorized agent within 30 days after receipt of notice, or such longer period not to exceed 180 days as the governing body or its authorized agent may specify, the governing body may institute a civil action in the superior court of the county in which the violation occurred, to recover the amount of the assessment. If any action or failure to act for which a penalty may be assessed under this section is continuous, the governing body or its authorized agent may assess a penalty not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per day for so long as the violation continues. In determining the amount of the penalty, the governing body or its authorized agent shall consider the degree and extent of harm caused by the violation, the cost of rectifying the damage, and the amount of money the violator saved by not

having made the necessary expenditures to comply with the appropriate pollution control requirements.

- (2) Each governing body, or its duly authorized agent, may institute a civil action in the superior court, brought in the name of the agency having jurisdiction, for injunctive relief to restrain any violation or immediately threatened violation of such ordinances, orders, rules, or regulations and for such other relief as the court shall deem proper. Neither the institution of the action nor any of the proceedings thereon shall relieve any party to such proceedings from the penalty prescribed by this Article and Article 21 for any violation of same.
- (d1) (1) The governing body responsible for each local air pollution control program shall require that the owner or operator of all air contaminant sources subject to the requirement to obtain a permit under Title V pay an annual fee, or the equivalent over some other period, sufficient to cover costs as provided in section 502(b)(3)(A) of Title V (42 U.S.C. § 7661a(b)(3)(A)) and G.S. 143-215.3(a)(1d). Fees collected pursuant to this subdivision shall be used solely to cover all reasonable direct and indirect costs required to develop and administer the Title V permit program.
- (2) Each governing body is authorized to expend tax funds, nontax funds, or any other funds available to it to finance an air pollution control program and such expenditures are hereby declared to be for a public purpose and a necessary expense.
- (d2) (1) Any final administrative decision rendered in an air pollution control program of such governing body shall be subject to judicial review as provided by Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, and "administrative agency" or "agency" as used therein shall mean and include for this purpose the governing body of any county or municipality, regional air pollution control governing board, and any agency created by them in connection with an air pollution control program.
- (2) A local air pollution control program shall inform a permit applicant as to whether or not the application is complete within the time specified in the rules for action on the application. If a local air pollution program fails to act on an application for a permit required by Title V or this Article within the time periods specified by the Commission under G.S. 143-215.108(d)(2), the failure to act on the application constitutes a final agency decision to deny the permit. A permit applicant, permittee, or other person aggrieved, as defined in G.S. 150B-2, may seek judicial review of a failure to act on the application as provided in G.S. 143-215.5 and Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 150B-51, upon review of a failure to act on an application for a permit required by Title V or this Article, a court may either: (i) affirm the denial of the permit or (ii) remand the application to the local air pollution control program for action upon the application within a specified time.
- (e) (1) If the Commission has reason to believe that a local air pollution control program certified and in force pursuant to the provisions of this section is inadequate to abate or control air pollution in the jurisdiction to which such program relates, or that such program is being administered in a manner

inconsistent with the requirement of this Article, the Commission shall, upon due notice, conduct a hearing on the matter.

- (2) If, after such hearing, the Commission determines that an existing local air pollution control program or one which has been certified by the Commission is inadequate to abate or control air pollution in the municipality, county, or municipalities or counties to which such program relates, or that such program is not accomplishing the purposes of this Article, it shall set forth in its findings the corrective measures necessary for continued certification and shall specify a reasonable period of time, not to exceed one year, in which such measures must be taken if certification is not to be rescinded.
- (3) If the municipality, county, local board or commission or municipalities or counties fail to take such necessary corrective action within the time specified, the Commission shall rescind any certification as may have been issued for such program and shall administer within such municipality, county, or municipalities or counties all of the regulatory provisions of this Article and Article 21. Such air pollution control program shall supersede all municipal, county or local laws, regulations, ordinances and requirements in the affected jurisdiction.
- (4) If the Commission finds that the control of a particular class of air contaminant source because of its complexity or magnitude is beyond the reasonable capability of the local air pollution control authorities or may be more efficiently and economically performed at the State level, it may assume and retain jurisdiction over that class of air contaminant source. Classification pursuant to this subdivision may be either on the basis of the nature of the sources involved or on the basis of their relationship to the size of the communities in which they are located.
- (5) Any municipality or county in which the Commission administers its air pollution control program pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection may, with the approval of the Commission, establish or resume a municipal, county, or local air pollution control program which meets the requirements for certification by the Commission.
- (6) Repealed by Session Laws 1993, c. 400, s. 10.
- (7) Any municipality, county, local board or commission or municipalities or counties or designated area of this State for which a local air pollution control program is established or proposed for establishment may make application for, receive, administer and expend federal grant funds for the control of air pollution or the development and administration of programs related to air pollution control; provided that any such application is first submitted to and approved by the Commission. The Commission shall approve any such application if it is consistent with this Article, Article 21 and other applicable requirements of law.
- (8) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if the Commission determines that an air pollution source or combination of sources is operating in violation of the provisions of this Article and that the appropriate local authorities have not acted to abate such violation, the Commission, upon written notice to the appropriate local governing body, may act on behalf of the State to

require any person causing or contributing to the pollution to cease immediately the emission of air pollutants causing or contributing to the violation or may require such other action as it shall deem necessary. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; c. 1331, s. 3; 1979, c. 545, s. 7; 1987, c. 748, s. 1; c. 827, ss. 1, 154, 210; 1989, c. 135, s. 7; 1993, c. 400, s. 10; 1997-496, s. 6; 2010-180, s. 6; 2014-120, s. 24(f).)

§ 143-215.113: Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 827, s. 211.

§ 143-215.114: Recodified as §§ 143-215.114A through 143-215.114C.

- 4. (a) Recodified as G.S. 143-215.114A by Session Laws 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1045, s.
- 5. (b) Recodified as G.S. 143-215.114B by Session Laws 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1045, s.
- 6. (c) Recodified as G.S. 143-215.114C by Session Laws 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1045, s.

§ 143-215.114A. Enforcement procedures: civil penalties.

(a) A civil penalty of not more than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) may be assessed by the Secretary against any person who:

- (1) Violates any classification, standard or limitation established pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107.
- (2) Is required but fails to apply for or to secure a permit required by G.S. 143-215.108 or who violates or fails to act in accordance with the terms, conditions, or requirements of such permit.
- (3) Violates or fails to act in accordance with the terms, conditions, or requirements of any special order or other appropriate document issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.110.
- (4) Fails to file, submit, or make available, as the case may be, any documents, data or reports required by this Article or Parts 1 or 7 of Article 21 of this Chapter.
- (5) Violates a rule of the Commission or a local governing body implementing this Article or Parts 1 or 7 of Article 21.
- (6) Violates the offenses set out in G.S. 143-215.114B.
- (7) Violates the emissions limitations set out in G.S. 143-215.107D.

(b) If any action or failure to act for which a penalty may be assessed under this section is continuous, the Secretary may assess a penalty not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per day for so long as the violation continues.

(b1) The Secretary may assess a civil penalty of not more than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per day for a violation of the emissions limitations set out in G.S. 143-215.107D as provided in this subsection. If at the end of any calendar year, an investor-owned public utility has violated an emissions limitation set out in G.S. 143-215.107D, the violation shall be considered to be continuous from the day that the collective emissions first exceeded the emissions limitation set out in G.S. 143-215.107D through the end of the calendar year and the Secretary may assess a separate civil penalty for each day.

(c) In determining the amount of the penalty the Secretary shall consider the factors set out in G.S. 143B-282.1(b). The procedures set out in G.S. 143B-282.1 shall apply to civil penalty assessments that are presented to the Commission for final agency decision.

(d) The Secretary shall notify any person assessed a civil penalty of the assessment and the specific reasons therefor by registered or certified mail, or by any means authorized by G.S. 1A-1, Rule 4. Contested case petitions shall be filed within 30 days of receipt of the notice of assessment.

(e) Requests for remission of civil penalties shall be filed with the Secretary. Remission requests shall not be considered unless made within 30 days of receipt of the notice of assessment. Remission requests must be accompanied by a waiver of the right to a contested case hearing pursuant to Chapter 150B and a stipulation of the facts on which the assessment was based. Consistent with the limitations in G.S. 143B-282.1(c) and (d), remission requests may be resolved by the Secretary and the violator. If the Secretary and the violator are unable to resolve the request, the Secretary shall deliver remission requests and his recommended action to the Committee on Civil Penalty Remissions of the Environmental Management Commission appointed pursuant to G.S. 143B-282.1(c).

(f) If any civil penalty has not been paid within 30 days after notice of assessment has been served on the violator, the Secretary shall request the Attorney General to institute a civil action in the Superior Court of any county in which the violator resides or has his or its principal place of business to recover the amount of the assessment, unless the violator contests the assessment as provided in subdivision (4) of this subsection, or requests remission of the assessment in whole or in part as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection. If any civil penalty has not been paid within 30 days after the final agency decision or court order has been served on the violator, the Secretary shall request the Attorney General to institute a civil action in the Superior Court of any county in which the violator resides or has his or its principal place of business to recover the amount of the assessment. Such civil actions must be filed within three years of the date the final agency decision or court order was served on the violator.

(g) Repealed by Session Laws 1996, Second Extra Session c. 18, s. 27.34(f).

(h) The clear proceeds of penalties provided for in this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; c. 1331, s. 3; 1975, c. 19, s. 53; c. 842, ss. 6, 7; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1979, c. 545, ss. 4-6; 1987, c. 748, s. 2; c. 827, ss. 154, 212; 1989, c. 135, s. 8; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1036, s. 8; c. 1045, s. 4; 1991, c. 552, s. 4; c. 725, s. 7; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 890, s. 18; 1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 18, s. 27.34(f); 1997-496, s. 7; 1998-215, s. 73; 2002-4, ss. 4, 5; 2002-165, s. 1.12; 2007-296, s. 1.)

§ 143-215.114B. Enforcement procedures: criminal penalties.

(a) For purposes of this section, the term "person" shall mean, in addition to the definition contained in G.S. 143-212, any responsible corporate or public officer or employee; provided, however, that where a vote of the people is required to effectuate the intent and purpose of this Article by a county, city, town, or other political subdivision of the State, and the vote on the referendum is against the means or machinery for carrying said intent and purpose into effect, then, and only then, this section shall not apply to elected officials or to any responsible appointed officials or employees of such county, city, town, or political subdivision.

(b) No proceeding shall be brought or continued under this section for or on account of a violation by any person who has previously been convicted of a federal violation based upon the same set of facts.

(c) In proving the defendant's possession of actual knowledge, circumstantial evidence may be used, including evidence that the defendant took affirmative steps to shield himself from relevant information. Consistent with the principles of common law, the subjective mental state of defendants may be inferred from their conduct.

(d) For the purposes of the felony provisions of this section, a person's state of mind shall not be found "knowingly and willfully" or "knowingly" if the conduct that is the subject of the prosecution is the result of any of the following occurrences or circumstances:

- (1) A natural disaster or other act of God which could not have been prevented or avoided by the exercise of due care or foresight.
- (2) An act of third parties other than agents, employees, contractors, or subcontractors of the defendant.
- (3) An act done in reliance on the written advice or emergency on-site direction of an employee of the Department. In emergencies, oral advice may be relied upon if written confirmation is delivered to the employee as soon as practicable after receiving and relying on the advice.
- (4) An act causing no significant harm to the environment or risk to the public health, safety, or welfare and done in compliance with other conflicting environmental requirements or other constraints imposed in writing by environmental agencies or officials after written notice is delivered to all relevant agencies that the conflict exists and will cause a violation of the identified standard.
- (5) Violations of permit limitations causing no significant harm to the environment or risk to the public health, safety, or welfare for which no enforcement action or civil penalty could have been imposed under any written civil enforcement guidelines in use by the Department at the time, including but not limited to, guidelines for the pretreatment permit civil penalties. This subdivision shall not be construed to require the Department to develop or use written civil enforcement guidelines.
- (6) Occasional, inadvertent, short-term violations of permit limitations causing no significant harm to the environment or risk to the public health, safety, or welfare. If the violation occurs within 30 days of a prior violation or lasts for more than 24 hours, it is not an occasional, short-term violation.

(e) All general defenses, affirmative defenses, and bars to prosecution that may apply with respect to other criminal offenses under State criminal offenses may apply to prosecutions brought under this section or other criminal statutes that refer to this section and shall be determined by the courts of this State according to the principles of common law as they may be applied in the light of reason and experience. Concepts of justification and excuse applicable under this section may be developed in the light of reason and experience.

(f) Any person who negligently violates any classification, standard or limitation established pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107 or by G.S. 143-215.107D any term, condition, or requirement of a permit issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.108 or of a special order or other appropriate document issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.110 or any rule of the Commission implementing any of the said section, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor which may include a fine not to exceed fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) per day of violation, provided that such fine shall not exceed a cumulative total of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for each period of 30 days during which a violation continues.

(g) Any person who knowingly and willfully violates any classification, standard, or limitation established in the rules of the Commission pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107; the emissions limitations set out in G.S. 143-215.107D; any term, condition, or requirement of a permit issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.108; or of a special order or other appropriate document issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.110, shall be guilty of a Class H felony, which may include a fine not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) per day of violation, provided that this fine shall not exceed a cumulative total of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for each period of 30 days during which a violation continues. For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase "knowingly and willfully" shall mean intentionally and consciously as the courts of this State, according to the principles of common law, interpret the phrase in the light of reason and experience.

(h) (1) Any person who knowingly violates any classification, standard, or limitation established in the rules of the Commission pursuant to G.S. 143-215.107; the emissions limitations set out in G.S. 143-215.107D; any term, condition, or requirement of a permit issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.108; or of a special order or other appropriate document issued pursuant to G.S. 143-215.110 and who knows at that time that he thereby places another person in imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury shall be guilty of a Class C felony, which may include a fine not to exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) per day of violation, provided that this fine shall not exceed a cumulative total of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for each period of 30 days during which a violation continues.

(2) For the purposes of this subsection, a person's state of mind is knowing with respect to:

- a. His conduct, if he is aware of the nature of his conduct;
- b. An existing circumstance, if he is aware or believes that the circumstance exists; or
- c. A result of his conduct, if he is aware or believes that his conduct is substantially certain to cause danger of death or serious bodily injury.

(3) Under this subsection, in determining whether a defendant who is a natural person knew that his conduct placed another person in imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury:

- a. The person is responsible only for actual awareness or actual belief that he possessed; and
- b. Knowledge possessed by a person other than the defendant but not by the defendant himself may not be attributed to the defendant.

(4) It is an affirmative defense to a prosecution under this subsection that the conduct charged was conduct consented to by the person endangered and that the danger and conduct charged were reasonably foreseeable hazards of an occupation, a business, or a profession; or of medical treatment or medical or scientific experimentation conducted by professionally approved methods and such other person had been made aware of the risks involved prior to giving consent. The defendant may establish an affirmative defense under this subdivision by a preponderance of the evidence.

(i) Any person who knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or certification in any application, record, report, plan, or other document filed or required to be maintained under this Article or Article 21, or a rule implementing this Article or Article 21; or who knowingly

makes a false statement of a material fact in a rulemaking or contested case under this Article or Article 21; or who falsifies, tampers with, or knowingly renders inaccurate any recording or monitoring device or method required to be operated or maintained under this Article or Article 21 or rules of the Commission implementing this Article or Article 21, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor which may include a fine not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

(j) Repealed by Session Laws 1993, c. 539, s. 1320. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; c. 1331, s. 3; 1975, c. 19, s. 53; c. 842, ss. 6, 7; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1979, c. 545, ss. 4-6; 1987, c. 748, s. 2; c. 827, ss. 154, 212; 1989, c. 135, s. 8; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1004, s. 49; c. 1045, s. 5; 1993, c. 539, ss. 1026, 1027, 1318, 1319, 1320; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2002-4, ss. 6-8.)

§ 143-215.114C. Enforcement procedures: injunctive relief.

Whenever the Department has reasonable cause to believe that any person has violated or is threatening to violate any of the provisions of this Article or Article 21 of this Chapter or a rule implementing this Article or Article 21 of this Chapter, the Department, either before or after the institution of any other action or proceeding authorized by this Article or Article 21 of this Chapter, may request the Attorney General to institute a civil action in the name of the State upon the relation of the Department for injunctive relief to restrain the violation or threatened violation and for such other and further relief in the premises as the court shall deem proper. The Attorney General may institute such action in the Superior Court of Wake County, or, in his discretion, in the superior court of the county in which the violation occurred or may occur. Upon a determination by the court that the alleged violation of the provisions of this Article or Article 21 of this Chapter or the regulation of the Commission has occurred or is threatened, the court shall grant the relief necessary to prevent or abate the violation or threatened violation. Neither the institution of the action nor any of the proceedings thereon shall relieve any party to such proceedings from any penalty prescribed for violation of this Article or Article 21 of this Chapter. (1973, c. 821, s. 6; c. 1262, s. 23; c. 1331, s. 3; 1975, c. 19, s. 53; c. 842, ss. 6, 7; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1979, c. 545, ss. 4-6; 1987, c. 748, s. 2; c. 827, ss. 154, 212; 1989, c. 135, s. 8; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1045, s. 6.)