THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1450 Session of 2009

INTRODUCED BY DEASY, MUSTIO, VULAKOVICH, MATZIE, BRADFORD, DERMODY, FABRIZIO, FRANKEL, FREEMAN, GEORGE, MAHONEY, MELIO, MURPHY, READSHAW, CASORIO, MARSHALL, D. COSTA AND MURT, MAY 6, 2009

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 29, 2010

AN ACT

Amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, transferring provisions relating to environmental advisory councils; providing for the 3 designation and regulation of geologically hazardous areas throughout this Commonwealth to protect people and limit 5 property damage and the disruption of commerce from the possible dangers associated with land development in areas 7 that are prone to landslides, sinkholes or other geologic 8 hazards; imposing duties and conferring powers on the 9 Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of 10 Conservation and Natural Resources and municipalities; and 11 providing for enforcement and remedies. 12 13 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 14 hereby enacts as follows: 15 Section 1. Subchapter B of Chapter 23 of Title 53 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is repealed: 17 [SUBCHAPTER B 18 ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCILS 19 Sec. 20 2321. Scope of subchapter. 2322. Establishment of environmental advisory council.

- 1 2323. Composition and organization of council.
- 2 2324. Powers and duties of council.
- 3 2325. Records and reports.
- 4 2326. Appropriations for expenses of council.
- 5 2327. Status of existing agencies unaffected.
- 6 2328. Assistance from State Conservation Commission.
- 7 2329. Assistance from Department of Community and Economic
- 8 Development.
- 9 § 2321. Scope of subchapter.
- 10 This subchapter applies to all municipal corporations.
- 11 § 2322. Establishment of environmental advisory council.
- 12 The governing body of any municipal corporation or group of
- 13 two or more municipal corporations may by ordinance establish an
- 14 environmental advisory council to advise other local
- 15 governmental agencies, including, but not limited to, the
- 16 planning commission, park and recreation boards and elected
- 17 officials, on matters dealing with protection, conservation,
- 18 management, promotion and use of natural resources, including
- 19 air, land and water resources, located within its or their
- 20 territorial limits.
- 21 § 2323. Composition and organization of council.
- 22 (a) Composition. -- An environmental advisory council shall be
- 23 composed of no less than three nor more than seven residents of
- 24 the municipal corporation establishing the council, who shall be
- 25 appointed and all vacancies filled by the governing body. Where
- 26 two or more municipal corporations jointly establish an
- 27 environmental advisory council, the members shall be appointed
- 28 in the same manner by each of the respective municipal
- 29 corporations establishing the council, each constituent
- 30 municipal corporation to have equal membership on the joint

- 1 council.
- 2 (b) Term of office. -- Council members shall serve for three
- 3 years except that initial appointments shall be so staggered
- 4 that the terms of approximately one-third of the membership
- 5 shall expire each year, the terms of their successors to be of
- 6 three years each.
- 7 (c) Compensation and expenses. -- Members shall receive no
- 8 compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for the
- 9 expenses actually and necessarily incurred by them in the
- 10 performance of their duties.
- 11 (d) Chairman. -- The appointing authority shall designate the
- 12 chairman of the council except that in joint councils the
- 13 chairman shall be elected by the duly selected members. Whenever
- 14 possible, one member shall also be a member of the municipal
- 15 planning board.
- 16 § 2324. Powers and duties of council.
- 17 (a) General rule. -- An environmental advisory council shall
- 18 have the power to:
- 19 (1) Identify environmental problems and recommend plans
- and programs to the appropriate agencies for the promotion
- 21 and conservation of the natural resources and for the
- 22 protection and improvement of the quality of the environment
- 23 within its territorial limits.
- 24 (2) Make recommendations as to the possible use of open
- land areas of the municipal corporations within its
- 26 territorial limits.
- 27 (3) Promote a community environmental program.
- 28 (4) Keep an index of all open areas, publicly or
- 29 privately owned, including flood-prone areas, swamps and
- other unique natural areas, for the purpose of obtaining

- 1 information on the proper use of those areas.
- 2 (5) Advise the appropriate local government agencies,
- 3 including the planning commission and recreation and park
- 4 board or, if none, the elected governing body or bodies
- 5 within its territorial limits, in the acquisition of both
- 6 real and personal property by gift, purchase, grant, bequest,
- 7 easement, devise or lease, in matters dealing with the
- 8 purposes of this subchapter.
- 9 (b) Limitation.--An environmental advisory council shall not
- 10 exercise any powers or perform any duties which by law are
- 11 conferred or imposed upon a Commonwealth agency.
- 12 § 2325. Records and reports.
- 13 An environmental advisory council shall keep records of its
- 14 meetings and activities and shall make an annual report which
- 15 shall be printed in the annual report of the municipal
- 16 corporation or, if none, otherwise made known and available.
- 17 § 2326. Appropriations for expenses of council.
- 18 The governing body of any municipal corporation establishing
- 19 an environmental advisory council may appropriate funds for the
- 20 expenses incurred by the council. Appropriations may be expended
- 21 for those administrative, clerical, printing and legal services
- 22 as may be required and as shall be within the limit of funds
- 23 appropriated to the council. The whole or any part of any funds
- 24 so appropriated in any year may be placed in a conservation fund
- 25 and allowed to accumulate from year to year or may be expended
- 26 in any year.
- 27 § 2327. Status of existing agencies unaffected.
- This subchapter shall not be construed to require a municipal
- 29 corporation to abolish an existing commission with a related
- 30 responsibility or to prevent its establishment.

- 1 § 2328. Assistance from State Conservation Commission.
- 2 The State Conservation Commission shall establish a program
- 3 of assistance to environmental advisory councils that may
- 4 include educational services, exchange of information,
- 5 assignment of technical personnel for natural resources planning
- 6 assistance and the coordination of State and local conservation
- 7 activities.
- 8 § 2329. Assistance from Department of Community and Economic
- 9 Development.
- 10 The Department of Community and Economic Development shall
- 11 establish a program of assistance to environmental advisory
- 12 councils in planning for the management, use and development of
- 13 open space and recreation areas.]
- 14 Section 2. Title 53 is amended by adding a part to read:
- 15 PART VI
- 16 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS
- 17 Subpart
- 18 A. Environmental Planning
- 19 B. Special Considerations
- 20 SUBPART A
- 21 <u>ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING</u>
- 22 <u>Chapter</u>
- 23 71. Environmental Advisory Councils
- 24 CHAPTER 71
- 25 ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCILS
- 26 Sec.
- 27 7101. Scope of chapter.
- 28 7102. Establishment of environmental advisory council.
- 29 7103. Composition and organization of council.
- 30 7104. Powers and duties of council.

- 1 7105. Records and reports.
- 2 7106. Appropriations for expenses of council.
- 3 7107. Status of existing agencies unaffected.
- 4 7108. Assistance from State Conservation Commission.
- 5 7109. Assistance from Department of Community and Economic
- 6 <u>Development.</u>
- 7 § 7101. Scope of chapter.
- 8 This chapter applies to all municipal corporations.
- 9 § 7102. Establishment of environmental advisory council.
- 10 The governing body of any municipal corporation or group of
- 11 two or more municipal corporations may by ordinance establish an
- 12 <u>environmental advisory council to advise other local</u>
- 13 governmental agencies, including, but not limited to, the
- 14 planning commission, park and recreation boards and elected
- 15 officials, on matters dealing with protection, conservation,
- 16 management, promotion and use of natural resources, including
- 17 air, land and water resources, located within its or their
- 18 territorial limits.
- 19 § 7103. Composition and organization of council.
- 20 (a) Composition. -- An environmental advisory council shall be
- 21 composed of not less than three nor more than seven residents of
- 22 the municipal corporation establishing the council who shall be
- 23 appointed and all vacancies filled by the governing body. Where
- 24 two or more municipal corporations jointly establish an
- 25 <u>environmental advisory council, the members shall be appointed</u>
- 26 in the same manner by each of the respective municipal
- 27 <u>corporations establishing the council, each constituent</u>
- 28 municipal corporation shall have equal membership on the joint
- 29 council.
- 30 (b) Term of office. -- Council members shall serve for three

- 1 years except that initial appointments shall be so staggered
- 2 that the terms of approximately one-third of the membership
- 3 shall expire each year, the terms of their successors shall be
- 4 three years each.
- 5 (c) Compensation and expenses. -- Members shall receive no
- 6 compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for the
- 7 <u>expenses actually and necessarily incurred by them in the</u>
- 8 performance of their duties.
- 9 (d) Chairman. -- The appointing authority shall designate the
- 10 chairman of the council, except that in joint councils, the
- 11 <u>chairman shall be elected by the duly selected members. Whenever</u>
- 12 possible, one member shall also be a member of the municipal
- 13 planning board.
- 14 § 7104. Powers and duties of council.
- 15 (a) General rule. -- An environmental advisory council shall
- 16 <u>have the power to:</u>
- 17 (1) Identify environmental problems and recommend plans
- and programs to the appropriate agencies for the promotion
- 19 and conservation of the natural resources and for the
- 20 protection and improvement of the quality of the environment
- 21 within its territorial limits.
- 22 (2) Make recommendations as to the possible use of open
- 23 <u>land areas of the municipal corporations within the council's</u>
- 24 territorial limits.
- 25 (3) Promote a community environmental program.
- 26 (4) Keep an index of all open areas, publicly or
- 27 <u>privately owned, including flood-prone areas, swamps and</u>
- other unique natural areas, for the purpose of obtaining
- information on the proper use of those areas.
- 30 (5) Advise the appropriate local government agencies,

- 1 <u>including the planning commission and recreation and park</u>
- board or, if none, the elected governing body or bodies
- 3 within the council's territorial limits, in the acquisition
- 4 <u>of both real and personal property by gift, purchase, grant,</u>
- beguest, easement, devise or lease, in matters dealing with
- 6 <u>the purposes of this chapter.</u>
- 7 (b) Limitation. -- An environmental advisory council shall not
- 8 <u>exercise any powers or perform any duties which by law are</u>
- 9 <u>conferred or imposed upon a Commonwealth agency.</u>
- 10 § 7105. Records and reports.
- 11 An environmental advisory council shall keep records of its
- 12 <u>meetings and activities and shall make an annual report which</u>
- 13 shall be printed in the annual report of the municipal
- 14 corporation or, if none, otherwise made known and available.
- 15 § 7106. Appropriations for expenses of council.
- 16 The governing body of any municipal corporation establishing
- 17 an environmental advisory council may appropriate funds for the
- 18 expenses incurred by the council. Appropriations may be expended
- 19 for those administrative, clerical, printing and legal services
- 20 as may be required and as shall be within the limit of funds
- 21 appropriated to the council. The whole or any part of any funds
- 22 so appropriated in any year may be placed in a conservation fund
- 23 and allowed to accumulate from year to year or may be expended
- 24 in any year.
- 25 § 7107. Status of existing agencies unaffected.
- This chapter shall not be construed to require a municipal
- 27 <u>corporation to abolish an existing commission with a related</u>
- 28 responsibility or to prevent its establishment.
- 29 § 7108. Assistance from State Conservation Commission.
- 30 The State Conservation Commission shall establish a program

- 1 of assistance to environmental advisory councils that may
- 2 <u>include educational services</u>, exchange of information,
- 3 assignment of technical personnel for natural resources planning
- 4 <u>assistance and the coordination of State and local conservation</u>
- 5 activities.
- 6 § 7109. Assistance from Department of Community and Economic
- 7 <u>Development.</u>
- 8 The Department of Community and Economic Development shall
- 9 establish a program of assistance to environmental advisory
- 10 councils in planning for the management, use and development of
- 11 open space and recreation areas.
- 12 SUBPART B
- 13 <u>SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u>
- 14 Chapter
- 15 <u>75. Geologically Hazardous Areas</u>
- 16 CHAPTER 75
- 17 GEOLOGICALLY HAZARDOUS AREAS
- 18 <u>Subchapter</u>
- 19 A. Preliminary Provisions
- 20 B. Agency and Municipal Responsibilities
- 21 C. Enforcement and Remedies
- D. Miscellaneous Provisions
- 23 SUBCHAPTER A
- 24 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS
- 25 <u>Sec.</u>
- 26 <u>7501</u>. Short title of chapter.
- 27 7502. Purpose.
- 28 <u>7503. Definitions.</u>
- 29 § 7501. Short title of chapter.
- This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the

- 1 Geologically Hazardous Areas Act.
- 2 § 7502. Purpose.
- 3 The purpose of this chapter is to:
- 4 (1) Protect people and property from the dangers and
- 5 <u>damage associated with earth disturbance activity in</u>
- 6 geologically hazardous areas that may be prone to landslides
- or sinkholes and other hazardous conditions, such as
- 8 <u>hazardous rock and soil slippage, and other soil management</u>
- 9 <u>problems.</u>
- 10 (2) Recognize and minimize the man-made conditions that
- 11 <u>increase the potential for:</u>
- 12 <u>(i) Landslides and other gravity-driven movements of</u>
- 13 <u>susceptible rock and soil.</u>
- 14 (ii) Sinkhole development and related subsidence in
- soluble units.
- 16 <u>(iii) Degradation of surface and groundwater</u>
- 17 resources associated with the alteration of geologic
- 18 conditions.
- 19 (3) Authorize a comprehensive and coordinated program to
- 20 regulate earth disturbance activity in geologically hazardous
- 21 areas using sound land use practices designed to prevent
- damage to and destruction of private and public property and
- 23 structures, to prevent the disruption of commerce and
- 24 preserve and restore the natural ecological systems.
- 25 (4) Encourage administration, management and stewardship
- of geologically hazardous areas consistent with the
- 27 <u>obligation to avoid the unnecessary expenditure of public</u>
- 28 moneys, the Commonwealth's duty as trustee of natural
- 29 <u>resources and the people's constitutional right to the</u>
- 30 preservation of the natural, scenic, aesthetic and historic

- 1 values of the environment.
- 2 § 7503. Definitions.
- 3 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter
- 4 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
- 5 context clearly indicates otherwise:
- 6 <u>"Closed depression." Part of the land surface on a site that</u>
- 7 drains internally, has generally sunk to a variable depth and is
- 8 generally characterized by a downward movement of soil into
- 9 <u>bedrock voids without breaking the ground surface.</u>
- 10 "Department." The Department of Environmental Protection of
- 11 the Commonwealth.
- 12 <u>"Earth disturbance activity." A construction or other human</u>
- 13 <u>activity that disturbs the surface of the land, including, but</u>
- 14 not limited to, land clearing and grubbing, grading,
- 15 <u>excavations</u>, <u>embankments</u>, <u>land development</u>, <u>agricultural plowing</u>
- 16 or tilling cultivation, operation of animal heavy use areas,
- 17 timber harvesting activities, road maintenance activities, oil
- 18 and gas activities, well drilling, mineral or oil extraction and
- 19 the moving, depositing, stockpiling or storing of soil, rock or
- 20 earth materials, PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THE TERM DOES NOT INCLUDE,
- 21 AND THIS ACT DOES NOT REGULATE, ANY SURFACE OR SUBSURFACE
- 22 ACTIVITIES OF ANY PERSON OR LEGAL ENTITY THAT IS REGULATED BY
- 23 THE ACT OF DECEMBER 19, 1984 (P.L.1093, NO.219), KNOWN AS THE
- 24 NONCOAL SURFACE MINING CONSERVATION AND RECLAMATION ACT, THE ACT
- 25 OF MAY 31, 1945 (P.L.1198, NO.418), KNOWN AS THE SURFACE MINING
- 26 CONSERVATION AND RECLAMATION ACT, THE ACT OF APRIL 27, 1966 (1ST
- 27 SP.SESS., P.L.31, NO.1), KNOWN AS THE BITUMINOUS MINE SUBSIDENCE
- 28 AND LAND CONSERVATION ACT, OR THE ACT OF SEPTEMBER 24, 1968
- 29 (P.L.1040, NO.318), KNOWN AS THE COAL REFUSE DISPOSAL CONTROL
- 30 ACT.

- 1 <u>"Geologically hazardous area."</u> An area with geologic
- 2 formations or soil conditions, or both, that under natural
- 3 conditions or when disturbed are documented by a licensed
- 4 professional to be geologically susceptible to cause, or
- 5 <u>historically have caused, a hazardous condition.</u>
- 6 "Hazardous condition." Any condition that may include, but
- 7 <u>not be limited to, a mass earth movement, such as a soil and</u>
- 8 rock slide, acid formation or sinkhole development, that:
- 9 <u>(1) has a negative environmental impact;</u>
- 10 (2) constitutes a danger or potential danger to life,
- 11 <u>health or property; or</u>
- 12 (3) threatens the safety, use or stability of property,
- 13 <u>public ways, structures or utilities.</u>
- 14 "Karst." A type of topography that is formed over limestone,
- 15 <u>dolomite or gypsum by bedrock solution and characterized by</u>
- 16 closed depressions or sinkholes, caves and underground drainage.
- 17 "Licensed professional." A person licensed by the
- 18 Commonwealth in the applicable practice under the act of May 23,
- 19 1945 (P.L.913, No.367), known as the Engineer, Land Surveyor and
- 20 Geologist Registration Law.
- "Sinkhole." A surface feature that is:
- 22 (1) formed in a karst area;
- 23 (2) characterized by a roughly circular hole in the
- 24 ground of variable size and depth; and
- 25 (3) the result of the movement of soil, rocks or similar
- 26 materials down into voids in the limestone bedrock or
- 27 regolith.
- 28 SUBCHAPTER B
- 29 <u>AGENCY AND MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES</u>
- 30 Sec.

1	7511. Duties of Department of Conservation and Natural
2	Resources.
3	7512. Geologic reports.
4	7513. Duties of department.
5	7514. Inspections.
6	7515. Liability.
7	7516. Conditioned approval by municipality.
8	7517. SCOPE.
9	§ 7511. Duties of Department of Conservation and Natural
10	Resources.
11	(a) General rule The Department of Conservation and
12	Natural Resources shall:
13	(1) Develop techniques and criteria for mapping
14	geologically hazardous areas in this Commonwealth.
15	(2) Identify and delineate geologically hazardous areas
16	in this Commonwealth.
17	(3) Analyze:
18	(i) The type and nature of rock and soil susceptible
19	to acid formation, a landslide, a sinkhole or development
20	of karst that may result in a hazardous condition.
21	(ii) Other relevant factors determined by the
22	Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
23	(4) Create an inventory of data developed under this
24	section that is publicly available.
25	(5) Notify the municipalities identified as falling
26	within a geologically hazardous area or having within their
27	boundaries a geologically hazardous area.
28	(b) Report Within two years following enactment of this
29	chapter, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
30	shall report to the General Assembly the information gathered

- 1 under subsection (a), including the mapping of geologically
- 2 hazardous areas of high priority, as defined by the Department
- 3 of Conservation and Natural Resources, and a projected plan to
- 4 continue gathering the information directed by subsection (a).
- 5 (c) Review and update. -- The Department of Conservation and
- 6 Natural Resources shall periodically review and update the
- 7 <u>following</u>, which shall be forwarded to the department:
- 8 (1) The techniques and criteria for mapping geologically
- 9 <u>hazardous areas in this Commonwealth.</u>
- 10 (2) The maps of geologically hazardous areas in this
- 11 Commonwealth.
- 12 <u>(d) Performance of duties.--In performing its duties under</u>
- 13 this section, the Department of Conservation and Natural
- 14 <u>Resources shall:</u>
- 15 (1) Review aerial photographs and maps, soil data and
- 16 geologic information, which may include:
- 17 (i) Data and reports from other departments.
- 18 (ii) Geologic reports under section 7512 (relating
- 19 to geologic reports).
- 20 (2) Perform site visits and studies as necessary.
- 21 (e) Publication of hazardous areas. -- The Department of
- 22 Conservation and Natural Resources shall publish in the
- 23 Pennsylvania Bulletin a list of all municipalities that fall
- 24 within a geologically hazardous area or have geologically
- 25 hazardous areas within their boundaries, as identified and
- 26 delineated under subsection (a) (2). The list shall be published
- 27 at least annually and more often if updated, but at least 30
- 28 days prior to the municipality being officially designated.
- 29 (f) Regulations.--The Department of Conservation and Natural
- 30 Resources may promulgate regulations necessary to implement this

- 1 section.
- 2 § 7512. Geologic reports.
- 3 (a) General rule. -- A person proposing to undertake earth
- 4 <u>disturbance activity within a geologically hazardous area shall</u>
- 5 <u>submit a geologic report, prepared and sealed by a licensed</u>
- 6 professional, to the municipality and department or its
- 7 <u>delegated designee</u>, along with:
- 8 (1) any application to discharge pollutants or storm
- 9 <u>water under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System</u>
- 10 Permit for Discharges Associated with Construction Activities
- or any other authorization relating to earthmoving
- 12 activities;
- 13 (2) a plan to control erosion and sediment required
- 14 <u>under departmental rules and regulations; or</u>
- 15 (3) a plan to manage postconstruction storm water
- required under departmental rules and regulations.
- 17 (b) Additional requirements. -- In addition to the application
- 18 requirements for the items set forth in subsection (a), a
- 19 geologic report under this section must adequately identify the
- 20 proposed courses of action and their sequence, to be taken
- 21 during and after construction to eliminate or reduce the
- 22 occurrence of a hazardous condition as a result of the proposed
- 23 earth disturbance activity.
- 24 (c) Fees.--A person submitting a geologic report under this
- 25 section shall be responsible for all fees involving the
- 26 preparation and review of the report.
- 27 <u>(d) Review.--The department, its delegated designee or a</u>
- 28 municipality may have a geologic report submitted under this
- 29 section reviewed by a licensed professional independent from the
- 30 preparer and sealer of the submitted report.

- 1 (e) Scope. -- This section shall not apply to a municipality
- 2 engaging in road construction and maintenance activities.
- 3 § 7513. Duties of department.
- 4 (a) Approval. -- The department may authorize earth
- 5 <u>disturbance activity in a geologically hazardous area in</u>
- 6 accordance with applicable laws and regulations if the
- 7 <u>department determines that the geologic report under section</u>
- 8 7512 (relating to geologic reports) adequately identifies the
- 9 proposed courses of action to be taken during and after
- 10 construction to eliminate or reduce the occurrence of a
- 11 <u>hazardous condition as a result of the proposed earth</u>
- 12 <u>disturbance activity.</u>
- 13 (b) Disapproval.--The department may refuse to authorize
- 14 <u>earth disturbance activity in a geologically hazardous area if</u>
- 15 the geologic report under section 7512 fails to adequately
- 16 identify proposed courses of action to be taken during and after
- 17 construction to eliminate or reduce the occurrence of a
- 18 hazardous condition as a result of the proposed earth
- 19 disturbance activity.
- 20 (c) Delegation of permit review. -- The department may
- 21 delegate its permit review, enforcement and inspection authority
- 22 under this chapter to a county conservation district.
- 23 (d) Duties.--In issuing orders or permits, and in taking any
- 24 other action under this chapter, the department shall:
- 25 (1) Review and take appropriate action on all permit
- applications submitted under this chapter and issue, modify,
- 27 <u>suspend, limit, renew or revoke permits under this chapter</u>
- 28 and departmental regulations.
- 29 (2) Receive and act upon written complaints.
- 30 (3) Issue orders necessary to implement this chapter or

- 1 departmental regulations.
- 2 (e) Regulations. -- The Environmental Quality Board may
- 3 promulgate regulations necessary to implement this chapter.
- 4 § 7514. Inspections.
- 5 (a) Condition. -- Approval of earth disturbance activity
- 6 within a geologically hazardous area may be conditioned upon the
- 7 granting of permission for an agent or employee of a
- 8 <u>municipality or the department to:</u>
- 9 <u>(1) Enter a property to survey a geologically hazardous</u>
- area or ascertain the location of a structure.
- 11 (2) Enter a property or structure to ascertain
- 12 <u>compliance or noncompliance with this chapter, municipal and</u>
- 13 <u>Commonwealth law, regulation, approval, conditional approval</u>
- or order.
- 15 (b) Inspection warrant. -- If an agent or employee of a
- 16 <u>municipality or the department charged with the enforcement of</u>
- 17 the provisions of this chapter has been improperly refused
- 18 access to the property to survey or inspect as authorized by
- 19 subsection (a) or reasonably requires access to the property
- 20 without prior notice to the owner, the agent or employee of the
- 21 municipality or the department may apply for an inspection
- 22 warrant to any Commonwealth official authorized by law to issue
- 23 a search or inspection warrant to permit the agent or employee
- 24 of the municipality or the department to access and inspect the
- 25 property. In determining whether to issue an inspection warrant,
- 26 sufficient probable cause is that the inspection is necessary to
- 27 properly enforce the provisions of this chapter.
- 28 (c) Grounds.--The department shall promptly inspect earth
- 29 disturbance activity within a geologically hazardous area when
- 30 the municipality presents information to the department that

- 1 gives the department probable cause to believe that there is a
- 2 <u>violation of this chapter, including a violation of regulation,</u>
- 3 <u>approval, conditional approval or order issued under this</u>
- 4 <u>chapter. The department shall notify the municipality of this</u>
- 5 <u>inspection and allow a municipal inspector from the municipality</u>
- 6 to accompany the departmental inspector during the inspection.
- 7 <u>If the department determines that there is insufficient</u>
- 8 <u>information to give the department probable cause to believe</u>
- 9 that a violation is occurring or has occurred, the department
- 10 shall promptly provide a written explanation to the municipality
- 11 of its decision not to inspect.
- 12 <u>§ 7515. Liability.</u>
- 13 (a) General rule. -- Approval, conditional approval or
- 14 <u>issuance of a permit under this chapter does not:</u>
- 15 (1) relieve a person from liability for damage to
- 16 <u>persons or property resulting from the issuance or</u>
- 17 compliance, or as otherwise imposed by law; or
- 18 (2) impose any liability for damages to persons or
- 19 property on the municipality or Commonwealth or its officers,
- 20 employees or agents.
- 21 (b) Costs.--Any person conducting earth disturbance activity
- 22 in violation of this chapter or a regulation or order under this
- 23 chapter is liable for the costs of abatement of any pollution
- 24 and any public nuisance caused by the violation.
- 25 § 7516. Conditioned approval by municipality.
- A municipality may not finally approve a proposal involving
- 27 earth disturbance activity under this chapter unless and until
- 28 the department approves the earth disturbance activity, but a
- 29 <u>municipality may conditionally approve a proposal involving</u>
- 30 earth disturbance activity under this chapter, subject to

- 1 approval or conditional approval by the department.
- 2 § 7517. SCOPE.
- THIS CHAPTER SHALL NOT APPLY TO ANY PERSON OR LEGAL ENTITY
- 4 THAT IS REGULATED BY THE ACT OF DECEMBER 19, 1984 (P.L.1093,
- 5 NO.219), KNOWN AS THE NONCOAL SURFACE MINING CONSERVATION AND
- 6 RECLAMATION ACT, THE ACT OF MAY 31, 1945 (P.L.1198, NO.418),
- 7 KNOWN AS THE SURFACE MINING CONSERVATION AND RECLAMATION ACT,
- 8 THE ACT OF APRIL 27, 1966 (1ST SP.SESS., P.L.31, NO.1), KNOWN AS
- 9 THE BITUMINOUS MINE SUBSIDENCE AND LAND CONSERVATION ACT, OR THE
- 10 ACT OF SEPTEMBER 24, 1968 (P.L.1040, NO.318), KNOWN AS THE COAL
- 11 REFUSE DISPOSAL CONTROL ACT.
- 12 SUBCHAPTER C
- 13 ENFORCEMENT AND REMEDIES
- 14 Sec.
- 15 7521. Enforcement and remedies.
- 16 § 7521. Enforcement and remedies.
- 17 (a) Unlawful conduct.--It is unlawful to:
- 18 (1) Fail to comply with any departmental rule,
- 19 regulation, order, permit or license.
- 20 (2) Violate this chapter or any rule or regulation
- 21 adopted under this chapter.
- 22 (3) Hinder, obstruct, prevent or interfere with the
- 23 department, its personnel or any delegated designee in the
- 24 performance of any duty under this chapter.
- 25 (b) Remedies and enforcement under The Clean Streams Law.--
- 26 Except as provided in subsection (c), for purposes of
- 27 <u>enforcement of this chapter and remedies under this chapter, the</u>
- 28 act of June 22, 1937 (P.L.1987, No.394), known as The Clean
- 29 <u>Streams Law, shall govern.</u>
- 30 (c) Scope. -- Nothing in subsection (b) is intended to broaden

- 1 the scope of persons that must comply with the provisions of
- 2 this chapter.
- 3 (d) Construction. -- An offense that constitutes a violation
- 4 of this chapter and The Clean Streams Law shall not result in
- 5 <u>dual penalties.</u>
- 6 <u>SUBCHAPTER D</u>
- 7 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS
- 8 <u>Sec.</u>
- 9 7531. Administration.
- 10 7532. Effect on other law.
- 11 § 7531. Administration.
- 12 The General Assembly shall appropriate the funds necessary to
- 13 <u>implement this chapter.</u>
- 14 § 7532. Effect on other law.
- Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to
- 16 <u>create additional review powers already regulated by other law.</u>
- 17 Section 3. The addition of 53 Pa.C.S. Ch. 71 is a
- 18 continuation of 53 Pa.C.S. Ch. 23 Subch. B. The provisions of
- 19 this act shall not affect any act done, liability incurred,
- 20 right accrued or vested or any suit or prosecution pending or to
- 21 be instituted under the authority of 53 Pa.C.S. Ch. 23 Subch. B.
- 22 Section 4. This act shall take effect immediately.