

# SENATE BILL 835

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4lr2432  
CF HB 992

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By: **Senator Hester**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2024

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 22, 2024

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Environment – Delegated Authorities – Well and Septic Program Permits**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a local health department or county government with certain  
4 delegated authority to submit, on or before a certain date, a schedule of review times  
5 for certain well and septic program permits to the Department of the Environment  
6 for approval; requiring a local health department or county government to submit  
7 well and septic program permit data to the Department for review at a certain  
8 frequency under certain circumstances; and generally relating to local health  
9 departments or county governments and well and septic program permits.

10 BY adding to

11 Article – Environment

12 Section 9–1114

13 Annotated Code of Maryland

14 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Environment**

18 **9–1114.**

19 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**  
20 **INDICATED.**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1           (2) “DELEGATED AUTHORITY” MEANS A LOCAL HEALTH  
2 DEPARTMENT OR COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO WHICH THE DEPARTMENT HAS  
3 DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER A WELL AND SEPTIC PROGRAM.

4           (3) “WELL AND SEPTIC PROGRAM” MEANS A PROGRAM UNDER WHICH  
5 A DELEGATED AUTHORITY ISSUES PERMITS FOR:

6                   (I) THE INSTALLATION OF ON-SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL  
7 SYSTEMS; AND

8                   (II) THE CONSTRUCTION OF WELLS.

9           (B) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2024, A DELEGATED AUTHORITY SHALL  
10 SUBMIT A SCHEDULE OF REVIEW TIMES FOR WELL AND SEPTIC PROGRAM PERMITS  
11 TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR APPROVAL.

12           (C) BEGINNING 3 MONTHS AFTER THE SCHEDULE SUBMITTED IN  
13 ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION IS APPROVED BY THE  
14 DEPARTMENT, AND EVERY 3 MONTHS THEREAFTER, A DELEGATED AUTHORITY  
15 SHALL SUBMIT WELL AND SEPTIC PROGRAM PERMIT DATA TO THE DEPARTMENT  
16 FOR REVIEW.

17           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

18           (a) (1) The Department of the Environment, in consultation with the  
19 Maryland Association of County Health Officers, the Maryland Conference of Local  
20 Environmental Health Directors, the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland  
21 Association of Counties, and the Department of Information Technology, shall study and  
22 make recommendations on modernizing IT systems to connect local health department  
23 environmental programs, local governments, and the Department of the Environment in  
24 relation to well and septic program permits.

25                   (2) The study shall address:

26                           (i) the backend interoperability of existing systems that allow local  
27 health departments or local governments to share relevant data with the Department of  
28 the Environment;

29                           (ii) the optimal design of a modernized system that includes  
30 front-facing dashboards to enable members of the public and State agencies to track permit  
31 processing status;

32                           (iii) the potential timeline for system modernization;

33                           (iv) the estimated costs of system modernization; and

1 (v) the availability of federal funds to match State investment.

2 (b) (1) On or before December 1, 2024, the Department of the Environment  
3 shall submit an interim report of its findings and any recommendations for legislative or  
4 administrative changes to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State  
5 Government Article, the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment  
6 and the House Health and Government Operations Committee.

7 (2) On or before December 1, 2025, the Department of the Environment  
8 shall submit a final report of its findings and any recommendations for legislative or  
9 administrative changes to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State  
10 Government Article, the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment  
11 and the House Health and Government Operations Committee.

12 SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
13 June 1, 2024.

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.