WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §16-13-23A

§16-13-23a. Additional powers of municipality to cease pollution.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision contained in this article, and in addition thereto, the governing body of any municipality which has received or which hereafter receives an order issued by the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Environmental Quality Board requiring the municipality to cease the pollution of any stream or waters is hereby authorized to establish and maintain, by ordinance, just and equitable rates, fees or charges for the use of the services and facilities of the existing municipal sewer system and/or stormwater system, or for the use of the services and facilities to be rendered upon completion of any works and system necessary by virtue of said order, to be paid by the owner, tenant or occupant of each and every lot or parcel of real estate or building that is connected with and uses any part of such sewer system or stormwater system, or that in any way uses or is served thereby, and may change and readjust such rates, fees or charges from time to time.

(b) The rates, fees or charges shall be sufficient to all the proper and reasonable costs and expenses of the acquisition and construction of plants, machinery and works for the collection, treatment, purification and disposal of sewage or stormwater and the repair, alteration and extension of existing sewer facilities or stormwater facilities, as may be necessary to comply with such order of the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Environmental Quality Board, and for the operation, maintenance and repair of the entire works and system.

(c) The governing body shall create, by ordinance, a sinking fund to accumulate and hold any part or all of the proceeds derived from rates or charges until completion of the construction, to be remitted to and administered by the Municipal Bond Commission by expending and paying the costs and expenses of construction and operation in the manner as provided by said ordinance.

(d) After the completion of the construction, the rates, fees or charges shall be sufficient in each year for the payment of the proper and reasonable costs and expenses of operation, maintenance, repair, replacement and extension, from time to time, of the entire sewer and works or entire stormwater works.

(e) No such rates, fees or charges shall be established until after a public hearing, at which all the potential users of the works and owners of property served or to be served thereby and others shall have had an opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed rates or charges.

(f) After introduction of the ordinance fixing rates, fees or charges, and before the same is finally enacted, notice of such hearing setting forth the proposed schedule of rates, fees or charges shall be given by publication of notice as a Class II-0 legal advertisement in

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compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code. The publication area for such publication is the municipality. The first publication shall be made at least ten days before the date fixed therein for the hearing.

(g) After such hearing, which may be adjourned from time to time, the ordinance establishing the rates, fees or charges, either as originally introduced or as modified and amended, may be passed and put into effect. A copy of the schedule of the rates, fees and charges so established shall be kept on file in the office of the sanitary board having charge of the construction and operation of such works and in the office of the clerk of the municipality. The schedule of rates, fees and charges shall be open to inspection by all parties interested. The rates, fees or charges established for any class of users or property served shall be extended to cover any additional premises thereafter served which fall within the same class, without the necessity of any hearing or notice.

(h) Any change or readjustment of rates, fees or charges may be made in the same manner as rates, fees or charges were originally established as hereinbefore provided: Provided, That if such change or readjustment be made substantially pro rata, as to all classes of service, no hearing or notice is required.

(i) If any rate, fee or charge is not paid within thirty days after it is due, the amount thereof, together with a penalty of ten percent and a reasonable attorney's fee, may be recovered by the sanitary board of the municipality in a civil action in the name of the municipality.

(j) Any municipality exercising the powers given herein has the authority to construct, acquire, improve, equip, operate, repair and maintain any plants, machinery or works necessary to comply with the order of the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Environmental Quality Board and the authority provided herein to establish, maintain and collect rates, fees or charges is an additional and alternative method of financing such works and matters, and is independent of any other provision of this article insofar as the article provides for or requires the issuance of revenue bonds or the imposition of rates, fees and charges in connection with the bonds: Provided, That except for the method of financing such works and matters, the construction, acquisition, improvement, equipment, custody, operation, repair and maintenance of any plants, machinery or works in compliance with an order of the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Environmental Quality Board and the rights, powers and duties of the municipality and the respective officers and departments thereof, including the sanitary board, are governed by the provisions of this article.

(k) The jurisdiction and authority provided by this section does not extend to highways, road and drainage easements and stormwater facilities constructed, owned or operated by the West Virginia Division of Highways and no rates, fees or charges for stormwater services or costs of compliance may be assessed against highways, road and drainage easements and/or stormwater facilities constructed, owned and/or operated by the West Virginia Division of Highways.

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(l) A municipality which has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as an entity to serve a West Virginia Separate Storm Sewer System community, as defined in 40 C.F.R. §122.26, has the authority to enact ordinances or regulations which allow for the issuance of orders, the right to enter properties and the right to impose reasonable fines and penalties regarding correction of violations of municipal stormwater ordinances or regulations within the municipal watershed served by the municipal stormwater system, as long as such rules, regulations, fines or actions are not contrary to any rules or orders of the Public Service Commission.

(m) Notice of a violation of a municipal stormwater ordinance or regulation shall be served in person to the alleged violator or by certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice shall state the nature of the violation, the potential penalty, the action required to correct the violation and the time limit for making the correction. Should a person, after receipt of proper notice, fail to correct the violation of the municipal stormwater ordinance or regulation, the municipality may make or have made the corrections of the violation and bring the party into compliance with the applicable stormwater ordinance or regulation. The municipality may collect the costs of correcting the violation from the person by instituting a civil action, as long as such actions are not contrary to any rules or orders of the Public Service Commission.

(n) A municipality which has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as an entity to serve a West Virginia Separate Storm Sewer System community shall prepare an annual report detailing the collection and expenditure of rates, fees or charges and make it available for public review at the place of business of the governing body and the stormwater utility main office.

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