WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE
SEVENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION, 2008

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
ENROLLED
Senate Bill No. 323

(Senators Bowman and Oliverio, original sponsors)

[Passed March 8, 2008; in effect from passage.]
AN ACT to amend and reenact §8-20-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended; to amend and reenact §16-13-16 and §16-13-23a of said code; and to amend and reenact §16-13A-9 of said code, all relating to the establishment and operation of stormwater systems; authorizing municipalities to set rates, charges and fees for stormwater services; providing that water service may be terminated for nonpayment of stormwater service fees; authorizing municipalities to adopt ordinances or regulations to allow
issue of orders, entry on property, setting fines and penalties for violation of stormwater law; establishing requirements for notice of violations; authorizing municipality to correct violations and collect cost from violator; and providing that the owner, occupant or tenant of real property is deemed to be served by a stormwater system under certain circumstances.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That §8-20-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted; that §16-13-16 and §16-13-23a of said code be amended and reenacted; and that §16-13A-9 of said code be amended and reenacted, all to read as follows:

CHAPTER 8. MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

ARTICLE 20. COMBINED SYSTEMS.

§8-20-10. Power and authority of municipality to enact ordinances and make rules and fix rates, fees or charges; deposit required for new customers; change in rates, fees or charges; failure to cure delinquency; delinquent rates, discontinuance of service; reconnecting deposit; return of deposit; fees or charges as liens; civil action for recovery thereof; deferral of filing fees and costs in magistrate court action; limitations with respect to foreclosure.

(a)(1) The governing body of a municipality availing itself of the provisions of this article shall have plenary power and authority to make, enact and enforce all necessary rules for the repair, maintenance, operation and management of the combined system of the
municipality and for the use thereof. The governing body of a municipality also has the plenary power and authority to make, enact and enforce all necessary rules and ordinances for the care and protection of any such system for the health, comfort and convenience of the public, to provide a clean water supply, to provide properly treated sewage insofar as it is reasonably possible to do and, if applicable, to properly collecting and controlling the stormwater as is reasonably possible to do: Provided, That no municipality may make, enact or enforce any rule, regulation or ordinance regulating any highways, road or drainage easements or storm water facilities constructed, owned or operated by the West Virginia Division of Highways.

(2) A municipality has the plenary power and authority to charge the users for the use and service of a combined system and to establish required deposits, rates, fees or charges for such purpose. Separate deposits, rates, fees or charges may be fixed for the water and sewer services respectively and, if applicable, the stormwater services, or combined rates, fees or for the combined water and sewer services, and, if applicable, the storm water services. Such deposits, rates, fees or charges, whether separate or combined, shall be sufficient at all times to pay the cost of repair, maintenance and operation of the combined system, provide an adequate reserve fund, an adequate depreciation fund and pay the principal and interest upon all revenue bonds issued under this article. Deposits, rates, fees or charges shall be established, revised and maintained by ordinance and become payable as the governing body may determine by ordinance. The rates, fees or charges shall be changed, from time to time, as necessary, consistent with the
provisions of this article.

(3) All new applicants for service shall indicate to the municipality or governing body whether they are an owner or tenant with respect to the service location. An entity providing stormwater service shall provide a tenant a report of the stormwater fee charged for the entire property and, if appropriate, that portion of the fee to be assessed to the tenant.

(4) The municipality or governing body, but only one of them, may collect from all new applicants for service a deposit of one hundred dollars or two twelfths of the average annual usage of the applicant's specific customer class, whichever is greater, to secure the payment of water and sewage service rates, fees and charges in the event they become delinquent as provided in this section. In any case where a deposit is forfeited to pay service rates, fees and charges which were delinquent and the user's service is disconnected or terminated, service may not be reconnected or reinstated by the municipality or governing body until another deposit equal to one hundred dollars or a sum equal to two twelfths of the average usage for the applicant's specific customer class, whichever is greater, is remitted to the municipality or governing body. After twelve months of prompt payment history, the municipality or governing body shall return the deposit to the customer or credit the customer's account with interest at a rate to be set by the Public Service Commission: Provided, That where the customer is a tenant, the municipality governing body is not required to return the deposit until the time the tenant discontinues service with the municipality or governing body. Whenever any rates, fees, rentals or charges for
services or facilities furnished remain unpaid for a period of twenty days after they become due, the user of the services and facilities provided is delinquent and the user is liable at law until all rates, fees and charges are fully paid. The municipality or governing body may terminate water services to a delinquent user of either water or sewage facilities, or both, ten days after the water or sewage services become delinquent regardless of whether the governing body utilizes the security deposit to satisfy any delinquent payments: Provided, That any termination of water service must comply with all rules and orders of the Public Service Commission.

(b) Whenever any rates, fees or charges for services or facilities furnished remain unpaid for a period of twenty days after they become due, the user of the services and facilities provided shall be delinquent and the municipality or governing body may apply any deposit against any delinquent fee. The user is liable until such time as all rates, fees and charges are fully paid.

(c) All rates, fees or charges for water service, sewer service and, if applicable, stormwater service, whenever delinquent, as provided by ordinance of the municipality, shall be liens of equal dignity, rank and priority with the lien on such premises of state, county, school and municipal taxes for the amount thereof upon the real property served. The municipality has the plenary power and authority to enforce such lien in a civil action to recover the money due for services rendered plus court fees and costs and reasonable attorney’s fees: Provided, That an owner of real property may not be held liable for the delinquent rates,
fees or charges for services or facilities of a tenant, nor
shall any lien attach to real property for the reason of
delinquent rates, fees or charges for services or facilities
of a tenant of the real property, unless the owner has
contracted directly with the municipality to purchase
such services or facilities.

(d) Municipalities are hereby granted a deferral of
filing fees or other fees and costs incidental to filing an
action in magistrate court for collection of the
delinquent rates and charges. If the municipality
collects the delinquent account, plus fees and costs,
from its customer or other responsible party, the
municipality shall pay to the magistrate court the filing
fees or other fees and costs which were previously
deferred.

(e) No municipality may foreclose upon the premises
served by it for delinquent rates, fees or charges for
which a lien is authorized by this section except
through a civil action in the circuit court of the county
wherein the municipality lies. In every such action, the
court shall be required to make a finding based upon
the evidence and facts presented that the municipality
has exhausted all other remedies for collection of debts
with respect to such delinquencies prior to bringing the
action. In no event shall foreclosure procedures be
instituted by any municipality or on its behalf unless
the delinquency has been in existence or continued for
a period of two years from the date of the first
delinquency for which foreclosure is being sought.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision contained in
this article, 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 acts are not contrary to any rules or orders of the Public Service Commission.

(g) 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 violation of the municipal stormwater ordinance or regulation, the municipality may correct or have the corrections of the violation made 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.

(h) 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
CHAPTER 16. PUBLIC HEALTH.

ARTICLE 13. SEWAGE WORKS AND STORMWATER WORKS.

§16-13-16. Rates for service; deposit required for new customers; forfeiture of deposit; reconnecting deposit; tenant's deposit; change or readjustment; hearing; lien and recovery; discontinuance of services.

A governing body has the power and duty, by ordinance, to establish and maintain just and equitable rates, fees or charges for the use of and the service rendered by:

(a) Sewerage works, to be paid by the owner of each and every lot, parcel of real estate or building that is connected with and uses such works by or through any part of the sewerage system of the municipality or that in any way uses or is served by such works; and

(b) Stormwater works, to be paid by the owner of each and every lot, parcel of real estate or building that in any way uses or is served by such stormwater works or whose property is improved or protected by the stormwater works or any user of such stormwater works.

(c) The governing body may change and readjust such rates, fees or charges from time to time. However, no rates, fees or charges for stormwater services may be assessed against highways, road and drainage easements or stormwater facilities constructed, owned
or operated by the West Virginia Division of Highways.

(d) All new applicants for service shall indicate to the governing body whether they are an owner or tenant with respect to the service location. An entity providing stormwater service shall provide a tenant a report of the stormwater fee charged for the entire property and, if appropriate, that portion of the fee to be assessed to the tenant.

(e) The governing body may collect from all new applicants for service a deposit of fifty dollars or two twelfths of the average annual usage of the applicant’s specific customer class, whichever is greater, to secure the payment of service rates, fees and charges in the event they become delinquent as provided in this section. In any case where a deposit is forfeited to pay service rates, fees and charges which were delinquent at the time of disconnection or termination of service, service may not be reconnected or reinstated by the governing body until another deposit equal to fifty dollars or a sum equal to two twelfths of the average usage for the applicant’s specific customer class, whichever is greater, is remitted to the governing body. After twelve months of prompt payment history, the governing body shall return the deposit to the customer or credit the customer’s account with interest at a rate as the Public Service Commission may prescribe: Provided, That where the customer is a tenant, the governing body is not required to return the deposit until the time the tenant discontinues service with the governing body. Whenever any rates, fees, rentals or charges for services or facilities furnished remain unpaid for a period of twenty days after they become due, the user of the services and facilities provided is
delinquent. The user is liable until all rates, fees and charges are fully paid. The governing body may, under reasonable rules promulgated by the Public Service Commission, shut off and discontinue water services to a delinquent user of sewer facilities ten days after the sewer services become delinquent regardless of whether the governing body utilizes the security deposit to satisfy any delinquent payments.

(f) Such rates, fees or charges shall be sufficient in each year for the payment of the proper and reasonable expense of operation, repair, replacements and maintenance of the works and for the payment of the sums herein required to be paid into the sinking fund. Revenues collected pursuant to this section shall be considered the revenues of the works.

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

(h) After introduction of the ordinance fixing such 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 as a Class II-0 legal advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code and the publication area for such publication shall be the municipality. The first publication shall be made at least ten days before the date fixed in the notice for the hearing.
(i) After the hearing, which may be adjourned, from time to time, the ordinance establishing rates, fees or charges, either as originally introduced or as modified and amended, shall be passed and put into effect. A copy of the schedule of the rates, fees and charges shall be kept on file in the office of the board having charge of the operation of such works, and also in the office of the clerk of the municipality, and 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.

(j) Any change or readjustment of such rates, fees or charges may be made in the same manner as the rates, fees or charges were originally established as hereinbefore provided: Provided, That if a change or readjustment be made substantially pro rata, as to all classes of service, no hearing or notice shall be required. The aggregate of the rates, fees or charges shall always be sufficient for the expense of operation, repair and maintenance and for the sinking fund payments.

(k) All rates, fees or charges, if not paid when due, shall constitute a lien upon the premises served by such works. If any service rate, fees or charge is not paid within twenty 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 board in a civil action in the name of the municipality. The lien may be foreclosed against such lot, parcel of land or building in accordance with the laws relating thereto. Where both water and sewer services are furnished by any municipality to any premises the schedule of charges
may be billed as a single amount or individually itemized and billed for the aggregate thereof.

(l) Whenever any rates, rentals, fees or charges for services or facilities furnished shall remain unpaid for a period of twenty days after they become due, the property and the owner thereof, as well as the user of the services and facilities shall be delinquent until such time as all rates, fees and charges are fully paid. When any payment for rates, rentals, fees or charges becomes delinquent, the governing body may use the security deposit to satisfy the delinquent payment.

(m) The board collecting the rates, fees or charges shall be obligated under reasonable rules to shut off and discontinue both water and sewer services to all delinquent users of water, sewer or stormwater facilities and shall not restore either water facilities or sewer facilities to any delinquent user of any such facilities until all delinquent rates, fees or charges for water, sewer and stormwater facilities, including reasonable interest and penalty charges, have been paid in full, as long as such actions are not contrary to any rules or orders of the Public Service Commission.

§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
total 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 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, fees 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.

(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.

ARTICLE 13A. PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICTS.

§16-13A-9. Rules; service rates and charges; discontinuance of service; required water and sewer connections; lien for delinquent fees.

(a) (1) The board may make, enact and enforce all needful rules in connection with the acquisition, construction, improvement, extension, management, maintenance, operation, care, protection and the use of any public service properties owned or controlled by the district. The board shall establish rates, fees and charges for the services and facilities it furnishes, which
shall be sufficient at all times, notwithstanding the provisions of any other law or laws, to pay the cost of maintenance, operation and depreciation of the public service properties and principal of and interest on all bonds issued, other obligations incurred under the provisions of this article and all reserve or other payments provided for in the proceedings which authorized the issuance of any bonds under this article.

The schedule of the rates, fees and charges may be based upon:

(A) The consumption of water or gas on premises connected with the facilities, taking into consideration domestic, commercial, industrial and public use of water and gas;

(B) The number and kind of fixtures connected with the facilities located on the various premises;

(C) The number of persons served by the facilities;

(D) Any combination of paragraphs (A), (B) and (C) of this subdivision; or

(E) May be determined on any other basis or classification which the board may determine to be fair and reasonable, taking into consideration the location of the premises served and the nature and extent of the services and facilities furnished. However, no rates, fees or charges for stormwater services may be assessed against highways, road and drainage easements or stormwater facilities constructed, owned or operated by the West Virginia Division of Highways.

(2) Where water, sewer, stormwater or gas services, or
any combination thereof, are all furnished to any premises, the schedule of charges may be billed as a single amount for the aggregate of the charges. The board shall require all users of services and facilities furnished by the district to designate on every application for service whether the applicant is a tenant or an owner of the premises to be served. If the applicant is a tenant, he or she shall state the name and address of the owner or owners of the premises to be served by the district. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eight, article three, chapter twenty-four of this code to the contrary, all new applicants for service shall deposit the greater of a sum equal to two twelfths of the average annual usage of the applicant's specific customer class or fifty dollars, with the district to secure the payment of service rates, fees and charges in the event they become delinquent as provided in this section. If a district provides both water and sewer service, all new applicants for service shall deposit the greater of a sum equal to two twelfths of the average annual usage for water service or fifty dollars and the greater of a sum equal to two twelfths of the average annual usage for wastewater service of the applicant's specific customer class or fifty dollars. In any case where a deposit is forfeited to pay service rates, fees and charges which were delinquent at the time of disconnection or termination of service, no reconnection or reinstatement of service may be made by the district until another deposit equal to the greater of a sum equal to two twelfths of the average usage for the applicant's specific customer class or fifty dollars has been remitted to the district. After twelve months of prompt payment history, the district shall return the deposit to the customer or credit the customer's account at a rate as the Public Service Commission may

provided: Provided, That where the customer is a tenant, the district is not required to return the deposit until the time the tenant discontinues service with the district. Whenever any rates, fees, rentals or charges for services or facilities furnished remain unpaid for a period of twenty days after the same become due and payable, the user of the services and facilities provided is delinquent and the user is liable at law until all rates, fees and charges are fully paid. The board may, under reasonable rules promulgated by the Public Service Commission, shut off and discontinue water or gas services to all delinquent users of either water or gas facilities, or both, ten days after the water or gas services become delinquent.

(b) In the event that any publicly or privately owned utility, city, incorporated town, other municipal corporation or other public service district included within the district owns and operates separately water facilities, sewer facilities or stormwater facilities and the district owns and operates another kind of facility either water or sewer, or both, as the case may be, then the district and the publicly or privately owned utility, city, incorporated town or other municipal corporation or other public service district shall covenant and contract with each other to shut off and discontinue the supplying of water service for the nonpayment of sewer or stormwater service fees and charges: Provided, That any contracts entered into by a public service district pursuant to this section shall be submitted to the Public Service Commission for approval. Any public service district which provides water and sewer service, water and stormwater service or water, sewer and stormwater service has the right to terminate water service for delinquency in payment of water, sewer or stormwater
bills. Where one public service district is providing sewer service and another public service district or a municipality included within the boundaries of the sewer or stormwater district is providing water service and the district providing sewer or stormwater service experiences a delinquency in payment, the district or the municipality included within the boundaries of the sewer or stormwater district that is providing water service, upon the request of the district providing sewer or stormwater service to the delinquent account, shall terminate its water service to the customer having the delinquent sewer or stormwater account: Provided, however, That any termination of water service must comply with all rules and orders of the Public Service Commission.

(c) Any district furnishing sewer facilities within the district may require, or may by petition to the circuit court of the county in which the property is located, compel or may require the Division of Health to compel all owners, tenants or occupants of any houses, dwellings and buildings located near any sewer facilities where sewage will flow by gravity or be transported by other methods approved by the Division of Health, including, but not limited to, vacuum and pressure systems, approved under the provisions of section nine, article one, chapter sixteen of this code, from the houses, dwellings or buildings into the sewer facilities, to connect with and use the sewer facilities and to cease the use of all other means for the collection, treatment and disposal of sewage and waste matters from the houses, dwellings and buildings where there is gravity flow or transportation by any other methods approved by the Division of Health, including, but not limited to, vacuum and pressure systems,
approved under the provisions of section nine, article one, chapter sixteen of this code and the houses, dwellings and buildings can be adequately served by the sewer facilities of the district and it is declared that the mandatory use of the sewer facilities provided for in this paragraph is necessary and essential for the health and welfare of the inhabitants and residents of the districts and of the state. If the public service district requires the property owner to connect with the sewer facilities even when sewage from dwellings may not flow to the main line by gravity and the property owner incurs costs for any changes in the existing dwellings' exterior plumbing in order to connect to the main sewer line, the Public Service District Board shall authorize the district to pay all reasonable costs for the changes in the exterior plumbing, including, but not limited to, installation, operation, maintenance and purchase of a pump or any other method approved by the Division of Health. Maintenance and operation costs for the extra installation should be reflected in the users charge for approval of the Public Service Commission. The circuit court shall adjudicate the merits of the petition by summary hearing to be held not later than thirty days after service of petition to the appropriate owners, tenants or occupants.

(d) Whenever any district has made available sewer facilities to any owner, tenant or occupant of any house, dwelling or building located near the sewer facility and the engineer for the district has certified that the sewer facilities are available to and are adequate to serve the owner, tenant or occupant and sewage will flow by gravity or be transported by other methods approved by the Division of Health from the house, dwelling or building into the sewer facilities, the district may
charge, and the owner, tenant or occupant shall pay, the rates and charges for services established under this article only after thirty-day notice of the availability of the facilities has been received by the owner, tenant or occupant. Rates and charges for sewage services shall be based upon actual water consumption or the average monthly water consumption based upon the owner’s, tenant’s or occupant’s specific customer class.

(e) The owner, tenant or occupant of any real property may be determined and declared to be served by a stormwater system only after each of the following conditions is met: (1) the district 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; (2) the district’s authority has been properly expanded to operate and maintain a stormwater system; (3) the district has made available a stormwater system where stormwater from the real property affects or drains into the stormwater system; and (4) the real property is located in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System’s designated service area. It is further hereby found, determined and declared that the mandatory use of the stormwater system is necessary and essential for the health and welfare of the inhabitants and residents of the district and of the state. The district may charge and the owner, tenant or occupant shall pay the rates, fees and charges for stormwater services established under this article only after thirty-day notice of the availability of the stormwater system has been received by the owner. An entity providing stormwater service shall provide a tenant a report of the stormwater fee charged for the entire property and, if appropriate, that portion of the fee to be assessed to the tenant.
(f) All delinquent fees, rates and charges of the district for either water facilities, sewer facilities, gas facilities or stormwater systems or stormwater management programs are liens on the premises served of equal dignity, rank and priority with the lien on the premises of state, county, school and municipal taxes. In addition to the other remedies provided in this section, public service districts are granted a deferral of filing fees or other fees and costs incidental to the bringing and maintenance of an action in magistrate court for the collection of delinquent water, sewer, stormwater or gas bills. If the district collects the delinquent account, plus reasonable costs, from its customer or other responsible party, the district shall pay to the magistrate the normal filing fee and reasonable costs which were previously deferred. In addition, each public service district may exchange with other public service districts a list of delinquent accounts: Provided, That an owner of real property may not be held liable for the delinquent rates or charges for services or facilities of a tenant, nor may any lien attach to real property for the reason of delinquent rates or charges for services or facilities of a tenant of the real property, unless the owner has contracted directly with the public service district to purchase the services or facilities.

(g) Anything in this section to the contrary notwithstanding, any establishment, as defined in section three, article eleven, chapter twenty-two of this code, now or hereafter operating its own sewage disposal system pursuant to a permit issued by the Department of Environmental Protection, as prescribed by section eleven, article eleven, chapter twenty-two of this code, is exempt from the provisions of this section.
(h) A public service district 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.
The Joint Committee on Enrolled Bills hereby certifies that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

Shirley Love
Chairman Senate Committee

Member

Originated in the Senate.
In effect from passage.

Darnell Chafin
Clerk of the Senate

90 days

Clerk of the House of Delegates

Earl Ray Tomblin
President of the Senate

The within is approved this
the Day of , 2008.

Governor
PRESENTED TO THE
GOVERNOR

MAR 13 2008

Time 5:00 pm