



# Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Water Fact Sheet

Fact Sheet 96-39

## Dam Safety: Annual Fee

Catastrophic dam failures have cost thousands of lives and millions of dollars in property damage throughout the United States. The Ohio state government established the dam safety program to protect lives, health and property from damages due to catastrophic dam failures. The program provides this protection by requiring review and approval for the design and construction of new and repaired dams, inspecting existing dams, and responding to dam safety emergencies. In Ohio, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water has the responsibility to regulate dam safety.

The dam safety program benefits both the owners of dams and residents in downstream areas. Owners receive periodic safety inspections of their dams, technical assistance during emergency situations, information on maintenance and operational procedures, and references for the preparation of emergency action plans. Downstream residents receive additional protection from catastrophic failure of the upstream dam.

The Ohio General Assembly established the dam safety program in 1963, and until 1987, all funding for the program came from the General Revenue Fund. In 1987, the General Assembly placed a share of the cost of the program on the owners of dams and they created the dam safety annual fee. Funds collected from the annual fee are placed in a dam safety fund and are used to fund a portion of the staffing, operational and equipment expenses of the dam safety program. By law, the fees collected can only be used for these purposes.

Owners of class I, II and III dams must pay an annual fee. Section 1501:21-13-01 of the Ohio Administrative Code and Section 1521.062 of the Ohio Revised Code explain of how dams are classified. Division of Water Fact Sheet 94-29, Classification of Structures also offers an explanation of the classification system in an easy-to-read format. The amount of the fee for each dam is

based on its height and classification. As stated in Section 1521.063 of the Ohio Revised Code and Section 1501:21-24-01 of the Ohio Administrative Code, the annual fee shall be as follows:

(1) For any dam classified as a Class I dam under rules adopted by the Chief of the Division of Water under Section 1521.06 of the Ohio Revised Code, thirty dollars plus ten dollars per foot of height of dam;

### Sample Calculation:

class I dam  
height = 32 feet  
annual fee = \$30.00 + (\$10.00/ ft)(32 ft)  
= \$30.00 + \$320.00  
= \$350.00

The Division of Water mails the annual fee invoices each year in May. Payment is due on or before June 30, and there is a 60 day grace period. The penalty for late payment is 10 percent of the fee plus interest at the rate of 0.5% per month from the due date until the date of payment. Delinquent fees are referred to the Attorney General for collection.

Any other questions, comments concerns, or fact sheet requests, should be directed to the Division of Water at:

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