

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 451 of 1994**

**324.31518 Inspection reports; determination of hazard potential classification; inspection schedule; notice; additional inspection reports; contents of inspection report; visual inspection and report; detailed investigation or evaluation; life or property threatened by breach of dam; cause of action; ordering actions to alleviate danger.**

Sec. 31518. (1) An owner shall submit to the department inspection reports prepared by a licensed professional engineer that evaluate the condition of the dam. The inspection report shall be submitted as follows:

- (a) Not less than once every 3 years for high hazard potential dams.
- (b) Not less than once every 4 years for significant hazard potential dams.
- (c) Not less than once every 5 years for low hazard potential dams.

(2) The department shall determine the hazard potential classification of all dams and shall establish an inspection schedule. The inspection schedule shall require annual submission of inspection reports for approximately 1/3 of all high hazard potential dams, 1/4 of all significant hazard potential dams, and 1/5 of all low hazard potential dams. The department shall notify owners in writing when inspection reports are due. The department may order additional inspection reports following an event or change in condition that could threaten a dam.

(3) An inspection report required by this section shall include, at a minimum, all of the following:

- (a) An evaluation of the dam's condition, spillway capacity, operational adequacy, and structural integrity.
- (b) A determination of whether deficiencies exist that could lead to the failure of the dam.
- (c) Recommendations for maintenance, repair, and alterations of a dam as are necessary to eliminate any deficiencies.

(4) Instead of engaging a licensed professional engineer to prepare an inspection report, local units of government or an organization of the type described in section 31508(2)(a) through (c) may request the department to conduct a visual inspection of a dam owned by that local unit of government and prepare a report on the condition of the dam in accordance with subsection (3). The department shall notify a requesting local unit of government as to when the inspection is to occur.

(5) If an inspection report discloses the need for a more detailed investigation or evaluation of certain dam features for the purpose of determining the condition of the dam, the department may order the completion and submission of that detailed investigation or evaluation at the expense of the owner. An investigation or evaluation required under this subsection shall be conducted under the supervision of a licensed professional engineer.

(6) If an owner does not submit an inspection report as required by subsection (1) or conduct additional investigations if required by subsection (5), the department or any person who would have life or property threatened by a breach of the dam may have a report prepared and recover the costs of preparing the report in a civil action commenced in a court of competent jurisdiction. This subsection does not limit the right of any person to bring a cause of action in a court of proper jurisdiction to compel an owner to comply with the requirements of this part.

(7) If, based on the findings and recommendations of the inspection report and an inspection by the department, the department finds that a condition exists which endangers a dam, it shall order the owner to take actions that the department considers necessary to alleviate the danger.

**History:** Add. 1995, Act 59, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

**Popular name:** Act 451

**Popular name:** NREPA