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Periodic Review Report of Findings

Agency name	Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation – Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists
Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) citation	18VAC145-20
Regulation title	Regulations Governing Professional Soil Scientists
Date this document prepared	November 22, 2019

This information is required for executive branch review and the Virginia Registrar of Regulations, pursuant to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), Executive Order 14 (as amended, July 16, 2018), the Regulations for Filing and Publishing Agency Regulations (1 VAC7-10), and the *Virginia Register Form, Style, and Procedure Manual for Publication of Virginia Regulations*.

Acronyms and Definitions

Please define all acronyms used in this Report. Also, please define any technical terms that are used in the document that are not also defined in the "Definition" section of the regulations.

No acronyms are used in this report.

Legal Basis

Please identify (1) the agency or other promulgating entity, and (2) the state and/or federal legal authority for the regulatory change, including the most relevant citations to the Code of Virginia or Acts of Assembly chapter number(s), if applicable. Your citation must include a specific provision, if any, authorizing the promulgating entity to regulate this specific subject or program, as well as a reference to the agency or promulgating entity's overall regulatory authority.

Code of Virginia §54.1-201.5 gives authority to the Board Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists to promulgate regulations. It states, in part, that the Board has

the power and duty “To promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§2.2-4000 et seq.) necessary to assure continued competency, to prevent deceptive or misleading practices by practitioners and to effectively administer the regulatory system administered by the regulatory board.”

Alternatives

Please describe any viable alternatives for achieving the purpose of the regulation that were considered as part of the periodic review. Include an explanation of why such alternatives were rejected and why this regulation is the least burdensome alternative available for achieving its purpose.

No viable alternatives for achieving the purpose of the existing regulation could be determined. The regulation enables the Board to fulfill the statutory requirements established in Chapter 4 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia. Further, the regulation is necessary to ensure the Board’s statutory requirements are executed in the least burdensome and most efficient and cost effective manner possible while protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Public Comment

Please summarize all comments received during the public comment period following the publication of the Notice of Periodic Review, and provide the agency response. Ensure to include all comments submitted: including those received on Town Hall, in a public hearing, or submitted directly to the agency or board. Please indicate if an informal advisory group was formed for purposes of assisting in the periodic review.

Commenter	Comment	Agency response
N/A	N/A	N/A

No comments were received during the public comment period following publication of the Notice of Periodic Review. An informal advisory group was not formed for purposes of assisting in the periodic review.

Effectiveness

Pursuant to § 2.2-4017, please indicate whether the regulation meets the criteria set out in Executive Order 14 (as amended, July 16, 2018), including why the regulation is (a) necessary for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare, and (b) is clearly written and easily understandable.

The regulation meets the criteria set forth in Executive Order 14 (2018). The regulation contains the requirements for obtaining a license, certification, registration, renewal license, certification or registration, and standards of professional conduct to ensure competence and integrity of all regulants, and to administer the regulatory program in accordance with Chapter 4 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia. The regulation is necessary for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare and is clearly written and understandable.

Decision

Please explain the basis for the rulemaking entity's decision (retain the regulation as is without making changes, amend the regulation, or repeal the regulation).

The agency is recommending that the regulation stay in effect without change.

Small Business Impact

As required by § 2.2-4007.1 E and F of the Code of Virginia, include a discussion of the agency's consideration of: (1) the continued need for the regulation; (2) the nature of complaints or comments received concerning the regulation from the public; (3) the complexity of the regulation; (4) the extent to which the regulation overlaps, duplicates, or conflicts with federal or state law or regulation; and (5) the length of time since the regulation has been evaluated or the degree to which technology, economic conditions, or other factors have changed in the area affected by the regulation. Also, discuss why the agency's decision, consistent with the stated objectives of applicable law, will minimize the economic impact of regulations on small businesses.

Code of Virginia §54.1-201.5 mandates the Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists promulgate regulations. The continued need for the regulation is established in statute. Repeal of the regulation would remove the current public protections provided by the regulation. The Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists provides protection to the safety and welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth by ensuring that only those individuals who meet specific criteria set forth in the statutes and regulations are eligible to receive a license. The Board is also tasked with ensuring that its regulants meet standards of practice that are set for the in the regulations.

No comments or complaints were received during the public comment period. The regulation is clearly written, easily understandable, and does not overlap, duplicate or conflict with federal or state law or regulation.

The most recent periodic review of the regulation occurred in 2015. On November 19, 2019, the Board discussed the regulation and for the reasons stated in this section, determined that regulation should not be amended or repealed, but should be retained in its current form.