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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO WATERS AND NAVIGATION -- UNIFORM SEPTAGE DISPOSAL FEE

Introduced By: Senators McKenney, DiMario, Britto, and Urso

Date Introduced: March 07, 2025

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The title of Chapter 46-12.11 of the General Laws entitled "Uniform Septage  
2 Disposal Fee" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 ~~CHAPTER 46-12.11~~

4 ~~Uniform Septage Disposal Fee~~

5 CHAPTER 46-12.11

6 UNIFORM SEPTAGE DISPOSAL AND WASTEWATER DISPOSAL FEE

7 SECTION 2. Section 46-12.11-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 46-12.11 entitled  
8 "Uniform Septage Disposal Fee" is hereby amended to read as follows:

9 **46-12.11-2. Definitions.**

10 As used in this chapter, unless the context shall clearly indicate otherwise:

11 (1) "Director" shall mean the director of the department of environmental management.

12 (2) "Disposal facility" shall mean any wastewater treatment facility, or portion thereof, or  
13 any other facility that receives septage from septage transporters, pursuant to authorization by the  
14 department of environmental management.

15 (3) "Disposal facility operator" shall mean the person responsible for operating the disposal  
16 facility, who has authority to charge fees for the receipt of septage.

17 (4) "Person" shall mean an individual, trust, firm, joint stock company, corporation  
18 (including a government corporation), partnership, association, the Federal government, or any  
19 agency or subdivision thereof, a state, municipality, commission, political subdivision of a state, or

1 any interstate body.

2 (5) "Septage" shall mean any solid, liquid or semi-solid removed from a septic tank,  
3 cesspool, privy, domestic or other wastewater holding tank, or similar onsite sewage disposal  
4 system.

5 (6) "Septage transporter" shall mean any person lawfully authorized to transport septage.

6 (7) "Wastewater" means used water delivered to a wastewater treatment facility. From the  
7 standpoint of source, it may be a combination of the liquid and water-carried wastes from  
8 residences, commercial buildings, industrial plants, and institutions, together with any  
9 groundwater, surface water, and storm water that may be present.

10 (8) "Wastewater effluent" means treated or partially treated wastewater that flows from a  
11 treatment plant or other source into a body of water.

12 SECTION 3. Chapter 46-12.11 of the General Laws entitled "Uniform Septage Disposal  
13 Fee" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

14 **46-12.11-4.1. Assessment, collection, and deposit of wastewater disposal fee.**

15 (a) Effective July 1, 2025, there is hereby established a uniform wastewater disposal fee in  
16 the amount of fifteen cents (\$.15) per every ten thousand (10,000) gallons of wastewater effluent,  
17 as defined by § 46-12.11-2, that shall be imposed on the disposal of wastewater effluent at all  
18 wastewater treatment facilities in the state. Said revenue shall be deposited into the restricted receipt  
19 account within the department of environmental management known as the bays, rivers and  
20 watersheds fund as established by §46-31.1-3.

21 SECTION 4. Section 46-31.1-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 46-31.1 entitled "The  
22 Rhode Island Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Fund" is hereby amended to read as follows:

23 **46-31.1-3. Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Fund.**

24 (a) There is hereby established a restricted receipt account within the Department of  
25 Environmental Management to be called the Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Fund;

26 (b) The fund shall consist of any funds which the state may from time to time appropriate,  
27 as well as money received as gifts, grants, bequests, donations or other funds from any public or  
28 private sources, as well as all fees collected pursuant to § 46-23-1(f)(2) for the leasing of submerged  
29 lands for transatlantic cables, ~~and~~ all fees collected pursuant to chapter 12.11 of this title for the  
30 disposal of septage and wastewater disposal;

31 (c) All funds, monies, and fees collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the  
32 Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Fund, and shall be utilized by the Department of Environmental  
33 Management consistent with the purposes of § 46-23.2-1 entitled, "The Comprehensive Watershed  
34 and Marine Monitoring Act of 2004," § 46-12, "Water Pollution", chapter 33 of title 46 "Rhode

1 [Island lake management program](#)”, including the control of invasive plants and projects related to  
2 [shellfish transplants](#) and chapter 6.2 of title 4 entitled “Resilient Rhode Island Act of 2014 Climate  
3 Change Coordination Council.” All expenditures from the fund shall be subject to appropriation by  
4 the general assembly.

5 SECTION 5. Section 46-22-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 46-22 entitled "Regulation  
6 of Boats" is hereby amended to read as follows:

7 **46-22-4. Identification number and registration fee.**

8 (a)(1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b), the owner of each motorboat shall  
9 file biennially an application for registration with the department of environmental management on  
10 forms approved by the director. The application shall be accompanied by a registration fee  
11 according to the following schedule:

12 OVERALL LENGTH AT	NOT MORE THAN FEET	BIENNIAL FEE
13 LEAST FEET UNDER	15	<del>\$30</del> <a href="#">\$35</a>
14 16	20	<del>\$40</del> <a href="#">\$45</a>
15 21	25	<del>\$60</del> <a href="#">\$65</a>
16 26	30	<del>\$100</del> <a href="#">\$105</a>
17 31	35	<del>\$200</del> <a href="#">\$205</a>
18 36	40	<del>\$250</del> <a href="#">\$255</a>
19 41	45	<del>\$300</del> <a href="#">\$305</a>
20 46	50	<del>\$400</del> <a href="#">\$405</a>
21 51 and over		<del>\$600</del> <a href="#">\$605</a>

22 (i) For the purpose of the above fee schedule, “overall length” shall be defined as the  
23 horizontal distance between the foremost part of the stem, and, the aftermost part of the stern,  
24 excluding bowsprits, bumpkins, rudders, outboard motor brackets, and similar fittings or  
25 attachments. For purposes of this section, a fraction of a foot shall be deemed to be the next higher  
26 foot.

27 (ii) The fee payable under this section for any motorboat owned by a nonprofit organization  
28 shall not exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00).

29 (iii) All vessels over thirty feet (30') may, upon request, pay the registration fee annually  
30 at the rate of one-half (½) the biennial fee for a vessel of the same length.

31 (2) Upon receipt of the completed application and correct registration fee, the department  
32 of environmental management shall enter the application and registration fee into its records, and  
33 issue to the owner a certificate of number stating the number awarded to the motorboat and the  
34 name and address of the owner. The owner shall paint on or attach to each side of the bow of the

1 motorboat the identification number in such manner as may be prescribed by rules and regulations  
2 of the department of environmental management in order that it may be clearly visible. The number  
3 shall be maintained in legible condition. The certificate of number shall be pocket size and shall be  
4 available at all times for inspection on the motorboat for which issued, whenever that motorboat is  
5 in operation.

6 (b) The owner of any motorboat already covered by an identification number, in full force  
7 and effect, which has been awarded to it pursuant to then operative federal law or a federally  
8 approved numbering system of another state, shall record the number with the department of  
9 environmental management prior to operating the motorboat on the waters of this state in excess of  
10 the ninety (90) day reciprocity period provided for in § 46-22-6(a). The recordation shall be in the  
11 manner and subject to the procedure and fees required for the award and transfer of a number under  
12 subsections (a) and (c) through (i), except that no additional or substitute number shall be issued.

13 (c) Should the ownership of a motorboat change, a new application form shall be filed with  
14 the department of environmental management. Should the change in ownership take place before  
15 the date upon which the certificate of number expires, the new owner shall pay an administrative  
16 fee of ten dollars (\$10.00). The number assigned to the vessel shall remain with the vessel and be  
17 non-transferable while the vessel remains certified in the state of Rhode Island; provided, however,  
18 that upon the request of the owner of a duly registered vessel of historic value that is more than  
19 fifty (50) years old, the number assigned to the vessel may be transferred to a different historic  
20 vessel owned by the same person. The original vessel will be given a new registration number and  
21 the owner shall pay a transfer fee of six dollars (\$6.00) for each vessel.

22 (d) In the event that an agency of the United States government shall have in force an  
23 overall system of identification numbering for motorboats within the United States, the numbering  
24 system employed pursuant to this chapter by the department of environmental management shall  
25 be in conformity therewith.

26 (e) All records of the department of environmental management made or kept pursuant to  
27 this section shall be public records.

28 (f) The department of environmental management shall fix a day and month of the year on  
29 which the certificate of number is due to expire and no longer be of any force and effect, unless  
30 renewed pursuant to this chapter.

31 (g) The owner shall furnish the department of environmental management notice of the  
32 transfer of all or any part of the owner's interest, other than the creation of a security interest in a  
33 motorboat numbered in this state, pursuant to subsections (a) and (b), or of the destruction or  
34 abandonment of the motorboat, within fifteen (15) days thereof. That destruction shall terminate

1 the certificate of number for the motorboat.

2 (h) Any holder of a certificate of number shall notify the department of environmental  
3 management within fifteen (15) days if the holder's address no longer conforms to the address  
4 appearing on the certificate and shall, as a part of the notification, furnish the department of  
5 environmental management the new address. The department of environmental management may  
6 provide, in its rules and regulations, for the surrender of the certificate bearing the former address  
7 or for the alteration of an outstanding certificate to show the new address of the holder.

8 (i) No number, other than the number awarded to a motorboat or granted reciprocity  
9 pursuant to this chapter, shall be painted, attached, or otherwise displayed on either side of the bow  
10 of the motorboat.

11 (j) Biennial registration shall be phased in, alphabetically, over a two (2) year period  
12 starting January 1, 1999 at which time all owners whose last names begin with the letters "A"  
13 through "M" applications for registration will be accepted for consideration on a biennial basis.  
14 Owners whose last names begin with the letters "N" through "Z" shall be subject to biennial  
15 registration starting January 1, 2000.

16 SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO WATERS AND NAVIGATION -- UNIFORM SEPTAGE DISPOSAL FEE

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1           This act would establish a uniform wastewater disposal fee in the amount of fifteen cents  
2           (\$0.15) per every ten thousand (10,000) gallons of wastewater effluent which shall be imposed on  
3           the disposal of wastewater effluent at all wastewater treatment facilities in the state. Said revenue  
4           shall be deposited into the restricted receipt account within the department of environmental  
5           management known as the bays, rivers and watersheds fund and be utilized for lake management  
6           projects including the control of invasive plants and shellfish transplants. The act would also  
7           increase the amount of boat registrations by five dollars (\$5.00).

8           This act would take effect upon passage.

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