

CHAPTER 297

(House Bill 864)

AN ACT concerning

St. Mary's County – Loans – Purchase of New Emergency Equipment

FOR the purpose of altering the percentage of the purchase price of certain firefighting, rescue, and emergency medical services machinery or equipment that St. Mary's County is authorized to loan to certain persons under certain circumstances; and generally relating to loans made by St. Mary's County.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
The Public Local Laws of St. Mary's County
Section 46–2 A. and G.
Article 19 – Public Local Laws of Maryland
(2007 Edition, as amended)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
The Public Local Laws of St. Mary's County
Section 46–2 H.
Article 19 – Public Local Laws of Maryland
(2007 Edition, as amended)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article 19 – St. Mary's County

46–2.

A. In this section, the following words have the meanings indicated:

Construction means construction, reconstruction, improvement, enlargement, expansion, alteration, rehabilitation, and repair of buildings and facilities necessary for the operation of volunteer fire, ambulance, and rescue departments.

Construction costs includes, but is not limited to, architects' and engineers' fees, costs of building means of access, and costs of extending utility systems.

County means the body politic and corporate of the State of Maryland known as the County Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

Fire fighting equipment means:

- (1) Necessary furnishing;
- (2) Fire fighting, rescue and emergency medical equipment; and
- (3) Fixed, permanent equipment used and operated by volunteer fire, ambulance, and rescue departments.

Fund means the St. Mary's County Capital Revolving Financial Fund for Fire Fighting Equipment and Facilities.

Land acquisition means the acquisition of real and personal property for the construction of buildings to house fire fighting, rescue and emergency medical service equipment and services.

G. (1) A volunteer fire, ambulance, or rescue department shall apply for loans from the Fund established under this section on forms as prescribed by the Board of County Commissioners.

(2) The application shall contain information necessary to evaluate the requested loan for need, financial ability of borrower, sources of repayment, proposed costs and expenditures, fair value of complete projects, normal or useful life of equipment security for the loan, and other information as may be appropriate or useful in evaluating the loan application.

(3) The St. Mary's County Fire Board shall:

(a) Review and evaluate loan applications from the volunteer fire departments for need, practicality, and financial ability of the borrower; and

(b) Prepare a written recommendation for the need, practicality, and financial ability of a loan applicant and forward the recommendation to the St. Mary's County Emergency Services Committee.

(4) The St. Mary's County Ambulance and Rescue Association shall:

(a) Review and evaluate loan applications from the volunteer ambulance and rescue departments for need, practicality, and financial ability of the borrower; and

(b) Prepare a written recommendation for the need, practicality, and financial ability of a loan applicant and forward the recommendation to the St. Mary's County Emergency Services Committee.

(5) The St. Mary's County Emergency Services Committee shall:

(a) Evaluate the recommendations of the St. Mary's County Fire Board and the St. Mary's Country Ambulance and Rescue Association for content and assign a priority based on the availability of loan funds in the Fund, past requests, need of the respective organizations, and any other relevant factors applicable during its deliberations; and

(b) Forward all loan applications and submit its priority recommendations to the County Commissioners.

(6) An officer of the county designated by the Board of County Commissioners shall review loan applications in accordance with the priority assigned by the St. Mary's County Emergency Services Committee.

(7) Subject to the provisions of subsections E and F of this section, a loan may be approved by the County Commissioners up to the amount requested by a loan applicant if sufficient moneys exist in the Fund.

H. (1) The county may loan up to [75] **90** percent of the purchase price of new fire fighting, rescue, and emergency medical services machinery and equipment for a term not to exceed the normal useful life of the equipment as determined by National Fire Protection Association standards or 15 years, whichever is less.

(2) (a) The county may loan up to 90 percent of the costs of land acquisition and construction costs.

(b) The county may permit a project previously financed from other sources to be refinanced under this paragraph (2), subject to the 90 percent limitation.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2008.

Approved by the Governor, April 24, 2008.