

# HOUSE BILL 654

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2lr1340

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By: **Delegate Long**

Introduced and read first time: January 31, 2022

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Back River and Patapsco Wastewater Treatment Plants – Water Quality Testing**  
3 **and Overflow and Pipeline Breakage Notification**  
4 **(Environmental Accountability Act of 2022)**

5 FOR the purpose of requiring an independent third party to oversee all water quality  
6 testing conducted at the Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Patapsco  
7 Wastewater Treatment Plant; requiring the Department of the Environment to  
8 select the independent third party; specifying the duties of the independent  
9 third party; establishing certain notification requirements for sewage overflows and  
10 breaks in certain sewage pipelines at the Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant  
11 and the Patapsco Wastewater Treatment Plant; and generally relating to the Back  
12 River Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Patapsco Wastewater Treatment Plant.

13 BY adding to

14 Article – Environment

15 Section 9–255.1 and 9–331.2

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

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

20 **Article – Environment**

21 **9–255.1.**

22 **(A) (1) BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022, AN INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY SHALL**  
23 **OVERSEE ALL WATER QUALITY TESTING CONDUCTED AT THE BACK RIVER**  
24 **WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND THE PATAPSCO WASTEWATER TREATMENT**  
25 **PLANT.**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1           **(2) THE INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY SHALL:**

2                   **(I) BE SELECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT; AND**

3                   **(II) HAVE ALL STATE AND FEDERAL CERTIFICATIONS THE**  
4 **DEPARTMENT DETERMINES ARE NECESSARY FOR OVERSEEING TESTING AT A**  
5 **WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT.**

6           **(B) THE INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY SHALL:**

7                   **(1) OVERSEE ALL WATER QUALITY TESTS CONDUCTED AT THE BACK**  
8 **RIVER WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND THE PATAPSCO WASTEWATER**  
9 **TREATMENT PLANT;**

10                  **(2) VERIFY THE LABORATORY RESULTS FOR ALL WATER QUALITY**  
11 **TESTS CONDUCTED AT THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS; AND**

12                  **(3) IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS AT THE WASTEWATER**  
13 **TREATMENT PLANTS TO TEST FOR MIDGE LARVAE AND PREVENT THE DISCHARGE**  
14 **OF MIDGE LARVAE.**

15                  **(C) EACH LABORATORY REPORT CREATED FOR A WATER QUALITY TEST**  
16 **CONDUCTED AT THE BACK RIVER WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND THE**  
17 **PATAPSCO WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SHALL BE POSTED ON THE RELEVANT**  
18 **WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT'S WEBSITE AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE.**

19 **9-331.2.**

20                  **THE OWNERS OR OPERATORS OF THE BACK RIVER WASTEWATER**  
21 **TREATMENT PLANT AND THE PATAPSCO WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SHALL:**

22                  **(1) IN ADDITION TO THE NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER §**  
23 **9-331.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, ON NOTIFICATION OF AN OVERFLOW:**

24                   **(I) IMMEDIATELY POST A NOTIFICATION OF THE OVERFLOW ON**  
25 **THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT'S WEBSITE; AND**

26                   **(II) AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE, NOTIFY LOCAL NEWS MEDIA OF**  
27 **THE OVERFLOW AND POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS; AND**

28                  **(2) ON NOTIFICATION OF A BREAK IN A SEWAGE PIPELINE THAT**  
29 **DISCHARGES INTO THE PATAPSCO RIVER OR A TRIBUTARY OF THE PATAPSCO**

1 **RIVER, AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE, NOTIFY LOCAL NEWS MEDIA AND EACH STATE**  
2 **LEGISLATOR REPRESENTING THE AREA IN WHICH THE DISCHARGE WILL OCCUR OF**  
3 **THE BREAK IN THE SEWAGE PIPELINE AND POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS.**

4 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
5 1, 2022.