



DAM SAFETY
POLICY MEMORANDUM #18

TO: Dam Owners, Operators, and Engineers

FROM: Stormwater, Dam Safety, and Flood Management Program
Water and Science Administration

DATE: April 24, 2023

SUBJECT: Repairing Known Deficiencies During Retrofits or Repairs

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Maryland Department of the Environment (the Department) that the design of dam embankments considers potential failure modes and incorporate defensive design measures as appropriate.

This policy restates the requirement that any project proposing to retrofit or repair an existing dam or small pond (including work within the pond area only that is not considered routine maintenance as described in Policy Memorandum #11) must address known deficiencies at the dam and ensure the design meets current requirements. An inspection report prepared by a professional engineer with photographs and recommendations for repairs must accompany the application materials in support of the retrofit/repair project.

The professional engineer may justify the acceptance of certain conditions (e.g., anti-seep collars, embankment/core materials) based on sound engineering judgement and reasoning if correction of the condition would require significant embankment reconstruction. Repairs of spillway defects, internal erosion damage, seepage, slides/sloughs, animal burrows and woody vegetation removal are required regardless of the extent of embankment reconstruction.

Additional Information

Questions about this policy or other items relating to ponds and dams can be directed to the Chief of the Dam Safety Permits Division at 410-537-3552.