



## **Water Quality Certification Emergency Procedures**

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) may issue an emergency Water Quality Certification (WQC) when delaying action to complete the standard public notice process could result in an unacceptable threat to human life, water quality, aquatic resources, or cause severe property loss. This allows necessary emergency activities to proceed quickly. Within 10 days of issuing an emergency certification, MDE must provide public notice explaining the action taken and the justification. Even under emergency procedures, all applicable State water quality standards and environmental protections remain in effect. Additional State, federal (e.g., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), or local approvals may be required before proceeding with emergency repairs.

**Under COMAR 26.08.02.10.E(3), MDE may use emergency procedures if waiting for the standard review process could result in:**

- A serious threat to human life
- Significant harm to water quality
- Damage to aquatic resources
- Severe property loss

**Before beginning** any emergency action, the following information must be provided to MDE:

- 1) Applicant's name and contact information
- 2) Description of the emergency (see above)
- 3) Location of the emergency activity
- 4) Work area, emergency activities to be completed, and anticipated duration
- 5) Any anticipated impacts to water quality (i.e., turbidity), the duration of impacts, and how they will be minimized
- 6) Plans to restore water quality impacts after emergency repairs have been completed

Please visit <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/wetlandsandwaterways/pages/wqc.aspx> for more information on the WQC process, submission instructions, and contact information.