

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section relating to rainfall design standards for flood resilience.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding the following section to Title 62.1, Chapter 3.1 (State Water Control Law):
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§ 62.1-44.15:85. Rainfall design standards; non-stationary precipitation.

A. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, all state agencies and political subdivisions of the Commonwealth shall incorporate climate-adjusted precipitation values when establishing design standards for stormwater management facilities, floodplain management, culverts, and bridges.

B. Until such time as NOAA Atlas 15 precipitation frequency estimates are published and adopted by the Commonwealth, the Department of Environmental Quality, in consultation with the Virginia Department of Transportation, shall establish interim guidance requiring that precipitation values derived from NOAA Atlas 14 be increased by not less than twenty percent (20%) when used for design purposes.

C. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a locality from adopting more stringent rainfall design standards to address local or regional flood risk.

D. The Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Department of Transportation shall update all relevant manuals and design standards to reflect this requirement within 12 months of the effective date of this section.

2. That this act shall become effective on July 1, 2026.