CHAPTER 22

The South Carolina Geological Survey Unit of the Department of Natural Resources

**SECTION 48-22-10. Creation of State Geological Survey Unit; hiring of State Geologist; qualifications.**

The South Carolina Geological Survey Unit is established under the Department of Natural Resources. The State Geologist must be hired by the Director of the Department of Natural Resources. He must have graduated from an accredited college or university with a full curriculum in geology and had at least eight years of practical work experience, academic, governmental, or industrial, in geology.

HISTORY: 1993 Act No. 181, § 1228; 1994 Act No. 497, § 59D; 2019 Act No. 75 (H.4013), § 1, eff May 16, 2019.

**SECTION 48-22-20. Repealed.**

HISTORY: Former Section, titled Powers, duties, property, devolved upon Department of Natural Resources, had the following history: 1993 Act No. 181, § 1228; 1994 Act No. 497, § 59D. Repealed by 2018 Act No. 246, § 9, eff July 1, 2018.

**SECTION 48-22-30. Powers and duties of State Geologist.**

(A) The State Geologist shall:

(1) travel throughout the State so as to make himself familiar with the geology, geologic hazards, and mineral resources of each section;

(2) undertake field and laboratory work his time permits;

(3) perform other duties that properly pertain to his office.

(B) The department may employ geologists, technicians, and other personnel necessary to conduct the objectives of the unit.

HISTORY: 1993 Act No. 181, § 1228; 1994 Act No. 497, § 59D; 2019 Act No. 75 (H.4013), § 2, eff May 16, 2019.

**SECTION 48-22-40. Duties of unit.**

In addition to other duties assigned to it, the unit:

(1) shall conduct field and laboratory studies in geologic reconnaissance, mapping, evaluating mineral resources, and related gathering of surface and subsurface data. Investigative areas include offshore and onshore lands in this State;

(2) shall make surface and subsurface data available to governmental agencies, private business, and the public by disseminating published geologic information as bulletins, maps, economic reports, and related series and open-file reports;

(3) shall provide geologic advice and assistance to other state and local governmental agencies engaged in environmental protection or in industrial or economic development projects. In addition, the unit must be involved actively in geologic aspects of regional planning and effective land use in the State;

(4) shall encourage economic development in the State by disseminating published geologic information as bulletins, maps, economic reports, and related series and open-file reports to appropriate governmental agencies and private industry. The unit is encouraged further to initiate and maintain appropriate industrial contacts to promote the extraction and conservation of South Carolina's earth raw materials and their manufacture to the economic improvement of the State;

(5) shall provide unsolicited advice, when appropriate, to the Mining Council and its associated state regulatory agency, on geologic and related mining matters in keeping with the intent of the South Carolina Mining Act;

(6) shall operate and maintain a central, statewide repository for rock cores, well cuttings and related subsurface samples, and all associated supplemental data. Private firms and public agencies are encouraged to notify the unit before exploratory or developmental drilling and coring;

(7) may conduct cooperative work with appropriate agencies of the United States Government in its geologic activities and investigations;

(8) shall provide a minerals research laboratory related to the identification, extraction, and processing of industrial minerals and minerals of economic potential wherever found throughout the onshore and offshore areas of the State. The minerals research laboratory is encouraged to accept mineral research projects from South Carolina businesses or citizens on a per cost, per unit basis and to encourage expended use of the raw materials of the State. The minerals research laboratory may accept public and private gifts or funds and may enter into cooperative agreements for the purpose of applied research in the metallic and nonmetallic minerals of this State;

(9) when appropriate, shall provide unsolicited advice to other state and governmental agencies concerning geologic hazards including, but not limited to, earthquakes, ground liquefaction, sinkhole development and collapse, landslide development, and coastal vulnerability;

(10) shall conduct topographic mapping using light detection and ranging (LiDAR) data collections by December 31, 2022, and at least every seven years thereafter. The information must be shared with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Flood Mitigation Program to ensure compliance with Federal Emergency Management Agency guidelines and standards for flood risk analysis and mapping activities under the Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning Program. The unit is authorized to work with local, state, and federal governmental entities in South Carolina to complete the topographic mapping and share the results of the topographic mapping with these agencies. The unit shall work with the Flood Mitigation Program to publish the results to the public on the Department of Natural Resources' website. The provisions of this item may only be enforced when the General Assembly appropriates the necessary funding for the topographic mapping in the general appropriations act.

HISTORY: 1993 Act No. 181, § 1228, eff July 1, 1994; 1994 Act No. 497, § 59D, eff June 29, 1994; 2019 Act No. 75 (H.4013), § 3, eff May 16, 2019; 2022 Act No. 230 (H.3055), § 1, eff June 17, 2022.

**SECTION 48-22-50. Maintenance of files by unit; confidentiality of certain information.**

The unit shall maintain all unpublished information in its files which must be open to the public, except in cases where the investigator still has work in progress on a project leading to a publication or where an industrial firm, interested in possibly locating in the State, asks temporary confidential status for oral and written geologic related information supplied by them or obtained on their properties. In the latter instance the information may be held in confidence by the unit for not more than one year from the date the information was obtained.

HISTORY: 1993 Act No. 181, § 1228; 1994 Act No. 497, § 59D.

**SECTION 48-22-60. Impartiality of unit.**

The unit shall work impartially for the benefit of the public, and no person, firm, or governmental agency may call upon or require the State Geologist or unit staff to enter upon a special survey for his or their special benefit.

HISTORY: 1993 Act No. 181, § 1228; 1994 Act No. 497, § 59D.