

**April 1, 1993**

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality is formed with the consolidation of the Council on the Environment, the Department of Air Pollution Control, the Department of Waste Management and the State Water Control Board

**July 1, 1993**

State legislation establishes the Virginia Pollution Prevention Program at DEQ.

**1993**

DEQ conducts a statewide survey to locate illegal tire piles. More than 730 piles containing 17 million tires are identified. Since 1993, more than 1,200 tire piles containing 23.6 million tires have been cleaned up at a cost of \$23 million.

**May 1994**

DEQ issues its first air quality forecasts for the summer ozone season in the Richmond and Hampton Roads areas.

**July 1, 1994**

DEQ begins the Virginia Pollution Abatement general permit program for animal feeding operations, including nutrient management requirements.

**August 3, 1994**

DEQ's first regional boundaries are established, replacing almost 20 regional boundary configurations from the pre-DEQ air, waste and water agencies.

**January 1, 1995**

Virginia returns primary control of the Superfund program to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, while a state oversight program continues.

**July 1, 1995**

Virginia's Voluntary Remediation Program is authorized to encourage voluntary cleanups of potentially contaminated sites for later reuse.

**May 1996**

DEQ opens its site on the World Wide Web, focusing on providing environmental information requested by the public.

**1997**

Virginia creates the Water Quality Improvement Fund, with a \$10 million appropriation. DEQ is authorized to award grants for nutrient removal technology at publicly owned treatment plants in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

**March 1997**

The Hampton Roads area meets the national air quality standards for ozone in effect at the time, indicating significant improvement in air quality. Richmond receives the same designation two months later.

**January 1998**

DEQ initiates cooperative efforts with environmental organizations to promote volunteer water quality monitoring activities across the state.

**March 1998**

DEQ launches "Air Check Virginia," an enhanced vehicle emissions inspection program for Northern Virginia.

**1999**

The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program brings together state, federal and non-governmental organizations- plus private oyster industry partners- to focus on the Chesapeake Bay's largest oyster restoration project.

**July 1, 1999**

DEQ begins the Virginia Pollution Abatement Poultry Waste Management Program, including general permits for confined poultry operations.

**December 1999**

"DEQ 2000," the first-ever statewide meeting of the DEQ staff, is held in Richmond. The two-day event focuses on the agency's mission, strategic goals and training.

**2000**

The results of several decades of cooperative research with the U.S. Geological Survey are published documenting the Chesapeake Bay impact crater. This discovery, in which DEQ staff participates, results in the development of new approaches to managing ground water withdrawals in Virginia.

**January 2000**

The Virginia Naturally 2000 initiative is unveiled in the governor's State of the Commonwealth Address. Virginia commits "beginning with the class of 2005" to provide a meaningful outdoor stream or Chesapeake Bay experience for every student.

**June 2000**

The Chesapeake 2000 Agreement calls on Virginia and other jurisdictions to improve the Chesapeake Bay's water quality, restore vital habitats such as underwater grasses, and implement harvest levels to keep the Bay's ecosystem balanced.

**July 1, 2000**

The General Assembly authorizes DEQ to regulate activities in nontidal wetlands, helping ensure no net loss of wetlands and promoting development that minimizes impacts on Virginia wetlands.

**September 29, 2000**

EPA authorizes Virginia to administer the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Corrective Action Program for the cleanup of permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities.

**April 2001**

DEQ develops a schedule for closing unlined landfills by 2020. These closures ensure that active landfills protect human health and the environment. Twenty-one unlined landfills closed by 2013, and 36 more will close by the end of 2020.

**January 1, 2002**

Federal "brownfields" legislation implements financing to encourage revitalization of contaminated industrial sites, enhancing Virginia's program to support brownfields redevelopment. Virginia adopts brownfields legislation during the same time period.

**July 1, 2003**

State legislation takes effect enabling local and regional water supply planning. DEQ later adopts regulations requiring the development of water supply plans for each locality and the development of a state water resources plan.

**December 2004**

DEQ implements a community involvement policy that commits the agency to work more closely with the public and environmental stakeholders, and to ensure broader participation in environmental decision making.

**July 1, 2005**

Legislation establishes the Virginia Environmental Excellence Program to encourage business and industry to develop environmental management systems and voluntarily go beyond regulatory requirements to reduce pollution.

**December 2005**

State regulations take effect limiting the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that large wastewater treatment plants may discharge to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. This is the first time that nitrogen discharges are regulated in Virginia.

**July 1, 2006**

Virginia revises its recycling mandate to provide for a two-tiered goal: 15 percent and 25 percent. This provides relief for lightly populated localities whose programs had been unable to reach the 25 percent recycling level.

**January 1, 2007**

DEQ implements one of the country's first nutrient trading programs, allowing for the transfer of "credits" among existing wastewater treatment facilities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to meet nutrient limits.

**May 2007**

The Richmond and Hampton Roads areas meet the latest national health standard for air quality.

**2008**

The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program joins other states in forming the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean, which promotes regional collaboration to protect the ocean and coast.

**January 1, 2008**

DEQ assumes oversight of land application of biosolids, or sludge, in Virginia. This ensures a comprehensive inspection program and consistent enforcement of the biosolids regulations statewide.

**October 1, 2008**

State regulations take effect outlining wastewater reclamation and reuse, providing a mechanism for DEQ to promote the reuse of wastewater to further conserve drinkable water.

**February 2009**

A DEQ study of airborne toxic chemicals in Hopewell, a first for the area, provides details on 67 chemicals and metals, and calls for additional analysis of two chemicals.

**November 29, 2010**

Virginia submits the Phase I Watershed Implementation Plan for the impending Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load. DEQ developed the plan for most regulated nutrient sources subject to discharge permits.

**December 2010**

EPA adopts the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment. By 2025, DEQ is obligated to meet caps on discharges of nitrogen and phosphorus from municipal and industrial point sources in the Bay watershed.

**July 1, 2011**

The Virginia Brownfields Assistance Fund receives \$1 million from the state to provide funding to localities for brownfields redevelopment projects.

**December 2011**

In the first year under the watershed general permit for Chesapeake Bay nutrient discharges, facilities within all of the Bay's river basins achieve their nutrient limits, and several basins far exceed their reduction requirements.

**June 2012**

DEQ begins a community air study at fumigation sites in Suffolk, involving a stakeholder group to keep people informed about the monitoring project.

**July 1, 2012**

The Virginia Office of Environmental Education is transferred to the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Virginia Naturally education program has grown to more than 1,000 partners, delivering standards-based environmental education.

**July 1, 2013**

Stormwater permitting responsibilities transferred from DCR.

**Feb 2, 2014**

Coordinated response to coal ash spill in the Dan River

**April 30, 2014**

Coordinated response to CSX train derailment that spilled almost 30,000 gallons of oil into the James

**December, 2014**

The Coastal Zone Management Program produces the "Virginia Marine Debris Reduction Plan," the first on the east coast.

**August 19, 2015**

First meeting of the Eastern Virginia Groundwater Advisory Committee

**December 7, 2016**

Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan certified by the National Ocean Council; Virginia's Coastal Zone Management Program was integral to its development.

**2017**

DEQ to administer \$93.6 million from the Volkswagen settlement trust

**November 1, 2017**

Summer of 2017 was "the cleanest ground-level Ozone season" in Virginia in at least 20 years

**November 17, 2017**

Air Board approves draft rule to cut carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and link Virginia to a carbon-trading network of nine other states

**December 13, 2017**

Completion of the Virginia Coastal Plain Initiative to maintain the Potomac Aquifer productivity into the next generation.

**Spring 2018**

Over 630 MW of solar projects permitted since 2015 (about 320 currently operating)

**Spring 2018**

To date, DEQ has authorized \$80 million in grants for Stormwater Quality BMP construction, retrofits and stream restoration, funded 1012 Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund wastewater and stormwater projects at \$3.198 billion and signed 67 Water Quality Improvement Fund point source grants for a total of \$908.53 million.