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New dam safety legislation proposed in Mass.

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There are nearly 3,000 dams in Massachusetts. Some are owned by the state or municipalities, but most are privately owned. It is the responsibility of each owner to monitor and maintain these dams. A dam must be inspected by a professional engineer on a schedule based on the hazard classification of the structure. If deficiencies are found, they must be corrected by the owner. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation Office of Dam Safety has regulatory authority over most public and private dams in Massachusetts and can order necessary repairs to dams in poor or unsafe condition.

Dam repairs can be expensive for any owner. In an effort to assist owners in financing the repair or removal of existing dams, a bill has been proposed in the Massachusetts legislature which would create a revolving fund for low interest loans.

The bill's sponsor, senator Marc Pacheco, will be discussing the proposed legislation, Senate Bill 01985, at an Environmental Business Council program on April 26 in Boston. Please visit the EBC website for more details at www.ebcne.org

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