

Under Ohio Revised Code, all the land that uses and benefits from a project is required to share in the construction and maintenance costs. Petition projects are then maintained in perpetuity through the maintenance assessment.



# Drainage Petition Procedure

*Ohio Revised Code 6131, 6133, 6137*

## Why Maintenance?

Maintenance is required for drainage projects to ensure the system is functioning properly at the level it was designed. Annual inspections, minor repairs, tile replacement, erosion control, vegetation spraying, and log jam removal are all considered typical maintenance activities. No human-made objects, fences, sheds, buildings, trees, etc. shall be placed in the drainage easement.

## Your Role in Maintenance

Once the project is complete, if you observe a problem with the system, please reach out to our office. The faster we can respond to a problem, the faster we can remediate it. Keep your system working efficiently by picking up trash before it enters the drainage system and do not dump grass clippings or leaves in the storm drains.



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Ohio Revised Code Section 6131 refers to the drainage improvement petition process, also known as county ditch petition law. It provides a means for any private property owner to petition the county for a regional drainage improvement. These projects typically involve systems of subsurface (storm tile) and open surface (ditch) drainage that receive water from a specific area, known as a watershed.



## Why Petition?

The ditch petition process provides a path for property owners to resolve large-scale drainage problems in a scale larger than their individual properties.

## The Process

Drainage Petitions are started and paid for by property owners within the watershed. Here is a simplified outline of the petition process. Please call our office or consult with a legal counsel for more information.

1. A petition is filed.
  - a. Any property owner seeking drainage relief may file a petition, including residents, private corporations, and public entities.
  - b. A \$1500 bond must be filed with the petition, plus \$5 for each parcel in excess of 200 parcels.
2. A view is held with the County Board of Commissioners, County Engineer, property owners, and other interested parties.

3. A first hearing is held with the Board of Commissioners. The Board votes to proceed with design of the project or dismiss the petition. Watershed landowners are encouraged to provide testimony either in support of, or in opposition to, the proposed petition.
  - a. If the Board votes to proceed, the County Engineer performs topographic survey, detailed engineering design and specifications for the proposed improvement
4. A final hearing is held. All documents, including plans, reports, and schedule of assessments is considered.
  - a. If a project is deemed to possess benefits that outweigh the costs and is approved by the Commissioners, then the project is bid. If the bid is accepted, construction takes place with the project placed in the Drainage Maintenance Program.
  - b. If the project is dismissed, all costs for the proceedings may be distributed to the benefiting landowners.

## Who Pays?

Property owners benefitting from the improvement pay a special annual assessment for the cost of construction and maintenance. Funds collected are dedicated for use specifically for the project area for which it was collected.

