

ORDINANCE NO. ____-2026

Title: To amend Chapter 1137 of the Columbus City Codes by enacting Section 1137.26 to establish sewer tap requirements for large-scale data centers, and to harmonize such provisions with Chapters 1145 and 1105 of the Columbus City Codes.

SECTION 1.

That Chapter 1137 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby amended by enacting new Section **1137.26**, reading as follows:

1137.26 – Large-Scale Data Center Sewer Taps.

(A) Purpose and Applicability.

This section establishes additional requirements for sewer taps serving large-scale data centers. The provisions of this section shall apply in addition to, and not in lieu of, all other applicable provisions of Chapters 1105, 1137, and 1145 of the Columbus City Codes.

(B) Definitions.

As used in this section:

1. ***“Data center”*** means a facility used primarily for the storage, management, processing, or transmission of digital data.
 2. ***“Large-scale data center”*** means any data center that meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - (1) Gross floor area exceeding fifty thousand (50,000) square feet;
 - (2) Projected average daily sanitary discharge exceeding twenty-five thousand (25,000) gallons per day;
 - (3) Use of industrial-scale or process cooling systems discharging to the sanitary sewer.
 3. ***“Cooling water discharge”*** means water used in non-contact cooling processes, including evaporative cooling, liquid immersion cooling, or heat exchange systems.
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(C) Permit Required.

1. No sewer tap shall be issued for a large-scale data center without approval of the Director of Public Utilities.
2. Applications shall be submitted in accordance with Section 1137.05 and shall include all information required by this section.
3. The Director may condition approval upon compliance with applicable provisions of Chapter 1145, including industrial user permitting where applicable.

(D) Capacity Certification and System Impact Review.

1. In addition to the requirements of Section 1137.07, the applicant shall submit:
 - (A) A wastewater generation and discharge report, sealed by a professional engineer licensed in the State of Ohio;
 - (B) Projected average and peak flows, expressed in gallons per day and gallons per minute;
 - (C) Temperature ranges and anticipated thermal loading;
 - (D) Identification of any additives, biocides, corrosion inhibitors, or treatment chemicals.
 2. The Director shall evaluate the proposed discharge for impacts on:
 - (A) Sewer conveyance capacity;
 - (B) Pump stations and downstream infrastructure;
 - (C) Treatment plant performance and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance.
 3. The Director may require independent technical review at the applicant's expense.
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(E) Infrastructure Improvements and Cost Recovery.

1. Where existing public sewer facilities are insufficient, the Director may require, as a condition of tap approval:
 - (A) Construction of on-site or off-site sewer improvements;
 - (B) Enlargement of downstream facilities;
 - (C) Participation in capital improvement cost recovery pursuant to Chapter 1105.
 2. All such improvements shall be designed and constructed in accordance with City standards and shall be subject to inspection and acceptance by the City.
 3. No tap shall be activated until required improvements are completed or financial assurances acceptable to the Director are provided.
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(F) Pretreatment and Discharge Limitations.

1. Discharges from large-scale data centers shall comply with Chapter 1145.
2. The Director may require installation of pretreatment or control measures, including but not limited to:
 - (A) Temperature attenuation systems;
 - (B) Chemical neutralization or removal systems;
 - (C) Flow equalization facilities.
3. The Director may impose specific discharge limits more stringent than those in Chapter 1145 where necessary to protect the system.

(G) Metering, Monitoring, and Reporting.

1. The owner shall install and maintain metering devices approved by the Department of Public Utilities to measure flow and, where required, temperature and water quality parameters.
 2. Continuous monitoring systems may be required for high-volume or variable discharges.
 3. The owner shall submit periodic reports in a form prescribed by the Director.
 4. The City shall have the right to enter the premises for inspection, sampling, and verification of compliance.
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(H) Fees.

1. In addition to sewer tap fees established under Section 1137.12, the Director is authorized to assess supplemental charges based on:
 - (A) Peak discharge capacity;
 - (B) Strength and characteristics of wastewater;
 - (C) Required capital improvements and administrative oversight.
 2. Such fees shall be established in accordance with applicable provisions of Chapter 1105 and shall be reasonably related to the cost of service.
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(I) Enforcement.

1. Violations of this section shall be subject to enforcement under Chapters 1105 and 1145.
 2. The Director may suspend, revoke, or modify any approval issued under this section for noncompliance.
 3. Unauthorized or harmful discharges may result in immediate termination of sewer service.
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Section 1.

The Director of Public Utilities may promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement and administer this section.

SECTION 2.

That existing sections of Chapter 1137 are hereby renumbered as necessary to accommodate this enactment, and all cross-references are amended accordingly.

SECTION 3.

That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.
