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**Act No. 114 (H.778). An act relating to dam safety**

**Subjects: Conservation and development; dam safety; emergency operation planning**

This act requires the Division of Emergency Management, in coordination with the Department of Environmental Conservation, to conduct a pilot project for the development of a set of emergency operations plans (EOPs) for two State-owned high-hazard dams. One of the dams shall have a population at risk of 1,000 or more persons, and the other dam shall have a population at risk of 100 or more but fewer than 1,000 persons. In preparing the EOPs, the Division shall assess the needs of a community and the businesses, organizations, and public it must engage with for planning in a community. The act requires each EOP to meet specific requirements, including identification of planned evacuations and evacuation routes, identification of where individuals shall evacuate to, and a plan for the use of mutual aid and State resources. The act requires the Division to report the results of the project, including copies of the EOPs, to the General Assembly by July 1, 2028. The report shall include a summary of the process of developing the EOPs, the cost of the completed EOPs, and a scope, timeline, and budget for the Division to develop an EOP template and training on EOP development for municipalities. The Division also shall recommend how EOPs should be completed for all municipalities downstream of a State or federal dam in Vermont that is a high-hazard potential dam and that has a population at risk of 100 or more persons. The report shall include an estimate of what it would cost for the Division to complete or contract for EOPs for all municipalities downstream of dams with a population at risk of 100 or more persons. The Division also shall recommend how often exercises should be conducted to validate EOPs completed under the project and for all EOPs in the State. The act also clarifies that the Governor or the Director of Emergency Management may order the evacuation of an area subject to inundation from a dam failure without municipal approval.

Effective Date: May 27, 2026