

FAQs

Van Cass Intercounty Drain Drainage Board

Cass County

Van Buren County

MDARD

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about the Hearing of Necessity & Electronic Access Procedure

Why did I receive a notice?

A petition was received for maintenance and improvement of the Van Cass Intercounty Drain . The Drainage District for the Drain spans across portions of Cass and Van Buren Counties. All property owners with lands in the Drainage District were sent a copy of the notice.

What is a Drainage District?

A drainage district is the land area that benefits from the drain. The drainage district makes up the watershed that contributes water to the drain. Each property and municipality within the drainage district pays for the construction (or establishment) of the Drain and for future maintenance and improvement of the drain.

What happens after a petition is received?

When a valid petition is filed with a member of the Intercounty Drainage Board, the Michigan Drain Code of 1956, as amended, requires a hearing to determine if the project is practicable. The Drainage Board met on August 23, 2019 and determined the requested improvement to the drain was practicable. Subsequently, preliminary engineering was undertaken. This is now complete, and the Drain Code requires the Board to hold a Hearing of Necessity to determine if the project is necessary to public health, convenience , or welfare.

What happens at a Hearing of Necessity?

The Drainage Board will receive evidence and hear testimony of interested persons. An engineer will also present an inspection

report on the condition of the drain. The Board will determine whether a project is necessary.

What happens after the Hearing of Necessity?

If a project is not found necessary, the process will end and no project will occur. If a project is found necessary, then the Board will work with engineers and other consultants to finalize the scope of the project. Then, the Drainage Board will take bids for the construction of the project and will subsequently hold a public meeting to review apportionments. Notices for the public hearing on apportionments/ assessments will be mailed to all property owners and municipalities in the drainage district.

What is my assessment amount?

Estimated assessment amounts are not yet determined. If the Board finds the project necessary, each county will hold a public meeting to review apportionments/ assessments after a project scope has been determined.

Can the decision of the Drainage Board be appealed?

Yes. If a person feels aggrieved by the Board's determination of necessity, he/she may institute an action in circuit court within 10 days after the determination by the Board. MCL 280.122a.

How can I get more information?

To get more information or have questions answered, please call the number listed on the notice.

Why is this meeting being held electronically?

Due to the current COVID-19 public health crisis and various state and federal orders/recommendations, the Board is holding the meeting 100% electronically.

What is Zoom?

Zoom is a video conferencing service that allows for virtual meetings, either by video, audio-only, or both. Zoom meetings can be accessed through the Zoom app, an internet browser, or by telephone.

How do I download the Zoom app on my device?

You will be prompted to download the app when you enter the meeting link from your notice into a web browser on your computer or device. You can also download the app as follows:

- **Computer.** The computer/laptop app is available for download at zoom.us/download. Select the download for "Zoom Client for Meetings."
- **Smartphone, tablet, and other app-based devices.** Search for "Zoom" in the app store for your device or go to zoom.us/download and select the appropriate link under "Zoom Mobile Apps."

How do I access the Meeting on Zoom?

- **By App.** Enter the meeting link from your Notice into a web browser. Permission will be requested to open the app on your device. Alternatively, you can open the app, select "Join," enter the Meeting ID from your Notice, and press the "Join" button.
- **By Web Browser on Computer/Laptop.** Go to zoom.us/join, enter the Meeting ID, and select "Join." For further information about accessing from a web browser, please visit <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362593-Launching-Zoom-from-a-web-browser>.
- **By Telephone.** Dial the number provided on your Notice. If requested, enter the Meeting ID from your Notice.

How do I participate during the meeting?

Once you have entered the Zoom meeting, you will be automatically placed on "mute." The Drainage Board Chair and meeting host will give further information about how to participate and when public comment is permitted. You are requested to remain "muted" until called on for comment.

How do I indicate I want to comment?

You can indicate that you would like to comment or ask a question by virtually "raising your hand," at which point a hand icon will appear next to your name for the meeting host to see. To "raise your hand":

- **Computer.** Select the icon labeled "Participants" at the bottom of your screen. This will pull up a participant list on the right side of your screen. At the bottom of the participant list, select the "Raise Hand" button. Once called on to speak, select the "Unmute" button on your screen.
- **Smartphone, tablet, and other app-based devices.** Select the "Raise Hand" button at the bottom of your screen. If "Raise Hand" is not present, select the "More" button to reveal more controls. Once called on to speak, select the "Audio" or "Unmute" button on your screen.
- **Telephone.** Dial *9 to "Raise Hand." Once called on to speak, dial *6 to unmute your line.

How can I request help in ensuring I have access to attend the meeting electronically?

Please call your county drain commissioner at the number listed on the notice. Every effort will be made to help ensure your participation.

Can I submit questions or comments prior to the Day Meeting?

Questions and comments prior to the meeting can be submitted to your county drain commissioner at the number listed on the notice.