



DEQ POLICY STATEMENT PS15-12

PLAN REVIEW FOR CITIES

PURPOSE

This policy establishes conditions under which the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with qualifying cities to perform plan reviews and authorize construction without any prior review and approval by DEQ. The development of an MOU is for the purpose of allowing qualified cities to review more complex engineering designs associated with drinking water and wastewater projects. This policy supersedes PM06-2.

BACKGROUND

DEQ has been negotiating MOUs with cities to establish an advanced review opportunity as an extension of the piloted fast track engineering review process. DEQ has recognized that some cities have extensive engineering or public works departments and may benefit by performing additional plan reviews.

Experience tells us that certain cities are capable of preparing design plans and specifications for more complex systems, are staffed to include senior engineers that perform peer evaluations that include modifications to plans, and are able to conduct independent plan reviews.

The following complex systems are considered for these additional plan reviews:

- Booster and pressure reducing stations and routine drinking water storage system replacement for drinking water supplies
- Pressurized sewer mains, sewage lift stations, septic tank effluent pumping (STEP) systems, and routine wastewater treatment unit replacement or minor upgrades that conform to approved facility master plans

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Qualifications for Cities

Cities may apply to DEQ for consideration to develop an MOU with the city for complex engineering plan reviews associated with either drinking water or wastewater systems or both. Cities may request development of an MOU under one of two approaches:

- Approach #1—Cities have senior professional engineers competent in water and/or sewer infrastructure design and are knowledgeable of DEQ rules and regulations serving as the review staff
- Approach #2—Cities have a contract with the same engineering firm for over 3 years, and the firm employs senior professional engineers that are knowledgeable of the cities' drinking water or wastewater master plans, DEQ's rules and regulations, and have design and review experience in Idaho

Senior professional engineering staff must have thorough knowledge, skills, and abilities in the design, review, and construction of water and wastewater projects in Idaho as demonstrated by experience designing drinking water and wastewater systems involving a minimum of 20 projects. Senior professional engineering staff must have demonstrated experience in interpreting applicable facility and design standards and accompanying guidelines. DEQ believes facilities reviewed by qualified cities with a current City-DEQ MOU will likely produce no significant adverse impact on public health and the environment. Therefore, pursuant to Idaho Code §39-118(2)(d), DEQ has determined that such facilities reviewed by qualified cities with a current City-DEQ MOU may be constructed without prior review and approval by DEQ.

Development of a Memorandum of Understanding

After reviewing the city staffing charts, resumes, and history, DEQ may choose to develop with a city an MOU to perform plan reviews of complex drinking water or wastewater collection systems. Cities need to include in their review materials an approved facility master plan (less than 5 years old). The city shall specify by name the senior professional engineer(s) designated to conduct plan and specification reviews and provide qualifications for DEQ review. Senior professional engineers(s) shall attend plan and specification review trainings as provided by DEQ.

Projects may be limited to drinking water or wastewater only dependent upon the city staff knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience.

MOU Conditions

City-DEQ MOUs for drinking water or wastewater complex system plan review will include the following terms and conditions:

1. The MOU for plan review shall be reviewed every 3 years with the city and may be extended if city performance meets DEQ criteria. If significant staffing changes take place, then the MOU shall be suspended until reviewed.
2. Cities are required to submit (electronically if possible) one copy of approved construction plans at the time each project approval is issued and one copy of record drawings to DEQ within 30 days of project completion.
3. MOU may be suspended at any time by either party after 60 days notice or immediately if a DEQ MOU review or plan review audit determines that the city is not in compliance with the terms of the MOU or determines that the city is not performing adequate review of plans.
4. City shall perform all external agency coordination/notification functions normally performed by DEQ in conjunction with plan and specification approvals (e.g., notification of the State Plumbing Bureau).

RESPONSIBILITY

DEQ's wastewater engineering manager is responsible for maintaining this policy.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is effective immediately and will remain in effect for 5 years unless amended, replaced, or rescinded prior to expiration.

Dated this 21st day of May, 2015



Curt Fransen
Director