



The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Sanitary Sewer Extension Permitting Process

Water Quality/Wastewater Permits/#1.12/July 2002

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) sewer extension (SE) permitting process has changed dramatically so please read the following instructions carefully.

Why Did the Process Change?

With the recent reorganization and staffing changes, the MPCA decided that it was a good time to streamline the current SE permitting program. We wanted to continue to issue SE permits in a timely manner but we also wanted to focus our technical review efforts on projects that DO NOT meet the basic construction design criteria and, therefore, represent the greatest environmental risk.

To achieve this, the new process requires that plans and specifications ONLY be submitted to the MPCA when a project DOES NOT meet our design criteria. This determination is made by the project's design engineer using a new form and checklist titled: Design Certification for Sanitary Sewer Extension Plans and Specifications. By completing this form, you will also be able to determine if your project is on the FAST TRACK or the SLOW TRACK for permit issuance.

FAST TRACK projects are those that can certify that they conform with the MPCA design criteria and, therefore, will require minimal technical review by MPCA staff. These projects will be given top priority and every effort will be made to issue the permits within two weeks. Projects that cannot certify conformance with the design criteria will be on the **SLOW TRACK**.

Plans and specifications must be submitted to the MPCA for these projects and review time will be based on staff availability and workload. Unfortunately, permit issuance may take many weeks or months.

The new process (including exactly what forms need to be submitted) is explained in more detail on the next page.

As you can see, this new process strongly encourages you to design extensions that conform to our design criteria. Projects on the **FAST TRACK** not only get your permit much faster, but you will be helping the MPCA use its limited resources on projects that represent a greater potential harm to the environmental.

MPCA Compliance Audits and Inspections

As always, we expect quality planning, design, and construction practices from the project permittees, engineers, and contractors. To encourage compliance, we will also be doing periodic audits of project proposals. For example, we may require that plans and specifications be submitted on projects that certified that they met our design criteria. The MPCA staff may also conduct on-site construction inspections to ensure that projects are being built as designed. Failure to comply with the requirements of the permit or program, including knowingly submitting incomplete or incorrect information may subject the responsible party to permit revocation, administrative sanctions and/or enforcement action.





Here's another look at the new process:

FIRST ANSWER THE QUESTION: Does the proposed project conform to the MPCA's sewer design criteria?

The project engineer completes the document titled: Design Certification for Sanitary Sewer Extension Plans and Specifications to determine if the proposed sewer extension project conforms with the MPCA's design criteria. Based on that determination, the project will either be on the **FAST TRACK** or **SLOW TRACK** for permit issuance:

YES



FAST TRACK

If the consultant determines that the project conforms to the design criteria, the following is required to be submitted to the MPCA (**DO NOT submit plans and specs!**):

1. The completed and signed design certification document.
2. The completed and signed form titled: Permit Application and Transmittal Form for Sanitary Sewer Extensions and/or Changes.
3. The \$240 fee.

The MPCA will make every effort to issue these permits within two weeks.

NO



SLOW TRACK

If the consultant determines that the project does not conform to the design criteria, the following is required to be submitted to the MPCA:

1. The completed and **unsigned** design certification document.
2. Plans and specifications for the proposed project.
3. The completed and signed form titled: Permit Application and Transmittal Form for Sanitary Sewer Extensions and/or Changes.
4. The \$240 fee.

Review time will be based on MPCA staff availability and workload. Permit issuance may take many weeks or months.

- Send the project information above to: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55155-4194, ATTN: Sanitary Sewer Extensions, REM, Metro.
- All of the new forms are available on the MPCA's Web site at: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us>. You can also contact the MPCA's Customer Assistance Center at (651) 297-2274 (Metro or outside MN) or toll free at (800) 646-6247 to request forms or ask questions.