



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**SUBJECT: Policy on Public Involvement
In Department Programs and
Activities**

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Public involvement is a vital part of many programs administered by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). A successful public involvement process would ensure that those who are most likely affected by a DEQ decision are notified, understand the proposed decision, and have an opportunity to provide meaningful input prior to DEQ action.

POLICY:

The legal framework of public involvement in DEQ activities is established by the various enabling statutes administered by the DEQ and the Administrative Procedures Act, 1969 PA 306, as amended. While some specific aspects of public involvement are particular to the statutory and regulatory framework of individual programs, public involvement in the DEQ will be based on the following underlying principles:

- The decision-making process should foster fairness and understanding. It should be transparent, occurring in steps and in a time frame that is understood and predictable by involved parties. The decision-maker should be readily identifiable before the decision is made. Each decision should be based on the technical merits of a proposal and decision-making criteria established by law. The basis for the decision should be available to the public, and the DEQ is accountable for the decision.
- The public should have the opportunity for a meaningful role in the DEQ's activities: The public should be able to contribute to a decision on a proposed program or activity that could affect their quality of life. The public should have access, consistent with state law, to information and the evaluation of information involved in the decision. The DEQ should be able to explain its decision and how relevant and timely comments were considered in that decision thereby affording an involved participant the ability to ascertain that his or her interests were heard and considered.

