

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION
WASTEWATER EXPEDITED PERMIT APPLICATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015

I. Introduction

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has the authority for oversight of public wastewater systems per Part 41, Sewerage Systems, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended. Part 41 authority includes a public wastewater systems construction permit program. Section 4113 of Part 41 provides applicants with the option to request an expedited review of Part 41 construction permits for a fee. The statute also requires that the DEQ annually report relevant statistics for the expedited review program.

II. Program Overview

In its broadest sense, Part 41 seeks to protect Michigan's waters from harmful pollutants by ensuring wastewater systems are designed with adequate capacity and redundancy, and are capable of providing a level of treatment that will protect public health and water quality. Part 41 authorizes the DEQ to issue permits to entities seeking to construct wastewater systems. Persons seeking to construct wastewater systems must submit an application for a permit to the DEQ for evaluation. District engineers review permit applications to determine their completeness and acceptability with regard to accepted design standards for wastewater facilities. District engineers work closely with applicants and their consultants to understand proposed, complex processes and designs and assure that any construction permit subsequently issued results in construction of wastewater facilities which protect the state's water resources from harmful pollution.

There are instances when development projects that involve construction of wastewater facilities are on tight time frames for completion. The intent of the expedited permit program is to aid in timely planning of projects by providing applicants an option for a quick turn-around time for Part 41 permit review. This expedited permitting option provides excellent customer service from the DEQ and keeps such construction projects moving along in a timely manner, which is important to both the environment and economy of Michigan.

III. Wastewater Expedited Permits

The expedited permit program continued to gain momentum in fiscal year (FY) 2015, following observed increases from previous years. In FY 2015, 34 applications were submitted, the highest number in a single FY to date and a likely indicator that development projects in Michigan are increasing. The DEQ continued to respond to expedited permit applications in a timely manner, and all expedited permit reviews were completed within the statutory time frame of ten business days. Permits are rarely denied, but aspects of design are often revised based on adjustments needed to meet accepted design criteria and remain protective of water quality. The average number of days from the date of receipt of a complete application to the date of a permit decision was 1.3 business days in 2015.

Wastewater Expedited Permit Summary

Item	Total Number	Percentage (if applicable)
(a) The number of requests for expedited review received by the DEQ.	34	Not Applicable
(b) The number and percentage of requests for expedited review that were properly submitted.	34	100
(c) The number and percentage of requests for expedited review that were reviewed for completeness within statutory time frames.	34	100
(d) The number and percentage of requests for expedited review for which a final action was taken by the DEQ within statutory time frames.	34	100

The amount of revenue in the fund at the end of FY 2015 is \$49,000.

Number of Final Actions by Type

Type of Final Action	Number of Actions
Issued	34
Denied	0
Other	0
Total Final Actions	34

IV. Future Goals

In FY 2016, the DEQ will continue to provide a high level of customer service by timely responding to Part 41 permit applicants who choose to apply under the expedited permit review program while also assuring protection of Michigan's environment. Additionally, in FY 2016 the DEQ introduced an electronic application submittal process for Part 41 permits, including expedited permit program submittals, into the MiWaters system. This will further provide better customer service by allowing applicants to submit applications electronically, thereby, eliminating the time paper applications spend in the mail system. Proper planning and construction of wastewater facilities, regulated by Part 41, are essential aspects in preventing raw sewage discharges. Raw sewage discharges continue to offend Michiganders, as they should. Efforts will continue to prevent and eliminate those discharges and assist our municipal partners in planning for long-term management of their critical infrastructure assets. The expedited permit review program will ensure that these efforts continue to protect public health and the environment, while providing timely response to keep projects moving along for the benefit of Michigan's economy.