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Renewable Operating Permits Issued Twice as Fast

Renewable Operating Permits (ROP) that once took the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) 500 days to process now take just 250 days, thanks to a redesign of the ROP process that was completed in September 2011.

That amounts to a 50% decrease in permitting time over the last two years.

The ROP incorporates all of the facility's state and federal clean air requirements into a single document that gives the facility, the DEQ, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the public a clearer picture of the facility's obligations and allowed discharges of air emissions.

A total of 375 Michigan facilities are subject to ROPs. They include utilities; landfills; manufacturers of automobiles, paper, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals; and steel mills and mining operations. Renewals are required every five years, which means the DEQ's Air Quality Division (AQD) processes about 75 ROPs per year on average.

After eliminating duplicative forms and redesigning the permit renewal application, customers can now fill out the application much more quickly. This also minimizes the time spent by staff processing and issuing the permit.

By improving the old permit process, the AQD permit program has become more efficient, while still maintaining the protection of public health from the emissions of air contaminants.

