

XI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Any sewer line project that is more than three miles in length and has a design capacity of 1 MGD (average daily flow) or greater must have an Environmental Assessment completed before application to DEM for the non discharge permit. Pumping stations with a design capacity of 1 MGD or greater must have an Environmental Assessment regardless of the length of the associated collector system or force main.

Procedures for conducting Environmental Assessments and preparing reports are published by the North Carolina Department of Administration and are available through CMUD Engineering Division. A minimum of six months should be allowed for review and approval of the Environmental Assessments. Preparation time for the Environmental Assessments way vary from 60 days to several months depending on project complexity.

XII. WETLANDS PERMIT

Any project that involves encroachment on wetland areas must have a wetlands permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. It is the responsibility of the agency or design firm in responsible charge of project design to secure this permit. The procedure for obtaining permits is summarized as follows:

1. Have wetland areas delineated by a competent environmental scientist according to procedures specified by the "Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands".
2. Submit wetlands delineation maps to the U.S. Corps of Engineers, Asheville field office for verification.
3. Complete design of the project to minimize damage to wetlands consistent with good engineering practice and other constraints.
4. Submit project design data to North Carolina Department of Environmental Health and Natural Resources, Division of Environmental Management, Special Projects Sections for a water quality certification as required by Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.
5. Decide which type of permit is applicable according to the following guidelines:
 - a. Nationwide Permit #12. Damage to wetland areas is minor (e.g. small wetland areas adjacent to stream crossings) and the corridor width through the wetland area is less than 40 feet. No stockpiling material or spoil in wetland areas is permitted.
 - b. Nationwide Permit #26. The project is in an upland area where two year storm runoff is less than 5 CFS and the disturbed area is 10 acres or less.
 - c. Regional General Permit. The project parallels active streams, perhaps with stream crossings, with considerable encroachment into wetland areas. The maximum corridor width for a general permit is 40 feet. Spoil material and construction materials may be stockpiled within the corridor. Construction equipment can be operated outside the corridor provided the soil crust is not penetrated.
 - d. Individual Permit. Conditions of the general permit or nationwide permit cannot be met.
6. Submit permit application to the Wilmington District Office with the Section 401 Water Quality Certification from DEM. If an Environmental Assessment is required for the project, a copy of the approval letter should be included with the application.
7. A minimum of three months should be allowed for review and approval of Nationwide and Regional General Permits. Individual permits may require a one year or longer review and approval period depending on complexity and the amount of controversy generated.