



**United States
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Agriculture**

Selecting an Engineer

As part of an application for funding from Rural Development, Utilities Programs, the applicant must select an engineer using the process described in 7 CFR 1780.39(b), which is based on the requirements of the Qualifications Based Selection Process (QBS). This process involves public announcement (typically this involves a Request for Qualifications or RFQ) of all requirements for engineering services and negotiation of contracts on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional services required at a fair and reasonable price.

State laws and regulations may also apply to the selection of an engineer. For assistance in selection of an engineer contact the [National Rural Water Association](#) or the [Rural Community Assistance Partnership](#).



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Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)

A PER is the basic engineering document in an application for funding from Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal program. This document is developed by the consulting engineer and submitted along with a complete application to the Rural Development Processing Office for review. The PER describes the need for a project, presents an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project, including a life cycle present worth cost analysis of any feasible alternatives, a description of the proposed project, a detailed construction cost estimate, a total project cost estimate, and an annual operating budget.

The detailed content requirements for a PER are contained in RUS Bulletin 1780-2, "Preliminary Engineering Reports for the Water and Waste Disposal Program". This document is based on an interagency guidance document completed in 2013 by federal and state government partners, including USDA, Rural Utilities Service, the US EPA State Revolving Fund programs, the Indian Health Service, and the HUD Community Development Block Grant program.



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Engineering and Construction Contract Documents

Certain [Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee \(EJCDC\)](#) forms of agreement are considered pre-approved for use on Water and Waste Disposal projects. In addition the [ConsensusDOCS](#) forms 200.2, Electronic Communications Protocol Addendum and 220, Contractor Qualification Statement for Engineered Construction are pre-approved for use. Other contract forms may be considered on a case by case basis by the USDA Office of General Counsel, but are not pre-approved for use. Note that the EJCDC and ConsensusDOCS documents are proprietary and must be purchased before use.

[RUS Bulletin 1780-26](#), Guidance for the Use of Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee (EJCDC) Documents on Water and Waste Disposal Projects with RUS Financial Assistance explains how the EJCDC documents may be used on projects funded by the USDA, Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service, Water and Waste Disposal (WWD) Program and which EJCDC documents are pre-approved for use. Note that the EJCDC Funding Agency edition documents are no longer approved for use on WWD projects.



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Open and Free Competition

Maximum open and free competition requirements, found at 7 CFR 1780.70 (b) and (d), and that originate from OMB requirements at 2 CFR 200.319 and the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Section 306 (a) (17), make certain demands of RUS borrowers. Maximum open and free competition mandates that recipients of funds from the USDA, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program must ensure that maximum competition is included in the procurement process, including for the specification of equipment and materials. To better clarify these requirements, RUS participated in two webinars sponsored by the National Rural Water Association on December 2nd and 3rd, 2015. The following is a link to the webinar recording, a copy of the PowerPoint slides, and a collection of questions and answers generated as a result of those webinars intended to improve understanding of the requirements of maximum open and free competition.

- [Open & Free webinar December 2015](#)
- [Open Free FAQ 6-2-16.docx](#)
- [Recorded Open and Free Competition Webinar](#)



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Engineering Links

It takes the coordination of a lot of resources and organizations to complete a successful project. As a service to our customers, we list these links to web sites outside RD that provide information helpful in processing applications, designing projects, administering construction, and solving operational problems. RD is not responsible for the content or reliability of these sites.

- [American Water Works Association](#)
- [Davis-Bacon Wage determinations](#)
- [Debarment/Suspension List](#)
- [DOT Specifications Online](#)
- [Treasury Circular 570](#)
- [USGS Water Quality Data](#)
- [Water Environment Federation](#)
- [Clean Water Needs Survey](#)
- [Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey](#)