

## Water Quality

The Clean Water Act (CWA) which regulates discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulates quality standards for surface waters was enacted in 1977. It built upon the 1948 Federal Water Pollution Control Act and additional reorganization and expansion measures in 1972.

All federally funded projects must comply with the CWA. For most of the Agency projects this is easily accomplished. They receive water from regulated public or cooperation water sources and are allowed to discharge their waste water into a regulated public or cooperation sewage system. If applicable, this should be noted within the environmental report.

Another issue to discuss is the scale of the water use or discharge. The current infrastructure should be able to accommodate the volume from the project. If not, then additional details may be required. For example, a project may require the existing 2" water line which serves the city block be replaced with a 4" water line.

Note any required changes in infrastructure because of the project. This is an area which may have the potential for secondary impacts. Streets may be temporarily closed due to utility upgrades. A new water line to serve a site may cross a floodplain or travel near a historic building or cemetery.

Environmental Reports (ER) for projects with potentially hazardous effluents will require more detailed review. If applicable, contact the specific regulatory agency for comments. These projects will typically be larger industrial or chemical type projects. Projects may require the Owner to collect and transport hazardous effluents to approved collection and disposal sites. The level and detail of the ER should equal the level of the potential impact. Identify the type of hazardous effluents.

Projects that are built within areas of a sole source aquifer recharge area have special requirements if there is any potential water impact. In Texas, this applies to the counties over the Edwards Aquifer I & II located in central Texas. A map and additional information is provided in the "Sole Source Aquifer Recharge Area" section of this guide. Construction and facility operation permits may be required.

Another point that some projects will need to address in the ER is the use of private septic systems. When the area is not served by a wastewater treatment plant, a private septic system will be required. This applies to many of our funded rural area projects. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is the regulatory agency for this in the state. Local counties sometime have jurisdiction for permitting as well. Identify the type of system proposed if known.

During the project construction, projects with a ground disturbance of one acre or greater require a storm water discharge permit. This is usually obtained by the contractor after the project engineer prepares a storm water pollution prevention plan (SW3P). If this is applicable to the project, it should be noted within the report for documentation purposes.

The primary point of contacts for comments regarding water quality is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 found here: <http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/region6.html> and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) found here: <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us> .