

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
WATER QUALITY DIVISION**

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**SUBJECT:** Guidance Memorandum Number 04-2015  
Local Review Program

**TO:** Regional Directors

**FROM:** Larry G. Lawson, P.E., Director



**DATE:** June 24, 2004

**COPIES:** Deputy Regional Directors, Area Engineers – Office of Wastewater Engineering, Regional Office Water Permit Manager, Asif Malik, Jon VanSoestbergen, Cindy Berndt

**Summary:**

The Sewage Collection and Treatment (SCAT) Regulations provides for the establishment of local review programs. Municipalities and certain other owners, such as public service authorities, can apply to the Department of Environmental Quality for the authority to administer a local review program. This would allow the municipality/public service authority to perform design review of a delegated group of project types. In general, the projects that may be reviewed and approved are gravity sewers below a certain diameter. This guidance sets forth procedures that should be followed to review and approve local review programs.

**Electronic Copy:**

An electronic copy of this guidance in PDF format is available for staff internally on DEQNET, and for the public on DEQ's website at <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/water>.

**Contact Information:**

Questions about this Guidance Memorandum should be directed to Asif K. Malik, P.E., Office of Wastewater Engineering, via e-mail at [akmalik@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:akmalik@deq.virginia.gov), or by phone at 804-698-4476.

**Disclaimer:**

**This document is provided as guidance and, as such, sets forth-standard operating procedures for the Agency. However, it does not mandate any particular method nor does it prohibit any particular method for the review and approval of local review programs. If alternative proposals are made, such proposals should be reviewed and accepted or denied on their technical and compliance with appropriate laws and regulations.**

### Local Review Programs

Section 220 of the *Sewage Collection and Treatment (SCAT) Regulations* provides for the establishment of local review programs. See Appendix A for the regulatory reference. Municipalities and certain other owners, such as public service authorities, can apply to administer a local review program which allows the municipality/psa to perform the routine design review of a delegated group of project types. In general the projects are gravity collection systems with up to 12 inch diameter sewers. Other project types may be included in the program at the discretion of the area engineer. If the locality routinely sees a certain type of project, the project type is covered by the standard specifications, and the locality has the capability of adequately reviewing the project type, it could be considered for inclusion.

In order to obtain approval of a local review program, the owner must provide

1. standard construction and design details and specifications for the type of projects to be included in the program
2. a master plan that includes:
  - a. design criteria
  - b. evidence of personnel capable of carrying out the review
  - c. a system map that shows the location of interceptors and force mains with design flows,
  - d. and a certificate method for certifying that the sewerage system projects meet the requirements of the regulations and that the project is in compliance with the master plan and the standard specifications.

In order to process the request, the area engineer would first review the standard details and specifications for compliance with the SCAT regulations and issue an approval. See Appendix B for a sample approval letter. Once the standard details and specifications are in place, the area engineer would review the master plan and determine if the design criteria are in compliance with the SCAT regulations; if the proposed review procedure is adequate; if the system map is adequate; and if the certificate is adequate.

In evaluating the proposed review procedure, the area engineer must ensure that a professional engineer licensed in Virginia will be accepting the responsibility for the review process and signing the approval certificates. Normally, the local review program is set up so that the owner is reviewing plans submitted by outside developers. However, some owners generate their own plans and specifications for some projects. These projects cannot be included in the local review program and should be submitted to DEQ for review unless the owner can demonstrate that the design process is independent of the review process.

Appendix C contains a draft Local Review Program Agreement. Slight modifications of this agreement are allowed to more accurately state the intentions of the program. Both the owner and the DEQ must agree to the conditions in the Agreement. The Agreement has a renewal date five years from the date of concurrence by the DEQ Water Division Director.

Note that the Agreement contains a sample Certificate to Construct and a Certificate to Operate. The owner must issue a CTC and a CTO for every project that it reviews. It is not necessary for DEQ to concur with every CTC and CTO issued. The SCAT regulations provide automatic waivers for gravity sewer projects that serve 400 persons or less and have a design flow of 40,000 gpd or less (9 VAC 25-790-60.A). Projects that fall under this waiver are not required to be approved by DEQ.

Appendix A - Excerpt from the *Sewage Collection and Treatment Regulations*

**9 VAC 25-790-220. Local Review for sewerage systems.**

In lieu of obtaining a CTC and CTO for each sewage collection project, an owner may elect to obtain approval for a master plan and subsequent local review for connections to, or extensions of, existing sewerage systems. The area engineer will provide technical review support for review of such requests. The following procedure for obtaining approval for local review shall be used:

1. Local plans and specifications. The owner shall develop, adopt, and request approval of general local specifications and plan details covering sewage collection design and construction. For local government or owner approvals, the sewerage system owner must provide for preparation and evaluation of design documents either within the appropriate local government agency, or by separate professional entities or firms, and submit a formal description of such arrangements to the area engineer for evaluation and approval by the director.
2. Master plan. The owner shall develop a plan, which outlines the following system specific requirements and the owner's method of compliance with such requirements:
  - a. Design criteria and construction specifications used by the owner,
  - b. Evidence that personnel with the training and experience necessary to ensure compliance with the program requirements are employed by the owner,
  - c. Location of interceptors and force mains, with design flows, for each designated service area within the collection systems conveying flow to the treatment works, and
  - d. A certificate method for certifying that sewerage system projects meet the requirements of these regulations, and that the project is in compliance with the master plan<sup>8</sup> and local standards and specifications approved by the director.

The local owner approval certificate should describe the project to be constructed in accordance with bid documents and provide for the identification, position and signature of the local official responsible for project oversight.

3. Extensions. Sewer line extensions shall not be undertaken if such construction result in an increase in the number of equivalent residential connections (total flow divided by the product of 100 gpd times the service population), unless the receiving sewerage system and treatment works have been issued a final CTO in accordance with this chapter verifying that there is adequate capacity to handle the project design flows.
4. Sewerage systems covered by this section will not be issued separate CTOs unless special operation requirements dictate a need for permit issuance.

Appendix B

Date, 200?

LOCATION: City/County  
Owner – Municipality/PSA  
Project: Standard Specifications

Mr. Owner

Dear Mr. Owner:

This Department has received standard specifications for \_\_\_\_\_ as prepared by \_\_\_\_\_. The specifications are entitled “\_\_\_\_\_” and are dated \_\_\_\_\_.

The review of these specifications has been confined to technical requirements and design criteria as stipulated in the Commonwealth of Virginia’s *Sewage Collection and Treatment Regulations* (9 VAC 25-790).

In accordance with the Virginia Water Control Law, *Code of Virginia* 1950, as amended, Title 62.1, Section 62.1-44.19, this letter is to advise that the previously mentioned specifications are technically adequate and are approved by this Department.

One copy of the previously described standard specifications with an Office of Wastewater Engineering approval sticker is enclosed.

By direction of the Director, Department of Environmental Quality.

Sincerely,

Name  
Area Engineer  
Office of Wastewater Engineering

cc DEQ-OWE  
Building Inspector  
DEQ – Regional  
Consulting Engineer

## Appendix C

### **LOCAL STANDARDS AND REVIEW PROGRAM AGREEMENT**

The \_\_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_\_ may apply for approval of a Local Standards and Review Program because they have on record with the Virginia Department of Quality, Office of Wastewater Engineering, approved general specifications and plan details covering gravity sewer design and construction. This agreement delegates the review and approval authority of the Virginia Department of Quality (DEQ) for gravity sewers to the \_\_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_\_, in accordance with 9 VAC 25-790-220 of the Sewage Collection and Treatment (SCAT) Regulations. In order to receive and maintain approval of this Local Standards and Review Program, the \_\_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_\_ must establish a program consisting of the following items set forth in this Agreement:

1. This Local Standards and Review Program is limited to the review and approval prior to the construction of gravity sewer projects only. The maximum pipe diameter to be approved by the \_\_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_\_ shall be \_\_\_ inches in diameter. Pumping stations and treatment works (including upgrades and expansions) are not covered in the Local Standards and Review Program.
2. Any modification of the \_\_\_\_\_ (owner's) \_\_\_\_\_ standard sewerage specifications and plan details must be approved by the DEQ Area Engineer. Any such modifications shall be in accordance with acceptable standards of practice and at least as stringent as the latest edition of the SCAT Regulations.
3. A local review staff shall be provided as necessary and identified to the DEQ Area Engineer. The \_\_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_\_ shall maintain or retain at least one (1) professional engineer licensed to practice in the State of Virginia (PE) on staff at all times (or retained by contract) in order for this local review approval to be valid. The loss of professional engineering services shall be reported immediately to the DEQ Area Engineer.
4. All individual project approvals shall be based on specific engineering plans and specifications.
5. A project approval report shall be completed for each project approved under the Local Standards and Review Program. This report shall include project location, pipe material, diameter, length, and design flow (average and peak) of the project. Reports for projects approved should be updated quarterly and provided to DEQ upon request.
6. A Certificate to Construct and a Certificate to Operate shall be issued by the \_\_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_\_ for gravity sewer projects that serve 400 or more persons and have a design flow of 40,000 gpd or more. The DEQ Area Engineer is required to co-sign the Certificates for these projects. [*ie any project authorized by the Local Review Program that falls outside the waiver authorized under 9 VAC 25-790-60A.*]
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ (owner's) \_\_\_\_\_ wastewater collection system map shall be updated on an annual basis (See Item 8 below). Copies of all approved project plans, in either paper or digital format, shall be kept on file at all times for inspection by DEQ personnel.
8. On an annual basis, the following information is to be available upon request by DEQ: an overall system map showing the overall system layout with pipe diameters; and the average daily demand for each of the preceding 12 months, unless the data has been previously reported.

9. The       (owner)       may both design and evaluate projects consisting of gravity sewers provided that the design is performed by a professional engineer licensed in Virginia in a organizationally separate section from the review engineer, and that the project is evaluated by the persons identified under section 3 of this Agreement.
  
10. Delegation of plan review and approval authority associated with this Local Standards and Review Program Agreement shall allow the       (owner)       to certify to DEQ that a particular project is eligible for tax-exempt status in conformance with DEQ guidelines for wastewater related projects.
  
11. The DEQ can, upon request, evaluate any set of project plans and specifications submitted to or prepared by the       (owner)       under the Local Standards and Review Program.
  
12. The conditions contained in the Agreement are to be adhered to as long as the       (owner)       has an approved Local Standards and Review Program. The approval for the Local Standards and Review Program may be renewed five years from the date of concurrence by the DEQ Water Quality Division Director.
  
13. This Agreement may be rescinded by either party at any time. Failure to meet the requirements of the Local Standards and Review Program as verified by the DEQ will automatically rescind this Agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Owner Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Area Engineer  
 Virginia Department of Quality

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

The conditions as outlined above are satisfactory to allow approval of the       (owner's)       Local Standards and Review Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director  
 Division of Water Quality  
 Virginia Department of Quality

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

A. CERTIFICATE TO CONSTRUCT

The following sanitary sewer plan has been reviewed and approved by the \_\_\_\_ (owner) \_\_\_\_ and found to be in conformance with current design criteria and specifications pursuant to Section 62.1-44.19 of the *Code of Virginia* (1950) as amended.

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Design Engineer: \_\_\_\_\_

Sewer Shed: \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Population: \_\_\_\_\_ Design Flow: \_\_\_\_\_

Pipe Size and Length: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Pipe: \_\_\_\_\_ Manholes: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Downstream facilities have adequate capacity to handle design flow:  Yes  No

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Engineer  
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

B. CERTIFICATE TO OPERATE

The above project was completed substantially in accordance with the approved plans and was inspected, tested, and approved for use.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Engineer  
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality