

Forest Industry New Construction Guide

Permitting and Other Things You Need To Know

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is a critical partner in the success of your new business start-up. By contacting them in the early stages of the planning process, you will be able to work with the Agency to ensure the appropriate permits are obtained to operate your business in Wisconsin. In addition to this guide, an online resource the DNR [Permit Primer](#) will assist you in determining which permits you need and how to contact key DNR staff. You will find the [Permit Primer](#) at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/permitprimer/>.

There are many types of Permits/licenses that a forest industry *might* need:

- Air
- Water Supply
- Storm Water
- Waterway and Wetland Permits
- Waste Water

This list is only a compilation of possible permits. Not all companies need all of the above permits/licenses. This document compiles information about common requirements and permits that start-up forest industry businesses need.

Critical Pre-Construction Steps

Contacting your local Department of Natural Resources office is a step to be taken as you are drafting your business plan and developing the engineering drawings for your facility. Early contact with the Department will help both you and the agency better understand what your commitments will be. Agency staff is able to help you understand the permitting parameters, which will help you make informed decisions on things such as equipment and location of your new facility.

Of the potential permits that a facility may need there are a few to pay special attention to. The three most common permits that forest product industries need to obtain are:

1. Air
2. Storm Water
3. Water Regulation/Wetlands

Air Permit

If a facility will require an Air permit, those permits must be obtained prior to “Start of construction” or, in other words, any land disturbance or clearing. Activities such as grading, tree removal or even driveway construction cannot occur until the permit is issued. Apply for the permit at least 6 months in advance of planned construction.

Once the facility has been constructed, the permit issued by the Department will be valid for approximately one year. Prior to the construction permit expiring, it is important that the facility apply for and obtain a long-term operational permit. The air permitting program can be difficult to understand. It is advisable that you hire a consultant to help you work with the Department of Natural

Resources to obtain your air permit. The State Wisconsin also offers air permitting assistance for small businesses through the Small Business Clean Air Program (SBCAAP).

Water Quality Issues

Identify/determine wetlands, streams, lakes, etc. on the proposed site acreage. These can have an impact on the location of buildings, access points, storm water runoff, etc.

STORM WATER:

Most forest product companies need storm water permits. Stormwater permitting is broken down into two: 1) a construction permit and 2) an operating industrial permit. If storm water will need to be controlled, both the construction and operational permits must be obtained prior to any land disturbing activities occur.

WETLAND:

While you are evaluating a site to determine if it is appropriate for your future business, work with the seller to verify if there are any wetlands present on site. This is usually done by means of a wetland delineation of the site. Depending on the size of the site and your plans, it may not be necessary to have the entire property evaluated, but rather concentrate on the area where your business activities will occur.

WATER SUPPLY

Know what your water needs (plant operation and fire protection) will be. If not adequate, can it be supplemented or should another site be considered. If your facility will need to draw more than 70 gallons per minute, and it is not feasible to hook-up to a municipal water supply, you will need a high capacity well. Working closely with the Department, will help you understand the hydrogeology of the site and weather it is feasible to expect that you will be able to obtain that volume of water. High capacity wells require a permit.

Environmental Site Assessment/"Phase I investigation"

Get an *Environmental Site Assessment* done if one has not already been conducted for the specific property. This will help you in several ways:

1. It will answer many of the DNR's questions for the various permits in one document.
2. Most lending institutions will require it to ensure that no historic environmental issues will hold up or stop the project once it is started.
3. Doing one early on will speed up both the permitting and financing aspects of your project.
4. Hire a reputable company/individual who has a history of doing them.

Fire

Fire is always a major concern with any wood industry business, which is why it is certainly part of the concern in the aforementioned points. As mentioned, contact your insurance agent as soon as possible. It is imperative that planning address the following issues:

- Year-round water access (ponds freezing or drying up in drought years)
- Separation of high-risk fire areas from other areas
- Adequate water flow pressure for fire suppression

Transportation

Transportation issues also need to be addressed. Some questions that should be asked are:

- Is there Class A Highway Access – Ingress and Egress?
- Is rail involved and have all issues been agreed to in writing with the rail company?

Glossary

Environmental Site Assessmentⁱ	<p>A complete Environmental Site Assessment can involve three Phases, depending upon the size, type, construction and location of the property; the past and present intended use(s) of the property; and availability and access to complete records.</p> <p>PHASE I ELEMENTS</p> <p>A Phase I ESA determines, for a parcel of real estate, the "recognized environmental conditions". That is, the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of the substance(s) into structures on the property, or into the ground, groundwater, or surface water of the property. It does this by accomplishing due diligence in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A visual inspection of the property, including walking over the entire site, ideally with the owner/manager/user present to answer questions. A comprehensive photographic log.2. Interviews with the owner/manager/user of all adjacent properties.3. A thorough review of all "practically reviewable" records pertaining to the property and surrounding properties within ASTM radii.4. A comprehensive written report. <p>PHASE II ELEMENTS</p> <p>Based on a properly executed Phase I report advising a Phase II report, a Phase II shall consist of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The physical sampling of the site, using the recommendations of the Phase I report as a minimum guideline.2. A comprehensive written report detailing the rationale for the sampling that took place, the sampling protocols and procedures employed, an explanation of the analytical results, and, if necessary, a description of the recommended remedial action needed to restore the site to the appropriate condition for its intended use. <p>PHASE III ELEMENTS</p> <p>Based on a properly executed Phase II report, a Phase III shall consist of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The design and implementation of the remediation of the site.2. All necessary reports and permits to achieve cleanup of the site to agreed upon site-specific standards.
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ⁱ <http://www.nstengineers.com/ESAs.htm>