

Permit Assistance Guide



Revised April 2025



Oklahoma City



Permit Assistance Guide

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I. Introduction

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was created in 1993 with a mission to enhance the quality of life in Oklahoma and the health of its citizens by fostering a clean, attractive, healthy, prosperous and sustainable environment. DEQ adheres to statutes, regulations, rules, and guidelines that direct the Agency to be customer friendly.

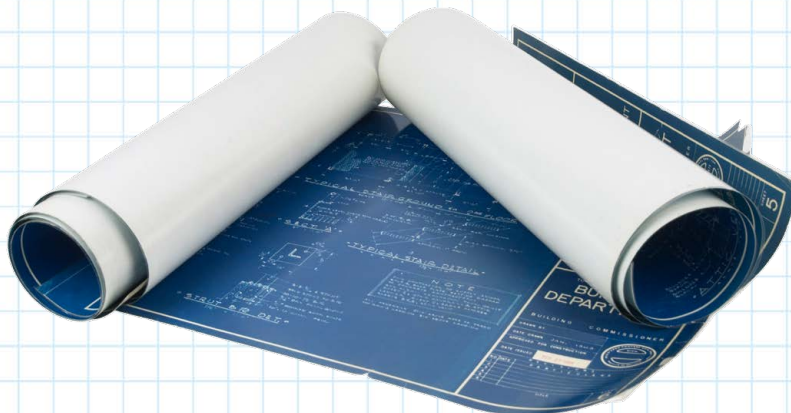
Over the past two decades DEQ's Customer Assistance Program (CAP) established itself as a leader in permitting new facilities. This program is now part of the Office of Business and Regulatory Affairs (OBRA).

An OBRA representative is assigned to new facilities to coordinate interaction with relevant divisions of DEQ. This is especially helpful to new facilities requiring multiple environmental permits. The representative will assist in determining what permits are needed to construct and operate the new facility. Because DEQ has received delegation from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for permitting programs in air, storm water, wastewater, public water supply and RCRA, all permit applications will be filed with DEQ.

The OBRA representative will coordinate meetings between DEQ permit writers and the facility's representatives. The representative can also assist in the establishment of permitting timelines in an effort to meet construction deadlines of the new facility. Finally, as the permit applications move forward toward issuance, the OBRA representative will track the progress of the permitting process to ensure it is proceeding in an efficient manner.

DEQ Contact:

If you have questions, please contact Owen Mills,
Director of Business and Regulatory Affairs,
at 405-702-7105. His email address is Owen.Mills@deq.ok.gov.



II. Permitting Process Summary

The Uniform Environmental Permitting Act requires that DEQ licenses, permits, certificates, approvals and registrations fit into an application category, or Tier, established under the Uniform Environmental Permitting Rules.

<https://oksenate.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/os27A.pdf>



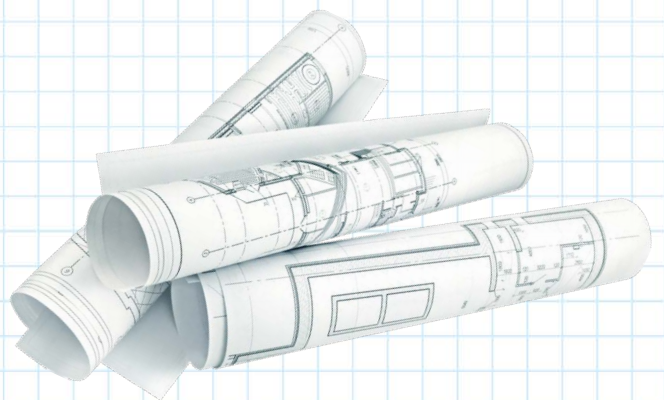
Tier I is the category for permit applications with administrative decisions that can be made by a technical supervisor. All permits applications require notice to the landowner. No public participation is required, except for certain Air Quality permits that have a public participation opportunity through noticing on the DEQ website.

Tier II is the category for those permit applications that have some public participation (notice to the public, the opportunity for a public meeting and public comment). The administrative decision is made by the Division Director.

Tier III is the category for those permit applications that have extensive public participation (notice to the public, the opportunity for a public meeting and public comment, and the opportunity for an administrative evidentiary hearing). The administrative decision is made by the Executive Director.

OAC 252:4 Rules of Practice and Procedure Appendix C:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/004.pdf>



Permitting Process Steps – All Media

Steps	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Filing – Applicant files application, pays any required fee, and provides landowner notice. Applicant may meet with DEQ staff prior to this.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Notice of filing – Applicant publishes notice in one newspaper local to site.	No	Yes	Yes
Process meeting – Notice – 30-day opportunity is published with notice of filing. DEQ holds meeting if requested and sufficient interest is shown.	No	No	Yes
Administrative completeness review – DEQ reviews application and asks applicant to supply any missing information.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Technical review – DEQ reviews application for technical compliance and requests applicant to cure any deficiencies.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Draft permit or draft denial – DEQ prepares this after completing review.	No	Yes	Yes
Notice of draft permit, public comment period and public meeting request opportunity – Applicant publishes this in one newspaper local to site (DEQ publishes notice of draft denial).	No	Yes	Yes
Public comment period – 45 days for hazardous waste treatment, storage or disposal draft permits; 30 days for all others.	No	Yes	Yes
Public meeting – Conducted by DEQ if held.	No	Yes	Yes
Review of comments – DEQ (written response)	No	Yes	Yes
Proposed permit – DEQ prepares this in response to comments on draft permit.	No	No	Yes
Notice of proposed permit – Applicant publishes, in one newspaper local to site, notice of 20-day opportunity to review permit and request administrative hearing.	No	No	Yes
Administrative permit hearing – Conducted by DEQ if held. Results in final order.	No	No	Yes
Issuance or denial – DEQ's final decision.	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note for Clean Air Act permits: In order to meet the minimum federal public participation requirements for state air pollution control programs, certain additional steps apply to the AQD permitting process. See OAC 252:4-7-13(g)

III. Air Quality Division (AQD)

Air Permits

Construction and operating permits for air emissions may be required for many operations. Minor Source Tier I, Major Source Tier I and II, and Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) Tier II and III requirements are found in DEQ rules OAC 252:4-7 at <https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/004.pdf>.

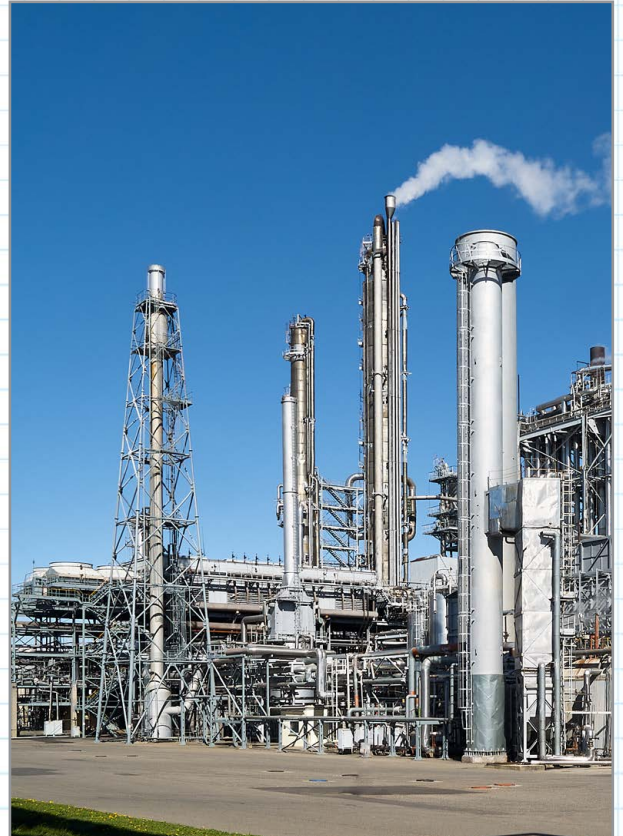
Permit Exempt – A facility would not need an air permit if the Potential to Emit (PTE) is below major source levels (100 tons/year of any criteria pollutant and 10 tons/year of any individual hazardous air pollutant and 25 tons/year of all HAPs combined), actual emissions of each criteria pollutant are below 40 tons/year, and the facility is not subject to any emission standard, equipment standard, or work practice standard, under New Source Performance Standard (NSPS) or National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP).

Tier I Minor Source Permit – A Minor Source Permit is needed if a facility does not qualify as Permit Exempt. Minor Source Individual Permits are processed as Tier I and require a 30-day public review. These permits are typically issued in 4 – 6 months but can be processed in as little as 6 weeks depending upon the need of the facility and the quality of the application.

Tier II Major Source Permit – A Major Source Permit is required if the facility does not qualify under the lower categories. Major Source Permits are processed as Tier II permits and require 30-day public review of the draft permit. These are typically issued in 6 – 9 months but timelines vary depending on the company need, facility complexity and application quality.

Tier III PSD-Major Sources – PSD-Major Sources are large sources with permitted criteria emissions above 250 tons/year (this level can be 100 tons/year if it is a designated source type as classified by EPA). PSD-Major Source construction permits are processed as Tier III permits and require 30-day public review of the draft and 20-day public review of the proposed permit. These permits are typically issued in 9 – 12 months.

Permit Modification – These facilities often do modifications to their facilities. These modifications are processed as either Tier I or Tier II based on the nature of the project. Tier I modifications are typically issued in 3 – 6 months. Tier II modifications are typically issued in 6 – 9 months. Depending on the type of application submitted, certain construction activities are allowed prior to issuance of the construction permit.



- **Major-PSD New Source Review (NSR) construction projects** – AQD follows EPA guidance on what construction activities are allowed prior to issuance of the construction permit.
- **Minor NSR projects** – Facilities may begin construction upon submittal of an administratively complete permit application and prior to issuance of the construction permit. An applicant may begin construction up to, but not including, making any emissions unit operational. In initiating these activities prior to permit issuance, the applicant assumes the risk of losing any investment it makes toward initiating construction. DEQ retains the authority to deny the permit application without consideration of and regardless of any investment the applicant has made prior to permit issuance. The regulations address this issue in OAC 252:100-7-2(b)(5) and OAC 252:100-8-4(a)(1)(D). Please contact the AQD permitting section at 405-702-4188 for further guidance.



IV. Water Quality Division (WQD)

A. Stormwater Permits

1. Construction – A construction stormwater permit will be required if the project will disturb one (1) or more acres.

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/stormwater-permitting/okr10-construction-stormwater/>



2. Industrial – Facilities wishing to discharge stormwater associated with industrial activities may elect to obtain coverage under either the stormwater multi-sector general permit or an individual discharge permit.

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/stormwater-permitting/okr05-industrial-stormwater/>



NOI's may be submitted online (preferred), via email or through the mail. Stormwater permit authorizations are typically issued within 14-30 days.

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/water-quality-division/permitting/>



B. Wastewater Permits

1. Industrial User Permit – If the facility's wastewater system is to be connected to a Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW), an Industrial User Permit will be required if the facility will contribute a significant volume of wastewater flow (>25,000 gallons per day or >5 percent of the total loading to the POTW) or if the wastewater will contain pollutants likely to pass through or interfere with treatment processes at the POTW. If the POTW operates an approved pretreatment program it will issue the industrial user permit. Otherwise DEQ will issue the permit. In either case, a permit can typically be issued within a few weeks to 90 days. The application form and instructions for a DEQ Industrial User Permit in a non-pretreatment municipality can be found on the DEQ website here:

<https://tinyurl.com/2wdzd8mk>



2. Municipal Wastewater Discharge Permit – Tier I and Tier II – If a facility is in need of a new direct discharge permit, a wasteload allocation (WLA) study and public notice will be required, as well as a public meeting for Tier II permits if requested. The WLA will also prompt an update to the state's Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) including technical review by EPA and a second (often concurrent) public process for the WQMP. This update must occur prior to issuance of the discharge permit. The entire process commonly takes a year or more. Municipal Wastewater Discharge Permit rules may be found at:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/690.pdf>



3. Wastewater System (Surface Impoundment, Tank System, or Land Application) Permit – If the facility proposes to store water in an impoundment or subsurface tank or land apply sludge or wastewater, a permit to construct and operate the wastewater system will be required. The permitting process can take up to 6 months, depending on the complexity of the wastewater system. Industrial wastewater system rules may be found at:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/616.pdf>

4. Water Reuse – If the facility proposes to purchase reclaimed water from a POTW, the facility must enter into a User/Supplier agreement with the POTW, and the POTW must seek to modify their DEQ permit to supply reclaimed water to the User. The POTW must be permitted to supply reclaimed water of a category appropriate for the proposed use. Rules for reclaimed water and water reuse may be found at:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/626.pdf>
and

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/656.pdf>



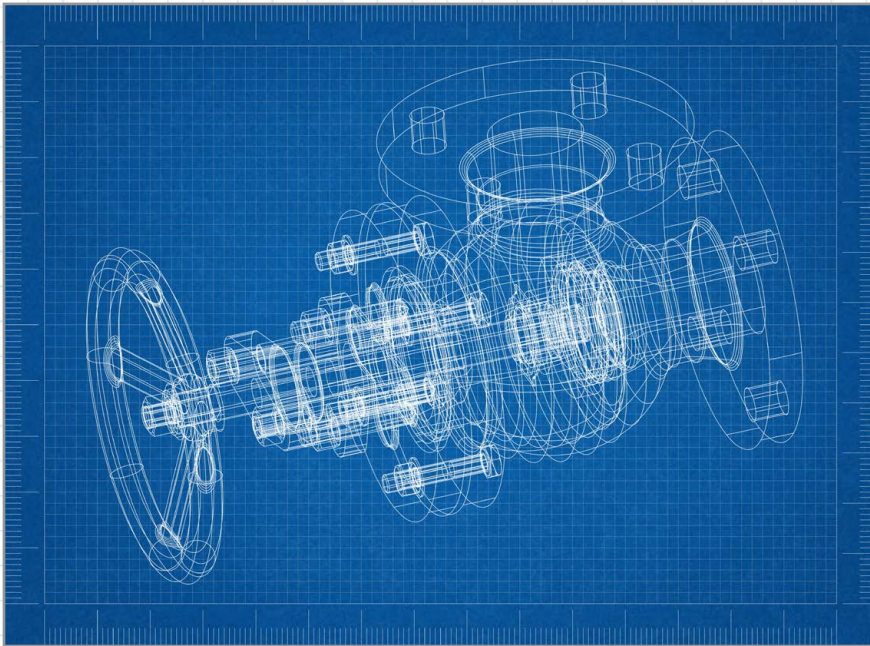
C. Public Water Supply Permits

If a facility develops its own source of drinking water, a DEQ construction permit will be required.* In many cases, an industrial facility will become a customer of an existing public water supply system rather than developing its own source of drinking water. *A water right may also be required. Contact the Oklahoma Water Resources Board at 405-530-8800.



D. Oklahoma DEQ Wasteload Allocations (WLA) Process for All New Discharges

1. Official letter from the Designated Management Agency (DMA) requesting to discharge
2. Discharger submits an Alternatives Report- A report that explains why discharging is the most feasible option (Oklahoma CPP page 158).
3. The discharger will submit a workplan providing details of how data will be collected and how that data will be used in a model(s) to develop a WLA.
4. Sampling may begin after the workplan is approved by DEQ.
5. Development of a water quality model to determine the impact of oxygen demanding substances on the instream D.O. concentration.
6. After the model and WLA report are submitted to DEQ, DEQ has 30 days to review.
7. If there are no issues with the model and/or the report, the model files and report will be transmitted to EPA for technical approval. EPA Region 6 has 30 days to review the information.
8. After EPA technical approval is granted and any EPA comments are addressed, a public notice of 208 Plan modification will be published.
9. The public comment period is open for 45 days. If there is a significant interest based on comments received, then a public meeting will be scheduled.
10. If a public meeting is warranted, notices will be sent out informing the public of the location and time of the meeting.
11. DEQ will address all public comments received during public notice period and submit the final document to EPA for approval. EPA will have 30 days for final review.
12. Subsequent to EPA approval, DEQ will update the 208 Plan for the facility with the new WLA.
13. The approved WLA will be incorporated into the facility's discharge permit.



V. Land Protection Division (LPD)

A. Hazardous Waste

1. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Permits – A RCRA permit is required for a facility that does one or more of the following:

- stores hazardous wastes for greater than 90 days;
- treats hazardous waste; and/or
- disposes of hazardous waste on-site.

2. Generator Requirements – If a facility generates hazardous waste, it must follow RCRA rules for its generator size as provided in the federal rules, which Oklahoma has adopted by reference. These rules may be found at:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/205.pdf>



B. Solid Waste

1. Solid Waste Permits – The following types of facilities are considered solid waste disposal facilities and will require a permit from DEQ prior to construction and/or operation.

- Land disposal facilities** – a landfill, or any other discrete area of land or land excavation, where solid waste is placed for treatment, processing, and/or disposal, with exceptions.
- Solid waste processing facilities** – including: transfer stations; solid waste incinerators receiving waste from off-site sources; regulated medical waste processing facilities receiving waste from off-site sources, and that are not shared service facilities; waste tire facilities; composting facilities, except yard waste composting facilities; permanently established household hazardous waste collection facilities; and any other type of facility that processes solid waste.
- Solid waste storage** – facilities used for the storage of solid waste for longer than 10 days.
- Used tire storage** – facilities used for the storage of more than 50 waste tires, except as authorized by 27A O.S. § 2-11-401.7.



2. Non-Hazardous Industrial Waste (NHIW) Disposal – If a facility disposes more than 10 cubic yards per month of non-hazardous industrial waste NHIW, as defined in OAC 252:515, it will need to submit a non-hazardous industrial waste certification to DEQ before sending the waste to an Oklahoma landfill for disposal.

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/515-1.pdf>

The NHIW certification form can be found at:

<https://tinyurl.com/bdftcw8u>



C. SARA Title III (Superfund)

Facilities that store chemicals requiring a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or perform manufacturing that uses hazardous chemicals may have reporting requirements under the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) Title III.

1. Tier 2 Reporting – Facilities storing 500 lbs. of a listed Extremely Hazardous Substance (list can be found on DEQ website or on SDS) or storing any other chemical requiring an SDS in amounts over 10,000 lbs. will be required to report that storage on a Tier2 form. Due date is March 1st annually. Oklahoma requires on-line reporting; instructions can be found on the DEQ website.

2. Toxic Release Inventory – Facilities engaged in manufacturing, having more than 10 full time employees, and using listed chemicals in threshold amounts, all of which can be found on the EPA TRI website, may be required to report a Form R under the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI). Those reports are due annually on July 1st and must be submitted electronically over the EPA website. Reports are then transmitted to Oklahoma. All instructions and reporting material may be found on the EPA website.

D. Radiation Management

This section is responsible for regulation of radioactive materials, industrial/analytical x-ray machines and particle accelerators, and medical therapeutic x-ray machines and particle accelerators. (It does not regulate medical diagnostic X-Ray machines.) Additional information can be found at:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/land-protection-division/radiation/>



E. Underground Injection Control

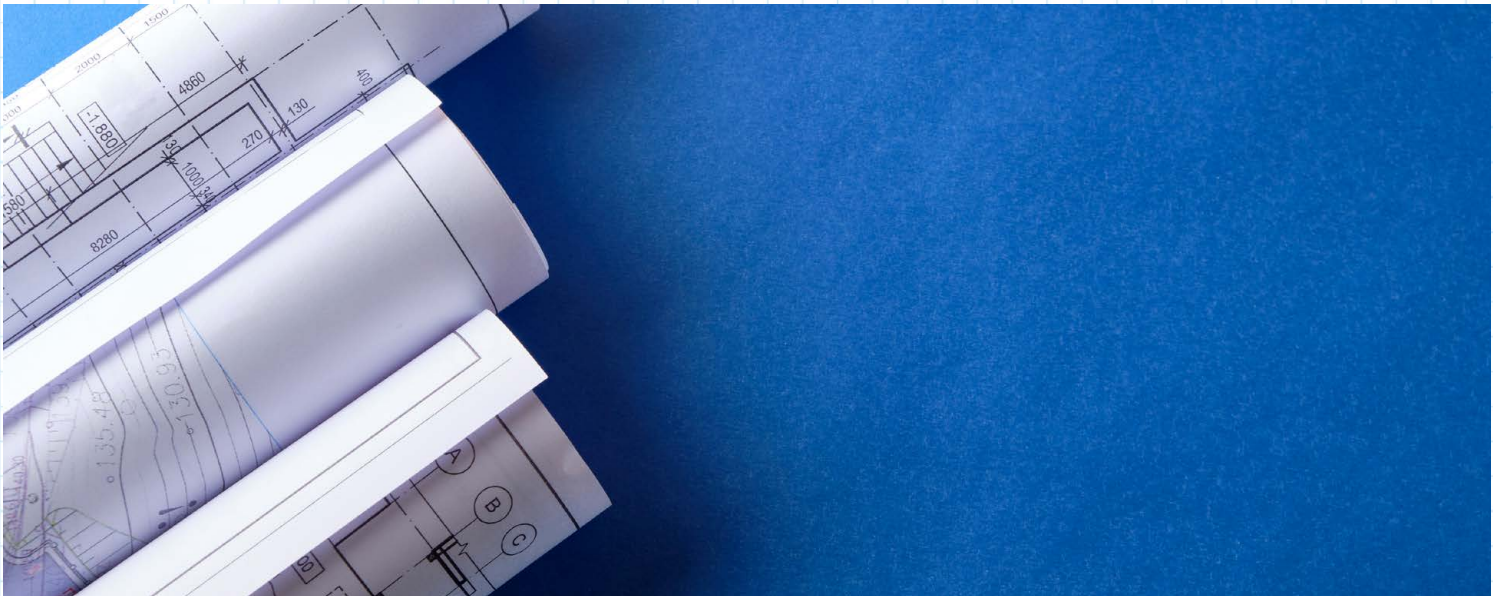
This section is responsible for regulation of injection wells not associated with oil and gas activity, which are regulated by the Oklahoma Corporation Commission. Additional information can be found at:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/land-protection-division/underground-injection-control/>



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Tier I Air Quality Division Permits*

Minor Source

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6
Administrative Review						
Technical Review						
Draft Permit 30-Day Public Review						
Response to Comments and Issuance						

*Does not represent potential extensive public comment time frame.
Note: Blue time line represents application completeness and effective communication, gray designates schedule flexibility for increased permit complexity.



Tier I Industrial Wastewater Permits

Process

DEQ has several general permits to assist certain industries with obtaining their authorizations more quickly and without public notice. Authorizations under a general permit can usually be processed in 7 – 45 days if the applications are complete. The application forms are available on the DEQ website:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/water-quality-division/permitting/>



DEQ also has state permits that are available to total retention facilities. These go through public notice the first time they are issued or the first time a land application site is permitted but not upon renewal. The application forms are available on the DEQ website. State permits can usually be processed in 2 – 4 months if the applications are complete.



Tier II Air Quality Division Permits*

Non-PSD Major Source

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Notice of Filing	30 Day								
Administrative Review									
Technical Review									
Draft Permit (Public Review)					30 Day			30 Day	
Response to Comments and Issuance									

*Does not represent potential extensive public comment time frame.

Note: Blue time line represents application completeness and effective communication, gray designates schedule flexibility for increased permit complexity.



Tier II Industrial Wastewater Permits

Facility and EPA Review Concurrent¹

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Public Notice of Application ²												
Administrative Review ²												
Technical Review ³												
Draft Permit Reviewed by EPA and Facility												
Public Notice of Draft Permit												
Issuance												

¹ Presumes no comments received from EPA, the facility or the public.

² WLA process may be performed concurrently.

³ If WLA is required, Technical Review cannot begin until WLA is approved.

Tier II Land Protection Division Permits

Facility and EPA Review Concurrent^{1,5}

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Public Notice of Application								
Administrative Review								
Technical Review								
Draft Permit Reviewed by EPA and Facility ²								
Public Notice of Draft Permit ³								
Public Notice of Public Meeting, if requested ⁴								
Issuance								

¹ Timelines may vary depending on company need, facility complexity, application quality and comments received.

² Solid Waste permits do not require EPA review.

³ Public Notice for a draft RCRA permit is 45 days. All other LPD draft permits are 30 days.

⁴ Public meetings require a 30-day notice. The applicant may choose to voluntarily conduct the public meeting with the draft permit to ensure the timeline is not extended an additional 30 days for the notice. If comments are received, a response to comments must be prepared.

⁵ For RCRA permits, additional federal requirements apply.

Tier III Air Quality Division Permits*

PSD Major Source

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Notice of Filing	30 Day											
Administrative Review												
Technical Review												
Draft Permit (Public Review)							30 Day			30 Day		
Response to Comments (30 Day) and Proposed Permit Public Review (20 Day)								50 Day			50 Day	
Issuance												

*Does not represent potential extensive public comment time frame.

Note: Blue time line represents application completeness and effective communication, gray designates schedule flexibility for increased permit complexity.

Tier III Industrial Wastewater Permits

Facility and EPA Review Concurrent¹

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Public Notice of Application ²											
Administrative Review ²											
Technical Review ³											
Draft Permit Reviewed by EPA and Facility											
Public Notice of Draft Permit											
Issuance											

1 Presumes no comments received from EPA, the facility or the public.

2 WLA process may be performed concurrently.

3 If WLA is required, Technical Review cannot begin until WLA is approved.



Tier III Land Protection Division Permits

Facility and EPA Review Concurrent^{1,7}

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Public Notice of Filing Application									
Public Notice of Process Meeting, if requested ²									
Administrative Review									
Technical Review									
Draft Permit Reviewed by EPA and Facility ³									
Public Notice of Draft Permit ⁴									
Public Notice of Public Meeting, if requested ⁵									
Public Notice of Proposed Permit ⁶									
Issuance									

¹ Timelines may vary depending on company need, facility complexity, application quality and comments received.

² 30-day opportunity to request a process meeting is published with the notice of filing. Public meetings require a 30-day notice.

³ Solid Waste permits do not require EPA review.

⁴ Public Notice for a draft RCRA permit is 45 days. All other LPD draft permits are 30 days.

⁵ Public meetings require a 30-day notice. The applicant may choose to voluntarily conduct the public meeting with the draft permit to ensure the timeline is not extended an additional 30 days for the notice. If comments are received, a response to comments must be prepared.

⁶ Public notice of proposed permit is 20 days. The public has the opportunity to request an administrative hearing. Final Issuance timeline presumes no administrative hearing is requested.

⁷ For RCRA permits, additional federal requirements apply.

Wasteload Allocation (WLA) Process

For New Discharges

Month	1	Undetermined ¹	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
DEQ Reviews WLA Workplan									
Facility Performs Sampling & Analysis, Prepares WLA Report		Not Under DEQ Control							
DEQ Draft of WLA Report									
EPA Review & Technical Acceptance of WLA Report									
Public Notice Process ²									
Response to Public Comments									
EPA Reviews Draft Final WLA Report									
Time to Respond to Comments on Workplan, WLA Report and Modeling									

¹ Sampling, analysis, modeling, and report preparation could result in lengthening the WLA process by an additional 4-10 months. The additional time will vary based on seasonal monitoring requirements, number of samples required, and model complexity.

² If, as a result of public notice, there is significant interest, a public hearing will be scheduled. WLA Process will not proceed until public hearing is completed.



Tulsa



OKLAHOMA Environmental Quality

