

567—70.5(17A,455B,481A) Procedures for review of applications.

70.5(1) *Initial screening of applications.* Each application upon receipt shall be promptly evaluated by the department to determine whether adequate information is available to review the project. The department shall advise the applicant of any additional information required to review the project. If the requested information is not submitted within 60 days of the date the request is made, the department may consider the application withdrawn.

70.5(2) *Order of processing.* In general, complete applications including sufficient plans and specifications shall be reviewed in the order that complete information is received. However, when there are a large number of pending applications, which preclude the department from promptly processing all applications, the department may expedite review of a particular application out of order if the completed application and supporting documents were submitted at the earliest practicable time and any of the following conditions exist:

a. Relatively little staff review time (generally less than four hours) is required and delay will cause the applicant hardship;

b. The applicant can demonstrate that a delay in the permit will result in a substantial cost increase of a large project;

c. Prompt review of the permit would result in earlier completion of a project that conveys a significant public benefit;

d. The need for a permit is the result of an unforeseen emergency or catastrophic event; or

e. A permit is needed to complete a project that will abate or prevent an imminent threat to the public health and welfare.

70.5(3) *Project investigation.* The department shall make an investigation of a project for which an application is submitted. The following are standard procedures for an investigation of an application.

a. *Inspection.* Agency personnel may make one or more field inspections of the project site when necessary to obtain information about the project. Submission of the application is deemed to constitute consent by the applicant for the agency staff and its agents to enter upon the land on which the proposed activity or project will be located for the sole purpose of collecting the data necessary to process the application, unless the applicant indicates to the contrary on the application.

b. *Technical review.* The department staff shall conduct a technical review using appropriate analytical techniques such as application of hydrologic and hydraulic models to determine the effects and impacts of a proposed project.

c. *Solicitation of expert comments on environmental effects.* For channel changes or other development which may cause significant adverse effects on the wise use and protection of water resources, water quality, fish, wildlife and recreational facilities or uses, the department shall request comments from the fish and wildlife division of the department or other knowledgeable sources.

d. *Summary report of project review.* The department staff may, if indicated, prepare a project summary report which summarizes the results of the review with respect to relevant criteria, the analytical methods used in the review and other project information. Typical indications of when project summary reports will be prepared are for those projects for which negative comments have been received from potentially affected landowners, those projects which are not approvable, and those projects which are complex in nature. Project summary reports will not normally be prepared for routine, noncontroversial projects.

e. *Notice to landowners who might be affected.* Before an application for approval of a levee or channel change is approved the department shall require the applicant to provide the names of the owners and occupants of land located immediately upstream, downstream, and across from the project site, and owners of any other land which the agency staff determines may be adversely affected by the project. The department shall then notify the landowners that the project is under consideration and provide a reasonable opportunity for submission of comments. The requirements of this paragraph also apply to other types of floodplain development when the project review discloses that lands not controlled by the applicant may be adversely affected by the project.

f. *Notice to the applicant that project does not conform to criteria.* If the project review discloses that the project violates one or more criteria and that the project should be disapproved, or approved only

subject to special conditions to which the applicant has not agreed, the department shall notify the applicant and, when practical, suggest appropriate project modifications. The department shall offer the applicant an opportunity to submit comments before an initial decision is made.

70.5(4) Initial decision by the department. The initial decision by the department on an application for a floodplain development permit shall be either approval or disapproval. The initial decision shall include a determination whether the project satisfied all relevant criteria and may incorporate by reference and attachment the summary report described in 70.5(3)“d.”

a. Approval. Issuance of a floodplain development permit shall constitute approval of a project. The permit shall include applicable general conditions listed in 567—Chapter 72 and may include one or more special conditions when reasonably necessary to implement relevant criteria.

b. Disapproval. A letter to the applicant denying the application shall constitute disapproval of a project.

c. Notice of initial decision. Copies of the initial decision shall be mailed to the applicant, any person who commented pursuant to 70.5(3)“e,” and any other person who has requested a copy of the decision. The decision may be sent by ordinary mail, first class, and shall be accompanied by a certification of the date of mailing. An initial decision becomes the final decision of the department unless a timely notice of appeal is filed in accordance with 567—70.6(17A,455B,481A). The final decision may be filed with the appropriate county recorder to give constructive notice to future landowners of any conditions or requirements imposed by the final decision.