



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Division of Water Resources

Beverly Eaves Perdue
Governor

Thomas A. Reeder
Director

Dee Freeman
Secretary

March 29, 2012

Memorandum

To: Public Water Systems

From: Jessica C. Godreau, PE, BCEE

Cc: Regional Engineers
Procedures Directory

Re: Partial Final Approvals

Background

Final Approval in accordance with 15A NCAC 18C .0309 is required before new construction can be placed into final service or made available for human consumption. To obtain Final Approval, applicants must submit an Applicant's Certification and an Engineer's Certification as specified in 15A NCAC 18C .0303. Periodically, applicants need to obtain Final Approval for a portion of an approved project. The purpose of this memorandum is to document the requirements for obtaining a Partial Final Approval.

In general, prior to issuing a Partial Final Approval the Public Water Supply (PWS) Section needs to ensure that an acceptable Applicants Certification has been submitted for the project and that the Engineer's Certification contains enough detail to identify specifically which portions of the project are to be included in the Partial Final Approval.

When projects are constructed in phases, some portions of the project may be constructed years in advance of full build out which, if not handled properly, can contribute to low pressures or poor water quality. Some projects are never fully built and water systems may be left with projects not as originally designed. This may be problematic particularly if dead end lines are included and were not originally anticipated. All phases must be fully compliant with 15A NCAC 18C when placed into service.

The procedures below provide flexibility to adjust to market changes during the course of a project while ensuring that the PWS Section can track intermediate project phases and that PWS Section regional offices have adequate information to conduct site visits as applicable.

When project changes are extensive, use of the Partial Final Approval procedure may not be acceptable. The acceptable alternative to obtaining Partial Final Approval(s) as described herein is for the applicant to submit revised plans and specifications and an engineer's certification for the modified project.

Regulatory Justification

15A NCAC 18C .0309 requires a system to obtain Final Approval before placing any project into service.

15A NCAC 18C .0303 requires that “Upon completion of the construction or modification, the applicant shall submit a certification statement signed and sealed by a registered professional engineer...” and “The applicant shall submit a signed certification, prior to Final Approval, stating that the requirements in Paragraph (d) (Operation and Maintenance) and Paragraph (e) (Emergency Management Plan) of Rule .0307 of this Section have been satisfied, and that the system will have a certified operator as required by Section .1300 of this subchapter prior to operation...”

15A NCAC 18C .0903 requires that “Where installation of dead-end water mains cannot be avoided, a hydrant or a valve of adequate size for flushing shall be installed at the terminal end of the line...”

Procedure

The PWS Section’s procedures for issuing Partial Final Approvals (and the applicant’s documentation requirements) depend on whether the phases were anticipated when the project was originally designed (i.e., are described in the PWS Section’s plan approval letter) or are necessary due to unplanned circumstances.

In all cases an Applicant’s Certification is required to be submitted to document that the water system has an Operation and Maintenance Plan and an Emergency Management Plan and that the new construction will be operated by an appropriately certified operator. Therefore, for phased projects, an Applicant’s Certification must be submitted before the first Partial Final Approval will be awarded.

The sections that follow describe components of a Partial Engineer’s Certification and supporting documents necessary for a Partial Final Approval.

Partial Engineer’s Certification for Planned Phases

When phasing is expected and the project application includes a phasing plan, the PWS Section’s approval letter will describe the phases by name. To receive Partial Final Approval for a planned phase, the Partial Engineer’s Certification must specifically name the phase completed. It is also helpful to include a copy of the PWS Section’s approval letter.

Partial Engineer’s Certification for Unanticipated Phases

When the project as originally approved did not contain phasing, the Partial Engineer’s Certification must include the following information:

1. Copy of the PWS Section’s approval letter or description of the original project as documented in the approval letter;
2. Description of the work/project components included in the Partial Engineer’s Certification (include unique identifiers such as lot numbers or station numbers);
3. Identification of work/project components included in a previous Partial Final Approval;
4. Identification of remaining work/project components to be performed in subsequent phases;
5. Identification of any originally planned work/project components that will not be constructed;
6. If phased construction resulted in dead-end water mains, description of any additional appurtenances or devices (such as blow offs) provided to ensure that water quality will be maintained. An example would be a blowoff, hydrant, or flushing valve added on dead end lines.
7. Site plan or drawing that depicts items listed in 2 through 6. The format of the drawing may be chosen by the applicant. One appropriate option might be a color coded plat map. The PWS Section prefers that these materials be emailed in PDF format.

The information should be in a level of detail similar to the approval letter. If all the waterlines proposed for the road were constructed, then simply give the road name. If some of the waterlines proposed for a road were constructed (and some not constructed), then list stations. An acceptable example follows:

- This certification covers the following waterlines:
 - all of Jones Road (lots 1-25),
 - Miller Road between First and Second Streets (lots 32-37), and
 - Jackson Street from STA0+00 to STA15+45 (lots 26-31).
 - In total, lots 1-31 are included.
- All of Smith Road was previously certified.
- All of Washington Street, and Miller Road between Second and Fourth Streets remain to be certified.

The Partial Final Approval letter mailed by the PWS Section will include the project description provided by the engineer and will include a statement of the need to maintain water quality during all phases of construction.