



Public Participation in Manitoba's Environmental Assessment Process

What is an Environmental Assessment?

When new developments that require licensing under The Environment Act or The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act are proposed or existing developments are changed, they undergo an Environmental Assessment.

Manitoba's Environmental Assessment process is an opportunity to assess the risks of the proposed project on the environment and public health to identify ways to prevent harmful effects from occurring. The environmental assessment aims to provide a high level of environmental protection and ensures appropriate measures are in place to avoid or reduce potential environmental and public health impacts before decisions are made.

New developments being proposed and major alterations to existing developments include a public review period as part of a key step within the environmental assessment process.

Who is the public?

The public refers to any person or group interested in or affected by the project. This may include landowners, community associations, municipal governments, regional planning agencies and special interest groups.

Why should the public participate?

Public participation is a key component of the environmental assessment process. It helps to build healthy communities and improve government decision-making by identifying environmental issues and public health concerns related to the proposal. This is an opportunity for the government to gather information from the wider community and address concerns that will lead to better decisions and outcomes. Public comments also help to guide the assessment of any potentially harmful public health and environmental effects, the development of the terms and conditions of a licence (should one be issued), and ways to prevent or reduce these negative effects.

What is the difference between the public participation process and Crown-Indigenous Consultations?

The Manitoba government recognizes it has a legal duty to consult in a meaningful way with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities when any proposed provincial law, regulation, decision or action may infringe upon or adversely affect the exercise of an aboriginal right or treaty right of a specific Indigenous community.

The department assesses potential impacts of the proposed development, which communities must be directly consulted, and the nature and scope of consultation. Consultation is conducted by sharing information, hearing, discussing and understanding community concerns or recommendations. The department then reviews and assesses gathered information and works with communities and the proponent to determine how concerns may reasonably be addressed and/or accommodated.

Crown-Indigenous consultation occurs separately from the public review process. Results of the consultation inform the licensing decision, which will not be made until the consultation is complete.

What is the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)?

The Technical Advisory Committee reviews and provides comments on proposals. The TAC is a standing committee of representatives from relevant federal and provincial government departments that provides technical advice on the project's environmental effects and methods of mitigating these effects. The comments from the TAC are also posted to the public registry for public information.

How will I know if there is a development undergoing an environmental assessment?

Notification of the set public review period for a proposal is advertised in local newspapers, the [Manitoba Gazette](#) and on the department's public registry. On the registry, the following is available during the public review period:

- A copy of the proposal
- The department's contact person for the environmental assessment process who can help answer any questions that you might have

After the deadline date for public comments has passed, all comments provided by the public prior to this deadline, as well as the TAC comments are placed on the public registry.

What is the public registry?

The public registry is where the department makes available to the public all the development proposals undergoing the environmental assessment and licensing process so that the public can participate during the public review period, get up-to-date information when a licensing decision is made and locate compliance information and reports provided to the department by the licensed entity.

The online public registry can be accessed here: manitoba.ca/sd/eal/registries/index.html

How are public comments submitted?

Public comments need to be submitted in writing and before the end of the public review period to be posted on the public registry. An online form to submit public comments is preferred and is available on the public registry. Proposals in the public comment phase, as well as the comment deadline, can be found in the “Open for Comment” tab on the public registry. Additional information to support a comment may be submitted by email to EABDirector@gov.mb.ca. Alternative formats are available, please contact 204-945-8321 for more information.

What type of public comments will inform the licensing decision?

Public comments should identify an issue or concern or otherwise contribute to a better understanding of the potential environmental and health effects of the proposed project. Comments that quote or attribute facts to external sources or third parties should be publicly known or easily verified and, where appropriate, should include supporting references. Including hyperlinks in comments should be avoided, as the content and availability of the website being referred to cannot be relied upon.

How do we protect personal information?

Public comments received during the comment period are posted on the department’s public registry after they are reviewed and any personal information is removed. Where a comment refers to other individuals or third parties by name, those names and any other personal identifying information will be removed. Comments will be posted on the public registry with personal information blacked out. Comments must be written in language that is appropriate for public posting. Profanity or defamatory language will be deleted from the comment before posting.

Public comments submitted in the form of a petition, or a form response will be posted with names, contact information and signatures removed.

The comments with personal information removed will also be shared with the proponent. This gives them the opportunity to address and respond to the identified issues.

This publication is available in alternate formats, upon request.

