

EQB Environmental Reviews

The Environmental Quality Board writes the rules for conducting environmental reviews. The actual reviews are usually conducted by governing bodies such as a county board, city council or a state agency. The EQB's environmental review duties are directed by Minnesota Statutes 116D.04.

Not all development projects require environmental review. The nature, size and location of a project determines this, and the specifics are spelled out in a detailed set of rules. If environmental review is required or desired, the governmental body with jurisdiction over the project works with the developer to complete one or both of the following documents:

Environmental assessment worksheet (EAW): A screening tool to determine whether a full environmental impact statement is needed. The worksheet is a six-page questionnaire about the project's environmental setting, the potential for environmental harm and plans to reduce the harm. About 150 worksheets are completed each year.

Environmental impact statement (EIS): An in-depth analysis used for major development projects that will significantly change the environment. The statement covers social and economic influences, as well as environmental impact, and looks at alternate ways to proceed with the project.