

# Environmental Assessment Program

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## Frequently Asked Questions from the Public June 2008

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### Introduction

The following is a list of questions that are commonly asked by members of the public regarding Alberta's Environmental Assessment process.

### Questions

What is the Environmental Assessment process for?

Part 2, Division 1 of the [Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act](#) (EPEA) governs Alberta's Environmental Assessment process. The Environmental Assessment process provides an opportunity for the proponent and government decision-makers to examine the effects that a proposed project may have on the environment. The information that is gathered throughout the process will help the appropriate regulatory board (Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC), Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) or Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB)) determine if the project is in the public interest. For more information follow the link to [Alberta's Environmental Assessment Process](#).

What is an Environmental Impact Assessment report?

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report is a description of the proponent's understanding of their project and its anticipated impacts on the environment and social and economic conditions in the region. The report assesses the significance of those impacts and determines how those impacts will be mitigated. The EIA report must also describe how the project will interact with other industrial and human activities in the area. The expected content of an EIA report is outlined in the specific Terms of Reference for the project.

What is an Integrated Application?

An Integrated Application is a single submission by the proponent of the following documents:

- EIA report
- EPEA Application
- *Water Act* Application (where applicable)
- AUC, ERCB or NRCB Application

All large industrial projects require a number of government approvals before they begin operating. Submitting all the documents at once allows for concurrent review of

information and reduces the duplication of information that would be required if the EIA report was submitted separately from the applications.

At what stages can I get involved in the Environmental Assessment process and who do I send my comments to?

Public involvement in the Environmental Assessment process occurs primarily through providing comments on the proposed Terms of Reference for the project to the Environmental Assessment Director. Notice of the public comment period will be placed in local newspapers.

If the Director determines that a project that is not on the mandatory EIA list will require screening, the public will also have the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed project.

Members of the public may also provide comments to the Approvals Director on the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* and *Water Act* applications associated with the EIA report. The Public Notice of Application will set out deadlines for receipt of comments.

Finally, directly affected parties may participate in any hearings established by the regulatory board to determine if the project is in the public interest. More information on board processes is available:

- [Alberta Utilities Commission](#)
- [Energy Resources Conservation Board](#)
- [Natural Resources Conservation Board](#)

How long is the public comment period for the proposed Terms of Reference?

The legislation requires a minimum of 30 days, however, given the complexity and number of EIAs in certain regions the

Environmental Assessment Director often extends the comment period.

Where can I find a copy of the company's Integrated Application so that I can provide comments? Who should I send my comments to?

Anyone who wishes to obtain a copy of the Integrated Application may contact the company directly. Any comments on the application should be submitted within the timeframe specified in the Public Notice of Application to:

Director  
Regulatory Approvals Centre  
Alberta Environment  
9th Floor, 9820 – 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6  
Fax: (780) 422 – 0154

What does EIA report completeness mean?

When the government's review team is satisfied that they understand the nature of the project and the proponent's description of the potential effects and mitigation, the review team will recommend that the EIA report is complete. The Environmental Assessment Director will then consider the recommendation and determine if the EIA report is complete. If it is deemed complete, the proponent and the appropriate regulatory board will be advised that the EIA report will be formally referred for a determination that the project is in the public interest.

The Director's decision that the EIA report is complete does not mean that Alberta Environment or the other review agencies support the project or accept the proponent's description of the potential impacts and mitigation strategies.

How can I obtain a copy of project specific information or an EIA report?

The project proponent is the first point of contact to obtain project information.

Subject to the [\*Disclosure of Information Regulation\*](#), a person can examine and obtain any information or document contained in the environmental assessment register. The register will include the following information as it becomes available during the various stages of the Environmental Assessment process:

- Names of proponents including detailed contact information
- Disclosure documents or detailed descriptions of the proposed projects
- Copies of public notices
- Copies of statements of concern and other public comments
- Screening reports
- Proposed and final Terms of Reference for EIA reports
- Locations where EIA reports and Supplemental Information can be obtained
- Orders-in-council

The register file can be viewed at the following location:

Environmental Assessment Team  
Alberta Environment  
111, 4999 -98 Ave  
Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2X3

Contact the Registrar to view documents:

Ph: (780) 427-5828

Fax: (780) 427-9102

[environmental.assessment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:environmental.assessment@gov.ab.ca)

A person may view EIA reports by contacting the proponent or at the following location:

Alberta Government Library, Great West Life Site  
Service Alberta  
6th fl Great West Life Building  
9920 - 108 St  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2M4  
Ph: (780) 427-5870

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### **Comments and Suggestions**

If you have comments on this document, or would like to suggest additional questions send an e-mail to

[environmental.assessment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:environmental.assessment@gov.ab.ca)