



DEQ POLICY MEMORANDUM PM13-04

EDITING TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS

PURPOSE

This policy assists Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) staff in achieving effective communication with internal and external customers. The policy outlines the goals and benefits of technical editing, identifies what technical editing is and the types of documents recommended for editing, and outlines the editing process. This policy shall supersede and take the place of the DEQ "Policy for Editing Technical Publications" (PM07-3), dated September 4, 2007.

GOALS

The policy's goals are to improve staff efficiency in developing written communications and increase the quality and consistency of these communications.

SERVICES

Technical editing services are provided by technical editors in the Environmental Management and Information (EMI) Division who are experienced in technical communication standards and best practices. Technical editing services consist of reviewing text, formatting documents, and evaluating content for readability, accuracy, and consistency with DEQ's style guide. Technical editors act as intermediaries between authors who are technical experts and their readers. Editors help make documents easier to read and understand without sacrificing technical accuracy, ensuring clear and concise documents that present a professional image consistent with DEQ's mission.

BENEFITS

Benefits expected to result from this policy include the following:

- Completion of consistent, professional, accurate documents
- Increased audience comprehension of DEQ objectives and operations
- Reduced technical staff time required to develop documents, allowing their focus to be on content rather than style and/or presentation
- Enhanced agency credibility and authority

DOCUMENTS RECOMMENDED FOR EDITING

Examples of document types recommended for editing include the following:

- Reports, plans, and other technical documents (e.g., total maximum daily loads, air quality implementation plans, annual reports, ground water quality reports, and protocols)
- Regulatory and compliance documents and tools (e.g., permits, forms, checklists for preparing applications/submittals, guidance, and training and procedure manuals)
- Outreach materials (e.g., brochures, fact sheets, posters, presentations, and web applications)
- Interagency correspondence (e.g., memoranda of understanding and responses to inquiries)
- Internal documents (e.g., training materials and policies)

PROCESS

The following steps outline the technical editing process:

1. Author: Complete a Technical Editing Work Request Form (on the DEQ intranet) and submit to the EMI division administrator. Authors are encouraged to submit work requests early in the document development process—documents do not need to be finished before scheduling editing. All documents submitted for editing must be placed in TRIM.
2. EMI division administrator: Assign work request to a technical editor and notify author of assigned editor and anticipated schedule. Depending on editor availability, documents may be placed in a queue.
3. Editor: Contact author to review request and discuss project background, audience, scope, and schedule.
4. Editor and author: Maintain communication as needed throughout editing process (including any other parties that need to be involved). Adjust scope and schedule, if needed, by mutual agreement.
5. Editor: Deliver edited document to author.
6. Author: Review edits by accepting or rejecting changes and responding to or addressing comments.
7. Editor and author: Work together to revise and finalize document.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy shall be effective immediately.

Dated this 27th day of March, 2013



Curt A. Fransen
Director