

Dam Abandonment and Removal Application Instructions

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources helps protect your rights in public waters as well as public safety, by ensuring adequate planning and design of projects affecting fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and natural scenic beauty. This is done through permit and plan approval requirements for individual water projects. Chapters 30 and 31 of the Wisconsin Statutes require written permits for certain activities on or near a watercourse.

A permit and plan approval is required for dam abandonment and removal of large and small dams that are State regulated and located on navigable watercourses. A plan approval is required for large and small dams that are State regulated and located on non-navigable watercourses. Note that navigability determinations are defined by today's standards rather than at the time of original dam construction.

Prior to applying for this permit:

- For more information, select "Abandonment and removal" from the Dams section on the website, dnr.wi.gov/permits/water/.
- Contact your county, city, or village zoning department to find out if your project site is either in a mapped wetland or floodplain and if local zoning restrictions could affect your project.

To apply:

- Apply online using our online ePermitting System at dnr.wi.gov/permits/water/.
- Include all required attachments. Each document must be less than 15 megabytes and our online system offers a help guide to reduce file sizes.
- Permit processing review times begin when all of the required application materials are received by the DNR. Depending upon the type, complexity, and location of your proposed project, processing can take 60 working days (3 months) to complete a review, public notice and any required hearing once your application is completed in detail.
- The department may require additional information to evaluate the project.
- If you have questions regarding your application contact:
 - The local Water Management Engineer (WME) for your county, refer to dnr.wi.gov/topic/dams/regionalcontacts.html, for information about dams.
 - The local Water Management Specialist (WMS) for your county, refer to dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/contacts.html for information about navigability or wetland impacts.

Please note, prior to starting any work at the project site, you are responsible for:

- Obtain all necessary local (e.g. city, town, village or county) permits
- Obtain U.S. Army Corps of Engineer permits or approvals
- Obtain any other applicable state permits

Public notice newspaper posting:

- As part of the permit process, it will be required to publish in the newspaper as a public notice.
- The department will prepare the notice.
 - If you would like to delegate to the department the required task of publishing in the newspaper, please select and pay the additional fee.
- If requested, a **public hearing** may be required.

Paper copies of application materials:

After the application has been submitted electronically, please submit three (3) hard copies of all of the required attachments, except the application fee, directly to the local Water Management Engineer. When the application has been successfully submitted, the person signing the application receives a pdf copy of the WRAPP form that was filled out electronically. Please also include a note that the application was submitted electronically.

Plans and specifications are required to be prepared and stamped under the supervision of a professional engineer registered in Wisconsin. The engineer should have experience with dam design and construction. The department reserves the right to require additional information to evaluate the project.

Required attachments - Forms or documents you upload in our online ePermitting System

1. **Application form** - A complete, signed application form "Water Resources Application for Project Permits (WRAPP)" (Form 3500-053).
2. **Application fee** - Payment needs to be submitted through the ePermitting System as part of the application process. A list of fees can be found at dnr.wi.gov/topic/waterways/documents/PermitDocs/feesheet.pdf.
3. **Ownership documentation** - Please provide verification of ownership (i.e. copy of deed, land contract) and/or permanent easements for the parcel of land which the dam sits, as well as access or construction agreements which allows for the abandonment and removal.
4. **Photographs** that clearly show the on-the-ground conditions of the existing project areas. Remember that too much snow cover or vegetation may obscure important details. If possible, have another person stand near the project area for size reference. Color images are preferred.
5. **Site maps** that clearly illustrate the location and perimeter of the project site, and its relationship to nearby water resources (e.g. lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands), major landmarks and roads. Provide copies of relevant maps (e.g. wetland, aerial, topographical, soil, floodplain, or zoning maps), with the project location clearly identified. The department offers a web mapping tool to assist in creating these maps at dnr.wi.gov/topic/surfacewater/swdvl/.
6. **Plans and specifications** - Detailed plans and specifications may not be needed at the beginning stages of abandonment, provided a thorough narrative description is provided. Please contact the local Water Management Engineer to discuss. When submitting final plans and specifications, please also mail three hard copies of the complete plans and specifications for the project directly to the local Water Management Engineer.
7. **Narrative description** of your proposal on a separate page. Please include:
 - What the project is, purpose of project, and need for the project.
 - Information on other participants if this is a cooperative effort.
 - The drawdown procedure to be used prior to dismantling the dam.
 - The parts of the dam that will be removed to render it abandoned.
 - How you intend to carry out the project, including methods of dam removal, materials, and equipment.
 - Your proposed construction schedule and sequence of work.
 - The location of any disposal area for the dam materials.
 - The stream channel and flowage bed restoration including protection needs.

If this information is included in the project design report with the plans and specifications, please specify that rather as a separate file, rather than uploading the project design report again.

Note: Any temporary coffer dams must be designed to structurally withstand at least a 10-year flood event, with or without overtopping. If a preliminary design for the coffer dams is included in this submittal, the design can be approved under the Chapter 31 plan approval, and proposed design changes by the contractor would go through a change order and plan amendment. If not included, the contractor's coffer dam design would need to be submitted for a separate Chapter 30.19 permit and prepared by a Professional Engineer registered in Wisconsin.

8. Riparian owners list - List the names and addresses of the adjacent property owners.

9. Hydrologic and hydraulic analyses may be required if the proposed project will reduce the effective flood flow capacity of the waterway by obstruction of existing flow area. If an analysis is required, the property owner **may** be required to retain an engineer, registered in the State of Wisconsin, to prepare this analysis. To determine if an analysis is needed, contact the local Water Management Engineer.

10. Sediment management plan.

11. Erosion control standards - Temporary and permanent erosion control measures must exceed the stormwater management technical standards.

12. Wild rice - If any existing wild rice is known to be included within the Ceded Territory, provide a brief narrative indicating potential impacts.

13. Wetland permit application - If wetlands are present where any work will be done, you will also need to apply for a wetland permit. Refer to the decision module to determine which application to submit, dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/construction/wetlands.html.

14. Endangered and threatened resources - The applicant is not required, but is encouraged to request an endangered resources (ER) review letter before applying for the permit. Information on how to obtain a review can be found by visiting the website at dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/Review.html. The applicant can also visit the NHI Public Portal, dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/PublicPortal.html, to determine if a full ER Review is required. Read the 'What is an ER Preliminary Assessment and what do the results mean?' section to determine follow-up steps.

15. Historical and cultural resources - If you are aware there is a historical or cultural resource present, you are **required** to contact the Wisconsin State Historical Society to verify and receive documentation that the activity will not result in an adverse impact to these resources.