

Selecting an Engineer

As part of an application for funding from Rural Utilities Service's Water and Environmental Programs (WEP), the applicant must select an engineer using the process described in 7 CFR 1780.39(b). This regulation is based on the requirements of the Qualifications Based Selection Process (QBS) outlined in 2 CFR 200.320(b). This process involves public announcement (typically, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) published in a local newspaper) of all requirements for engineering services and negotiation of contracts on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional services required and at a fair and reasonable price.

State laws and regulations may also apply to the selection of an engineer. The [National Rural Water Association](#) or the [Rural Community Assistance Partnership](#) may be able to provide assistance in this process.

Preliminary Engineering Report

A Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) is the basic engineering document in an application for funding from WEP. This document is developed by the consulting engineer and submitted along with a complete application to the Rural Development Processing Office for review. The PER describes the need for a project; presents an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project, including a life cycle present worth cost analysis of any feasible alternatives; and provides a description of the proposed project, a detailed construction cost estimate, a total project cost estimate, and an annual operating budget. The PER must be sealed by a professional engineer (PE) licensed by the jurisdiction in which the project is located.

The detailed content requirements for a PER are contained in [RUS Bulletin 1780-2](#), "Preliminary Engineering Reports for the Water and Waste Disposal Program". This document is based on an interagency guidance document completed in 2013 by federal and state government partners, including USDA, Rural Utilities Service; the US EPA State Revolving Fund programs; the Indian Health Service; and the HUD Community Development Block Grant program.

Please contact the State Engineer with any questions related to the PER.

Engineering and Construction Contract Documents

Certain [Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee](#) (EJCDC) forms of agreement are considered pre-approved for use on Water and Waste Disposal projects. Other contract forms may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the USDA Office of General Counsel but are not pre-approved for use. Note that the EJCDC documents are proprietary and must be purchased before use.

[RUS Bulletin 1780-26](#), “Guidance for the Use of Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee (EJCDC) Documents on Water and Waste Disposal Projects with RUS Financial Assistance” explains how the EJCDC documents may be used on projects funded by WEP and which EJCDC documents are pre-approved for use. This bulletin allows for use of a variety of EJCDC templates, so that applicants can tailor their contracts based on size and complexity of the relevant project.

Open and Free Competition

Maximum open and free competition requirements found at 7 CFR 1780.70 (b) and (d), 2 CFR 200.319, and section 306 (a) (17) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act describe steps that WEP funding recipients must take to maximize opportunities for competition in the construction contract procurement process.

Engineering Links

Completing a successful project takes the coordination of a lot of resources and organizations. As a service to our customers, WEP lists these links to web sites outside RD that provide information helpful in processing applications, designing projects, administering construction, and solving operational problems. RD is not responsible for the content or reliability of these sites.

- [American Water Works Association](#)
- [Davis-Bacon Wage determinations](#)
- [Debarment/Suspension List](#)
- [DOT Specifications Online](#)
- [Treasury Circular 570](#)
- [USGS Water Quality Data](#)
- [Water Environment Federation](#)
- [Clean Watersheds Needs Survey](#)
- [Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey](#)