

Environmental Review by Category

All projects requiring an environmental review (ER), which includes Section 106 review of historic properties and archaeological findings, fall into one of these four categories:

1. **ER completed by another agency.** The environmental review for the area of potential effect has been completed by another agency in the last 5 years.
2. **Exempt from both ER and the requirement for a historic database search.**
3. **Exempt from ER but requires a historic database search.**
4. **ER is required.** The project must complete the Environmental Information Worksheet.

ER is completed by another agency

1. Complete [Environmental Review Cover Page \(PDF\)](#), stating that the project has been completed by another agency.
2. Attach a copy of the other agency's approval letter.
3. Email the documents to dwrf.er.MDH@state.mn.us.

Project is exempt from both ER and historic database search

1. Complete [Environmental Review Cover Page \(PDF\)](#).
2. Complete [Environmental Review Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](#).
3. Complete [Section 106 Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](#).
 - a. It is strongly recommended that an Archaeological Site and Historic Structures Database Search is completed for the project area to assure that no historic properties will be impacted by the project. This database search can be generated by visiting [Minnesota's Statewide Historic Inventory Portal](#) and [OSA Portal](#).
4. Email documents to dwrf.er.MDH@state.mn.us.

Project is exempt from ER but requires a historic database search

1. Complete [Environmental Review Cover Page \(PDF\)](#).
2. Complete [Environmental Review Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](#).
3. Complete [Section 106 Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](#).
4. Conduct an initial search for any previously identified cultural resources in the project area to ensure that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project. To research previously documented aboveground historic resources in a project area, please visit [MnSHIP](#) (Public Map). To research previously documented archaeological sites in a project area, please visit the [OSA Portal](#) (Public Map). Applicants will not be able to see detailed

information on the locations of archaeological resources, as the site location data is protected under state law. The public map shows the number of sites located within a section. Only qualified archaeologists can access detailed information on archaeological sites.

5. A copy of the database search must be attached to the exemption checklist. If any cultural resources are found during the database search, an explanation of why these locations will not be impacted must be provided. If there is no impact to any cultural resources, an environmental review is not required. If the project could have an impact on any identified locations, an environmental review must be completed.
6. Email the completed documents to dwrf.er.MDH@state.mn.us.

ER is Required

1. Complete the [solicitation letter \(Word\)](#) addressed to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and send it along with the supporting documents to dwrf.er.MDH@state.mn.us. Once received, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) will review the submission. After confirming the submission is complete, MDH will forward the letter to SHPO for their evaluation. If it is determined that any archaeological, historical or architectural resources will be impacted, an agreement must be reached between SHPO, MDH, and the project submitter before construction can start. Please note that the SHPO solicitation letter and all supporting documentation must be completed and submitted to MDH before the Environmental review record submission.
2. Complete [Environmental Review Cover Page \(PDF\)](#).
3. Complete [Environmental Review Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](#).
4. Complete [Section 106 Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](#).
5. Complete [Environmental Information Worksheet \(PDF\)](#), although not all categories on the worksheet will apply to the project. For detailed instructions on how to complete the Environmental Information Worksheet, visit the [instructions](#) page.
6. Fill out the Environmental Review [Solicitation \(Mailing\) List \(PDF\)](#). This list must include the names and addresses of all agencies or individuals who will be sent an environmental review solicitation letter. The type of project, location, and local concern will determine who should receive a letter, so the mailing list will change from project to project and community to community. Insert the names and addresses of all people and agencies who will be receiving a letter.
7. Develop and mail the environmental review solicitation letter. The letter must provide sufficient information to allow the recipient to assess the potential environmental impacts. Use letterhead for the community or entity that will be applying for the loan. **Allow 30-day response time.**
8. Develop an environmental review public notice and publish it in the major or official public newspaper for the community. **Allow 30-day response time. (Do concurrently with No.7).**

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9. Optional: Hold a public hearing or meeting. Municipalities typically hold public hearings for public works projects. This is entirely optional from an environmental review standpoint, but if a hearing takes place, then the hearing or meeting will also serve as an additional forum for receiving environmental review comments. The comments received through this process will generally be verbal and not written. The minutes from these hearings or at least the environmental review-related comments must be included in the environmental review record that will be submitted to MDH.
10. Appropriately respond to all issues brought forth through the public notification process. Consult with MDH if necessary. Resolve pertinent environmental issues and document all activities.
11. After 30-day comment period, submit the environmental review record to dwrfr.MDH@state.mn.us.

The environmental review record consists of:

- a. Environmental Review Record Cover Page.
 - b. Environmental Review Exemption Checklist.
 - c. Section 106 Exemption Checklist.
 - d. Environmental Information Worksheet and all required attachments.
 - e. Environmental Review Generic Solicitation Letter.
 - f. Environmental Review Solicitation (Mailing) List.
 - g. Historic Database Search.
 - h. Newspaper public notice with affidavit of publication.
 - i. Minutes of public hearings or meetings (if they occurred).
 - j. Verification of any alternative public notification (if this was provided).
 - k. Copies of comments received, responses provided, and resolutions achieved (if any).
12. MDH will examine the environmental review record and write an Environmental Summary.
 13. MDH will send an Environmental Summary announcing its findings. The usual conclusion for public water supply project is “no significant impact.” ***(Allow 2 to 3 weeks from when the review record was submitted.)***
 14. If it is determined that the project will result in “no significant impact”, MDH will provide the Environmental Summary along with instructions for posting it in the official community newspaper. The Environmental Summary and the notice letter must be published together, and the public will have 15 days to respond. (Other MDH findings will be addressed on a case-by-case basis).
 15. If no public comments are received within the 15-day comment period, the environmental review will be concluded. If comments are received, they will have to be addressed.

16. A copy of the published environmental summary and notice letter, plus an official affidavit of publication must be sent to dwrf.er.MDH@state.mn.us. If any comments were received during the 15-day comment period, copies of all responses must also be sent to MDH. Once MDH receives this information, an email will be sent to the environmental review contact person stating that the environmental review is complete.

Resources

- [Forms - Drinking Water Revolving Fund](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/dwrf/dwrf.html)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/dwrf/dwrf.html>)
- [Environmental Review Cover Page \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/erecordcover.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/erecordcover.pdf>)
- [Environmental Review Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/eremptcklist.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/eremptcklist.pdf>)
- [Section 106 Exemption Checklist \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/eremptcklist106.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/eremptcklist106.pdf>)
- [Minnesota's Statewide Historic Inventory Portal](https://mnship.gisdata.mn.gov/) (<https://mnship.gisdata.mn.gov/>)
- [OSA Portal](https://osaportal.gisdata.mn.gov/) (<https://osaportal.gisdata.mn.gov/>)
- [MnSHIP](https://mnship.gisdata.mn.gov/) (<https://mnship.gisdata.mn.gov/>)
- [Solicitation letter \(Word\)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.health.state.mn.us%2Fcommunities%2Fenvironment%2Fwater%2Fdocs%2Fdwr%2Ftempltr.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
(<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.health.state.mn.us%2Fcommunities%2Fenvironment%2Fwater%2Fdocs%2Fdwr%2Ftempltr.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>)
- [Environmental Information Worksheet \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/erinfoworksheet.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/erinfoworksheet.pdf>)
- [Instructions](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/dwrf/erinstructions.html)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/dwrf/erinstructions.html>)
- [Solicitation \(Mailing\) List \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/ersolicmailist.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/dwrf/ersolicmailist.pdf>)