
Permitting Process Survey

Submitted to:

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Executive Summary

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), contracted with ORC Macro, a professional research and consulting firm, to conduct a telephone survey of DEC permittees and permit consultants about their experiences with the permitting process from July 1, 2002, to June 30, 2003. The survey's objectives were to obtain accurate, baseline data about the experiences and perceptions of the DEC's permitting processes and to obtain other input that will inform the DEC about improving its processes and services to permittees.

The survey included questions dealing with reasonableness of regulations; process timeliness; staff customer service and coordination; and how Vermont's processes compare with those in other states. Surveyors solicited ideas for improvements at several points during the survey.

Telephone data collection occurred from September 17 to October 5, 2003, and interviews were completed with 851 respondents. Many of these respondents were willing to provide specific feedback, as evidenced by the 1,664 comments received. The number of contacts for some permit programs was very small, making it impossible to allow for analysis at the program level with reasonable confidence. Therefore, responses for all programs were combined for analysis. It should be noted that the analysis included in this report meets statistical precision standards and can be interpreted with confidence.

Major Findings

The majority of respondents did not go through the permitting process themselves. Those who did not were asked for their perceptions of several aspects of the permitting processes. About half of respondents (49%) had received permits prior to fiscal year 2003.

A significantly higher percentage of those who went through the process themselves rated it as excellent or very good as compared to those without first-hand knowledge.

More than 85% of respondents who had been through the process personally felt that the department staff with whom they dealt were courteous and helpful and that they were treated fairly by the department staff during the permitting process.

More than 80% of respondents who had been through the process personally found the application and instruction forms to be clear and understandable. A significantly higher percentage of those respondents who went through the process themselves thought the regulations were reasonable as compared to those who had someone go through the process on their behalf.

A majority of those with first hand-knowledge thought the level of public involvement was about right, while a significantly lower proportion of those without first-hand experience thought the same.

More than three-quarters of respondents experiencing the permitting process reported that the time it took to issue their permit did not cause them problems, while 22% reported that the timing did cause them problems.

Thirty-nine respondents indicated that they had obtained permits from more than one DEC permit program for a single project. Slightly more than half of these respondents rated the coordination between programs for their project as average or above; nearly one-quarter of these respondents rated inter-program coordination as poor.

Of those who serve as consultants in other states, slightly more than half responded that the permitting process is more difficult in Vermont compared to that in other states, while nearly 20% reported that Vermont's permit processes are easier than those elsewhere.

I. Introduction

Background and Purpose

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Environmental Assistance Division contracted with ORC Macro, a professional research and consulting firm, to conduct a survey of DEC permittees and permit consultants about their experiences with the permitting process. The objectives of the survey were two-fold: first, to obtain accurate, baseline data about the experiences and perceptions of the DEC by its permittee customers and, second, to obtain data that will inform the DEC about improving its processes and service to permittees.

For several years prior to 2003, DEC staff conducted a mail survey of permittees to collect permit processing experience data. Due to low response rates, survey results were unable to be reliably generalized to all permittees, and the DEC felt that the study methods did not support the full objectives of the survey. The telephone survey conducted by ORC Macro in 2003 was based on the original mail survey developed by the DEC. The survey was tailored to accommodate telephone administration and questions were added to obtain more detailed information from permittees.

This report outlines the objectives of the Permitting Process Survey, the methods used to conduct it, and study results. In addition, suggestions for future DEC permittee surveys are included.

The Report's Organization

- **Chapter I: Introduction:** provides a brief overview of the survey as well as background information. It also provides a summary of the report's organization.
- **Chapter II: Methodology:** discusses the methods, including the sampling strategy, used to conduct the Permitting Process Survey. It also discusses survey instrument development, programming, and administration.
- **Chapter III: Results:** presents the results of the survey as well as discussion of the findings. It presents the results in the form of graphs with relevant narrative.

II. Methodology

Sample Preparation

Participants for the DEC Permitting Process Survey were obtained from two sources. First, the DEC provided ORC Macro with a list of the permits issued by certain programs within the department between July 1, 2002, and June 30, 2003.¹ Each record on this list included contact information for the permit holder or permittee.² To facilitate data collection, ORC Macro organized this list so that each record represented one permittee (whether an individual or a business) with corresponding contact information and a list of the programs from which each permittee received permits during the study period. Second, the DEC provided ORC Macro with a list of professional consultants who have ongoing relationships with the DEC. In some cases, consultants on the list were already represented in the permittee list; duplicates were removed so that the same individual would not be contacted more than once.

Eighteen permit programs were included in the survey (a list of programs may be found in Appendix A). Permit programs that issue at least 15 permits annually were selected. Some survey questions asked specifically about experiences with these permit programs. In these cases, the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) program designed for the survey displayed the name of the program(s) with which each respondent had experience so that the telephone interviewer could administer program-specific questions.

Contact persons included homeowners, town officials, professional consultants, and employees of private companies. In some cases, more than one person was listed as the permittee. Telephone interviewers were trained to administer the survey to any listed contacts in order to maximize the chances of completing a survey with one of the named permittees.

Because the sample frame provided by the DEC included all members of the defined population, sampling error was minimal. ORC Macro's sampling statistician determined that 850 completed interviews would allow for analyses of survey results at the .05 level of significance if all permit programs were combined; a much greater number of completed interviews would be needed to reliably analyze data at the permit program level. Due to the small number of available contacts in some permit programs (less than 30), it was decided that precision levels for individual programs would be evaluated after data collection, and results would be reported at the program level only if they met minimal statistical precision criteria.

¹ Note that the permits represented in the Permitting Process Survey are entirely separate from Act 250 permits. The DEC Permitting Process Survey did not inquire about any experiences with Act 250 permits.

² Note that permits for which full contact information (name, address, and telephone number) was not available were excluded from the survey sample.

Survey Instrument

ORC Macro and the DEC worked together to adapt the DEC's mail survey into a longer and more detailed telephone survey. Once the survey instrument was finalized, ORC Macro programmed the survey for Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) using the Computers for Marketing (CfMC) Software. The CATI program included the following benefits:

- Automated skips and branches according to the survey instrument's logic
- Range and logic checks for respondents' answers
- Hard and soft edits for response categories
- Internal consistency checks for respondents' answers
- Programmed question rotation within a section to avoid question-order effects

Systematic testing of the programmed questionnaire is critical to ensuring reliable, accurate data. Therefore, after programming was completed, the questionnaire was subjected to a rigorous testing regime that included manual verification of all questions and response categories, and scenario testing.

The telephone survey consists of six sections, A-F. An example of the survey is provided in Appendix C.

Section A was administered to each contact in the sample. Each respondent was asked a set of core questions about how they prepared for the permitting process. At the request of the DEC, ORC Macro further screened the respondents to determine if any were acting as consultants for the permit in question.

Section B was administered only to those records for which the listed contact was the official permit holder, but was not the person who actually went through the permitting process. These permittees were asked specific questions that reflected their perceptions of the process, rather than their personal experience with it. In addition, they were asked several of the same questions that were asked of permittees who had been through the permitting experience personally.

Section C was administered to each permittee who went through the permitting process personally. This section was also administered to the consultant group reflecting broader experience with one or more permit programs. ORC Macro's telephone interviewers asked permittees questions about their experience with the permitting process. For permittees who held permits from more than one of the 18 permit programs, and consultants who dealt with more than one program, the same set of questions was asked in reference to each program from which a permit was received. These respondents are considered multiple program permit holders. (See Appendix A for a list of permit programs.)

In Section D, "multiple program permit holders" were asked whether they received permits from more than one permit program *for any single project* during the study period. If so, they were asked how well they thought different program staffs coordinated with each other during the permitting process.

In Section E, consultants (identified on the list provided by the DEC or through a screening question in Section A) were asked whether they worked as consultants in any other states. If so, they were asked whether permit processes were easier or more difficult in Vermont as compared to those in other states. They also were asked to specify why they thought these processes were easier or more difficult.

Finally, in Section F, all respondents were invited to share any additional feedback about their experiences with the DEC permitting process.

Data Collection

To lend legitimacy to the survey and to encourage participation, ORC Macro mailed a letter on official letterhead from the DEC's commissioner to each contact one week before telephone data collection began. A copy of the pre-notification letter appears in Appendix B.

On September 16, 2003, ORC Macro's project team and DEC staff conducted an interviewer training session. All survey interviewers who worked on the project were experienced ORC Macro CATI interviewers. Topics covered during the training included:

- Background and purpose of the study
- Question-by-question review of the survey instrument
- Study protocols

As part of the training session, interviewers practiced reading the CATI survey online and manipulating the screens as if they were completing a survey.

Following the interviewer training and practice sessions, ORC Macro conducted a live pre-test of the survey instrument. The sample for the pre-test was obtained by randomly selecting potential respondents from the contact list. ORC Macro project staff and a representative from the DEC listened to pre-test interviews and observed the CATI screens via ORC Macro's in-house monitoring system. ORC Macro and DEC staff determined that with one adjustment to the skip pattern, data collection could continue immediately.

Contact numbers were called both during regular business hours and in the evening to maximize the number of respondents contacted during the survey period. Telephone data collection occurred from September 17 to October 5, 2003, and interviews were completed with 851 respondents.

Data Analysis

Following data collection and data processing, descriptive and comparative statistical analyses were performed for each survey response. In consultation with the DEC, it was determined that sample size issues would not allow for analysis at the program level. Therefore, all program responses were combined for analysis.

To determine whether certain groups had different experiences with the permitting process, three sets of comparisons were performed for each survey question:

- Respondents who had experiences with more than one program (referred to as “multiple program permit holders”) were compared to those who received permits from only one program (referred to as “single program permit holders”).
- Respondents who received a DEC permit for the first time during the study period (referred to as “first-time permittees”) were compared to those who had received a permit from the DEC prior to July 1, 2002 (“experienced permittees”).
- Consultants were compared to non-consultants, where consultants were defined as any contact from the list of consultants provided by the DEC, or anyone who answered “yes” to the survey question: “Did you represent someone else in the survey process.”

In addition, certain questions were asked of both those who had gone through the permitting process themselves (in Section C) and those who had not (in Section B). Comparisons were performed between these groups for these questions.

Throughout the survey, open-ended questions were asked to allow respondents to provide other specific information. Responses were typed, as each interviewer understood them. Although most responses are essentially verbatim, abbreviations and paraphrasing have been used in some entries for clarity. Due to the broad range of responses to these questions, it was not possible to briefly summarize them. However, responses that appeared multiple times were combined to appear only once with the number of similar responses provided. The responses are listed in Appendix E. DEC has requested that responses be modified to remove program staff names. This only occurred in 30 of 1,660 total responses. Otherwise, these responses appear verbatim, and comment content has not been altered.

Survey Limitations

A challenge to the project during sample preparation and data collection was the quality of the contact information available for each permit record. A sizable number of permit records could not be included in the survey due to missing or incomplete contact information. As a result, the number of contacts for some permit programs was very small, making it impossible to complete enough surveys to allow for analysis at the program level with reasonable confidence. It should be noted that the analysis included in this report meet statistical precision standards and can be interpreted with confidence. Statistical confidence intervals are provided for each response.

ORC Macro has worked with the DEC to identify key information (such as the name of the person who actually experienced the permit process, regardless of official permittee name; and complete address and telephone information) that is critical to collect from permittees for future research efforts.

III. Results

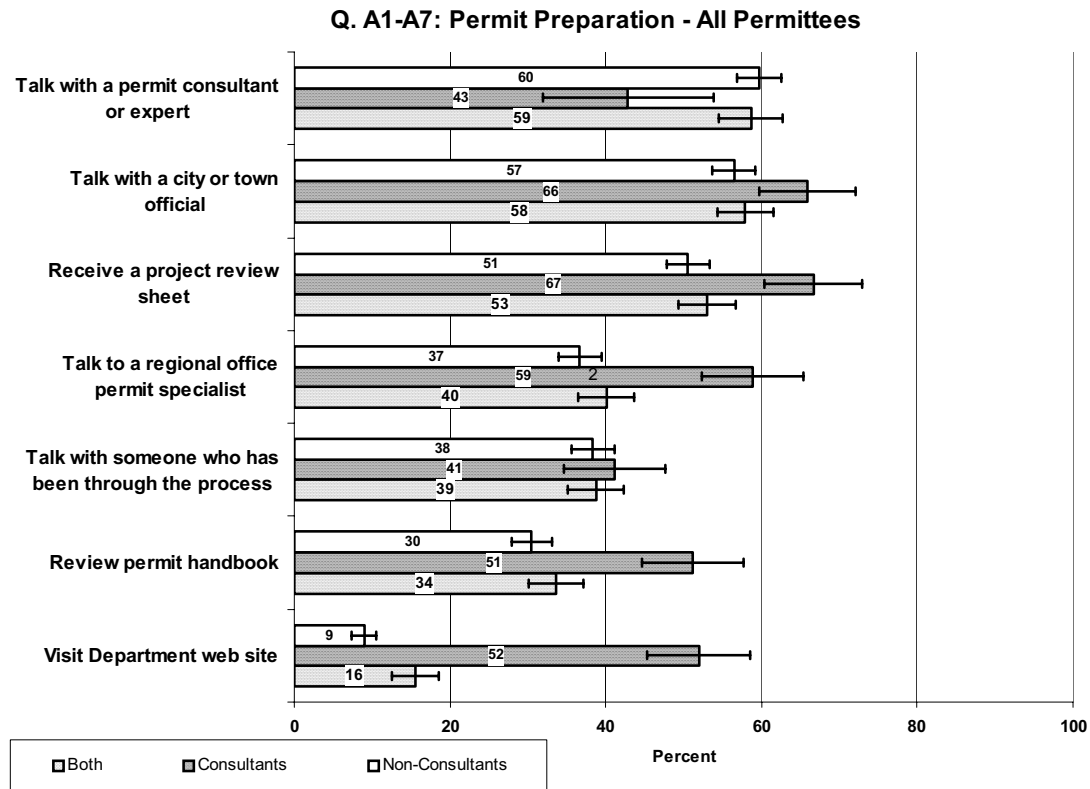
Section A: All Respondents

Following an introduction and confidentiality assurance, the survey began with a section of questions that were asked of all respondents. The intent of this section was to gather basic information about how permittees and consultants prepared for the permit process, the extent of their past experience with obtaining permits, and to determine whether they used the services of a consultant or were consultants themselves.

Preparing for the Permitting Process

Respondents were presented with several actions that may be taken to prepare for the permitting process, and asked whether or not they had taken each action. Respondents were then asked if they did anything else that was not mentioned to prepare for the permitting process.

The two actions most likely to be reported by respondents as preparation for the permitting process were talking with a permit consultant or expert (59%) and talking with a city or town official (58%). Furthermore, more than half of respondents (53%) received a project review sheet. Notably, 27% reported that they did not receive a project review sheet and 20% responded that they “did not know” whether they had received one or not.



Forty percent of respondents spoke with a regional office permit specialist and 39% spoke with a non-DEC staff member who had been through the process in preparation for the permitting process. Of those respondents who spoke with a regional office permit specialist, 75% did so prior to submitting their first application.

Approximately one-third (34%) of all respondents reported reviewing the Permit Handbook, while a relatively small percentage (16%) had visited the department's Web site in preparation for the permitting process.

Respondents were asked if they did anything else to prepare for the permitting process. About one-third (31%) of respondents provided other steps they took in preparation for the permitting process. A list of responses may be found in Appendix E.

Preparation by Consultants and Non-consultants

Comparing the preparation process of consultants and respondents who were not consultants (hereafter "non-consultants"), several significant differences were found. Consultants were significantly more likely than non-consultants to have reported receiving a project review sheet (67% vs. 51%), talked with a city or town official (66% vs. 57%), talked to a regional office permit specialist (59% vs. 37%), reviewed the permit handbook (51% vs. 30%), and visited the department's Web site (52% vs. 9%). Non-consultants, however, were significantly more likely to have talked with a permit consultant or expert (60% vs. 43%).

Notably, significantly more non-consultants (22%) reported "don't know" when asked if they had received a project review sheet, as compared to consultants (7%).

Preparation by Single and Multiple Program Permit Holders

Comparing single and multiple program permit holders also revealed significant differences in the permit preparation process. Multiple program permit holders were significantly more likely to have talked with a permit consultant or expert (83% vs. 57%), have received a project review sheet (75% vs. 51%), visited the department's Web site (47% vs. 12%), and to have reviewed the permit handbook (45% vs. 32%).

Preparation By First-Time and Experienced Permittees

Experienced permittees were significantly more likely to have taken certain steps in preparation for their permit(s) than were first-time permittees. Experienced permittees were more likely to have reviewed the Permit Handbook (37% vs. 30%), and to have visited the department's Web site (21% vs. 11%), whereas first-time permittees were significantly more likely to have talked with a city or town official (62% vs. 55%).

Notably, first-time permittees were significantly more likely than experienced permittees to respond "don't know" when asked if they had received a project review sheet (23% vs. 13%).

Prior Experience with the Permitting Process

Respondents were asked about their past experience obtaining permits from the department. Respondents were first asked whether they had ever received a permit from the department prior to July 1, 2002 (the current survey covers experiences obtaining permits *after* July 1, 2002). About half of respondents (49%) had received permits prior to fiscal year 2003. Of those who received permits in the past, slightly more than half had received five or fewer permits (53%), while slightly less than half had received more than five permits (46%).

Comparing consultants to non-consultants, consultants were significantly more likely (86%) to have received a permit prior to July 1, 2002, than non-consultants (43%). In addition, consultants were more likely than non-consultants to have received five or more permits in the past (80% vs. 33%).

Comparing single and multiple program permit holders, multiple program permit holders (82%) were significantly more likely to have received a permit prior to July 1, 2002, than single program permit holders (46%). Furthermore, multiple program permit holders were significantly more likely than single program permit holders to have received more than five permits in the past (81% vs. 40%).

At this point in the questionnaire, individuals identified as professional consultants by the department were routed to Section C, for questions about their experience with the permitting process.

Personal Experience in the Permitting Process

In order to identify which respondents had first-hand experience with the permitting process, respondents were asked if had gone through the permitting process themselves, or if someone else had represented them in the process. Only 38% of respondents went through the permitting process themselves. The majority of respondents (61%) was represented in the process by someone else.

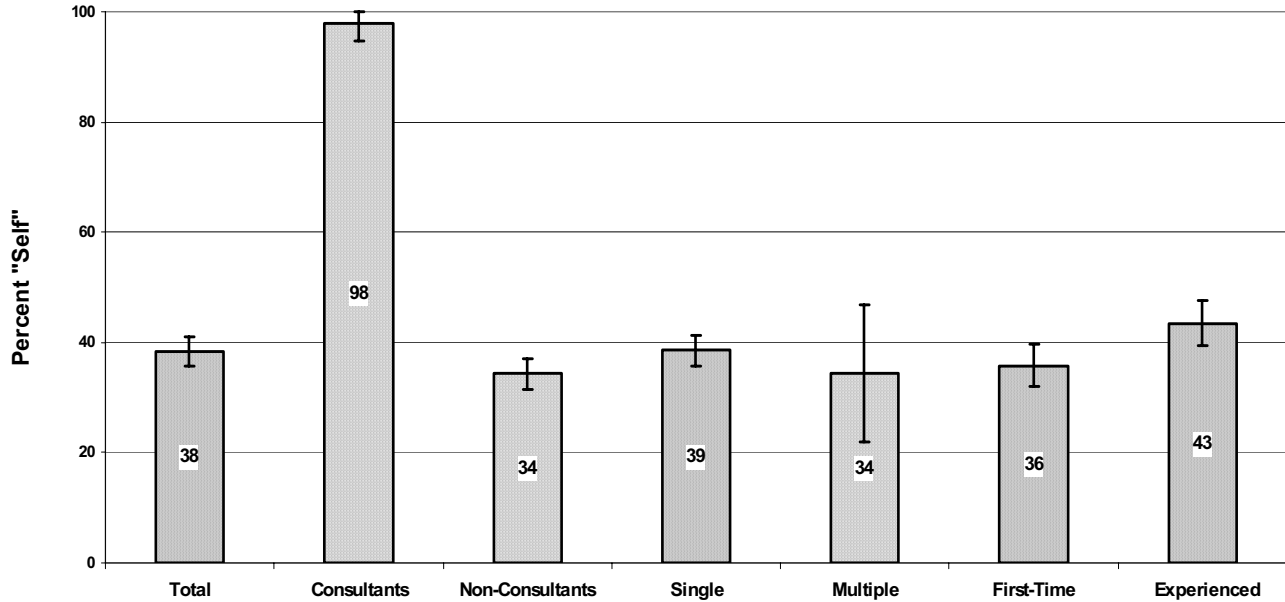
Not surprisingly, consultants were significantly more likely to have gone through the experience personally (98%), as compared to non-consultants (34%). No significant differences were found between single and multiple program permit holders, or between first-time and experienced permittees on this question.

Identifying Consultants

Respondents who went through the permitting process themselves (38% of all respondents) were asked whether they did so as a representative for someone else. Approximately 16% of these respondents reported that they had served as a representative for someone else. Of that 16%, 27% identified themselves as professional consultants. Respondents who reported that they had represented someone else in the permitting process (whether professional consultants or not) were flagged as “consultants” and combined with the professional consultants sample group provided by the department. This combined group was administered the consultant-specific

questions in Section D and used for the comparative analysis of consultants versus non-consultants.

Q. A10: Did you go through the process yourself, or did someone represent you? - "Self" Responses



Section B: Permittees Without Personal Experience in the Permitting Process Themselves

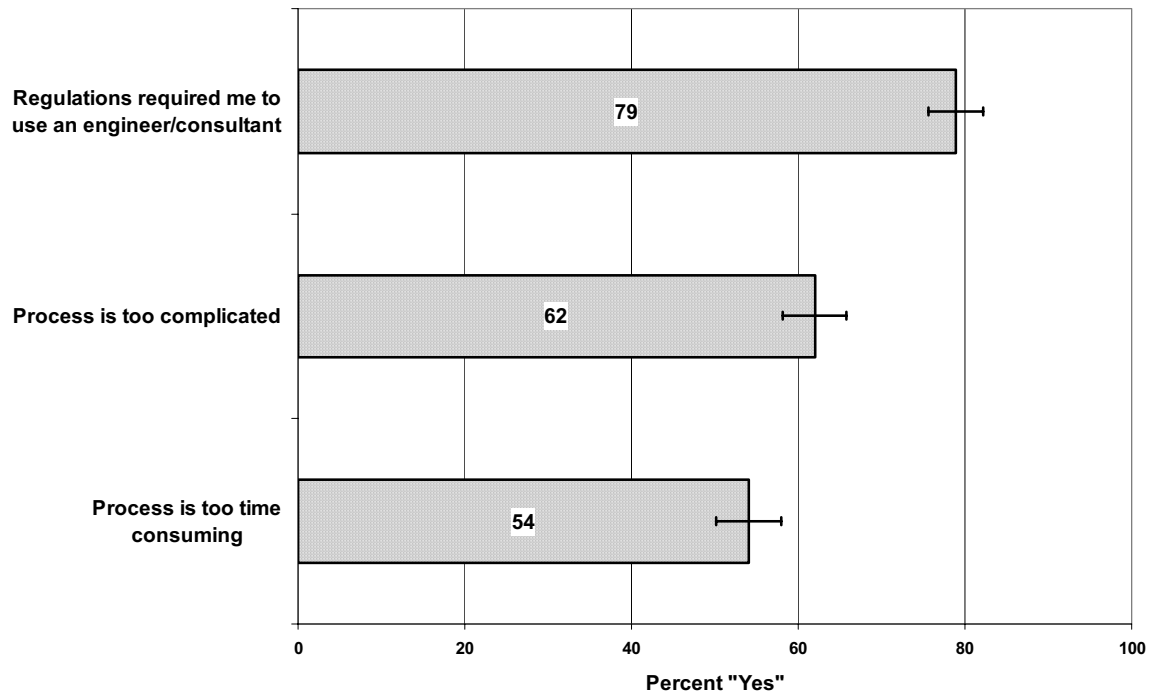
Section B of the questionnaire was designed to measure the opinions of people who held permits but who did not go through the permitting process themselves (i.e., the 61% of all respondents who reported that someone else represented them in the permitting process). It should be noted that consultants were not administered Section B and were instead routed directly to Section C.

Why Permittees Chose Not to Go Through the Process Themselves

The first four questions in Section B were intended to determine the reasons permittees chose not go through the permitting process themselves. Three possible reasons were presented to each permittee, and each reason was presented in a rotated order to avoid question-order effect:

- The regulations required use of an engineer/consultant
- The process is too complicated
- The process is too time consuming

Q. B12a-B12c: Reasons Permittees Chose Not to Go Through the Process



A slight majority (54%) thought the process would be too time consuming to go through themselves, while nearly two-thirds felt the process would be too complicated (62%). The strongest response was in the third category, for which 79% of permittees reported that they were required by the regulations to hire an engineer or consultant for some part of the process.

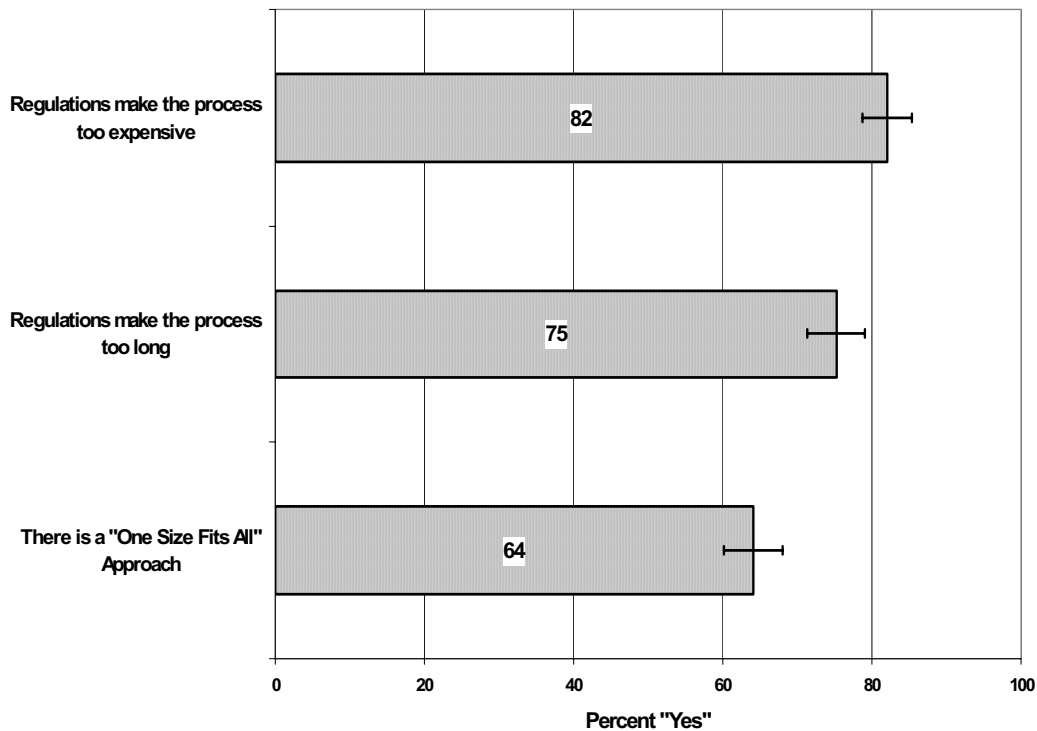
In addition, permittees were asked if there were any other reasons (not mentioned) why they chose not to go through the process. About two-thirds of the permittees in this group said that there was no other reason beyond those mentioned by the interviewer. A list of responses from those who did specify other reasons may be found in Appendix E.

Are Permitting Regulations Reasonable?

Permittees who did not go through the permitting process themselves were then asked four questions to determine their impressions of the reasonableness of the regulations. Based on their perception of the permitting process, a majority of permittees found the regulations reasonable (56%), while a third (35%) did not consider the regulations reasonable. Nine percent did not have an opinion on this question.

Those who did not find the regulations reasonable were again presented with three choices why they might consider the regulations unreasonable. Again, the reasons were presented in rotated order to reduce question-order effects. The responses are summarized in Fig. B13a-B13c below.

Q. B13a-B13c: Reasons the Permitting Regulations are Unreasonable



Permittees who felt that the regulations were unreasonable were asked if there were any other reasons (not yet mentioned) why they so. More than half (55%) provided other reasons with the most common response being that the process was too complicated, confusing, or daunting for a layperson to understand. A list of responses can be found in Appendix E.

Level of Public Involvement in the Permitting Process

Pursuant to permit laws and regulations, some permit programs provide an opportunity for the public to comment on permits during the review process, while others only allow for an appeal of the permitting decision. Permittees were asked whether they thought the level of public involvement for their particular permit program was reasonable.

Only 24% of permittees who did not go through the permitting process themselves thought the level of public involvement was too much, while 44% thought it was about right. A fairly small percentage (8%) thought there was too little public involvement. Nearly a quarter (24%) of permittees without personal experience in the process said they “didn’t know” whether the level of public involvement in the process was too much, about right, or too little.³

³ These data include responses from programs that have a public process and those that do not.

Overall Perception of Permittees Who Did Not Go Through the Process Themselves

Permittees who did not go through the process themselves were asked to rate their overall perception of the permitting process. Nearly 40% of permittees rated their overall opinion as “excellent” or “very good,” while 32% rated the process as average. The remaining 24% of permittees rated their opinion as “fair” or “poor.”

Finally, permittees who did not go through the process themselves were asked if there was anything the department could do to improve the process. A review of the responses shows that the most common suggestion was improve the timeliness of the process, followed closely by a desire to personalize or to individualize the process. In addition, many people commented that the process should be simplified or streamlined and changed so that laypersons can understand it. A listing of responses is included in Appendix E.

Responses in this section were compared between single and multiple program permit holders, as well as first-time and experienced permittees. The only significant difference noted in these comparative analyses was that single program permit holders were more likely than multiple program permit holders to respond that there were other reasons not mentioned by the interviewer that they chose not to go through the process themselves (66% vs. 43%).

Section C: Permittees with Personal Experience

Respondents who reported in Section A that they went through the permitting process themselves (as opposed to being represented by someone else) were asked a series of questions about their permitting experiences. For those respondents who received permits from multiple permit programs, the series of questions was repeated for each program. Respondents included both permittees and consultants. It is important to emphasize that the resultant program sample sizes do not allow comparisons between permit programs. However, interesting differences between consultants and non-consultants, experienced and first-time permittees, and single and multiple permit program holders are noted.

Types of Permits

Respondents were first asked whether any of the permits they had received within the program in question were new, amended, or renewed. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents reported that their permits were new, while 39% reported that their permits had been amended, and 30% said their permits had been renewed.

Consultants were more likely than non-consultants to have received new permits (86% vs. 60%) and amended permits (63% vs. 22%). However, consultants and non-consultants were equally likely to have received renewed permits (27% vs. 30%).

Similarly, multiple program permit holders were more likely than single program permit holders to have received new permits (83% vs. 66%) and amended permits (68% vs. 27%), but these groups were equally likely to have received permit renewals (27% and 33%, respectively).

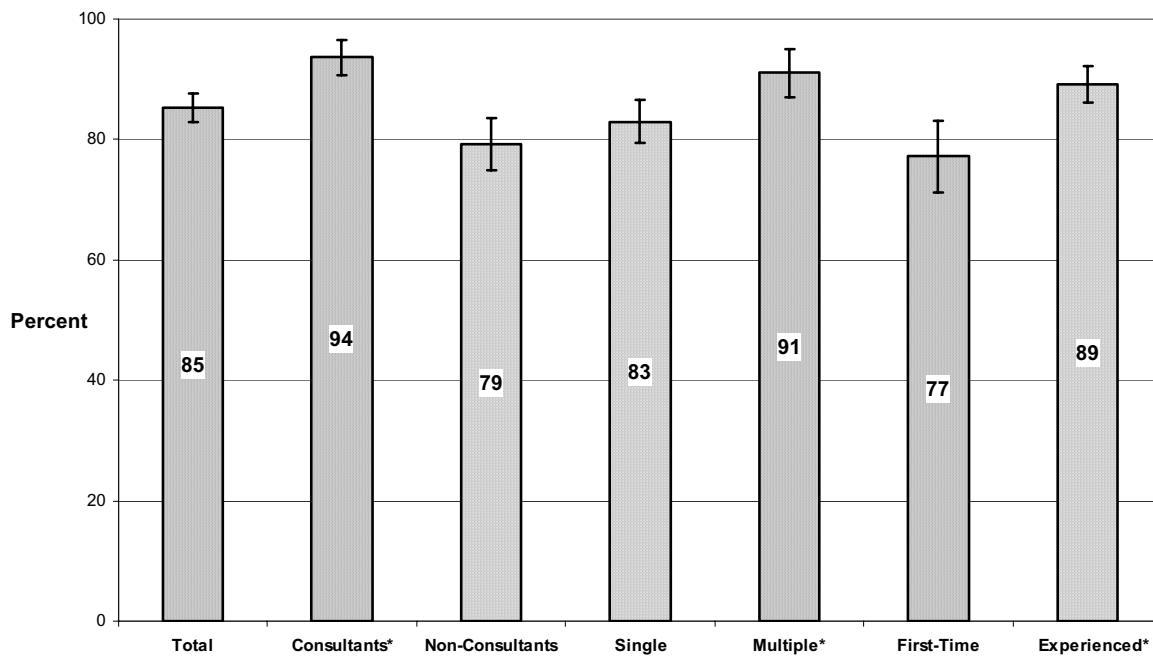
Experienced and first-time permittees were about equally likely to have received new permits between July 1, 2002, and June 30, 2003 (73% and 70%, respectively), but experienced permittees were more likely than first-time permittees to have received amended (49% vs. 21%) or renewed (36% vs. 12%) permits.

Understanding of Requirements by Those Experiencing the Permit Process

The DEC was interested to know whether these respondents knew what was required of them in the permitting process. Results show that a strong majority (85%) of respondents felt that they understood what they needed to know at the time they filed their permit application, whereas 13% said they did not understand what they needed to know. About 2% did not know if they understood what they needed to know at the time or not.

Not surprisingly, experienced respondents were significantly more likely than first-time respondents to report that they knew what they needed to do to prepare a complete application (89% vs. 77%), as were multiple program permit holders as compared to single program permit holders (91% vs. 83%), and consultants as compared to non-consultants (94% vs. 79%).

**Q. C18: Understood Requirements for a Complete Application?
"Yes" Responses**



*Significant Difference

Permittee Interaction with Department Staff

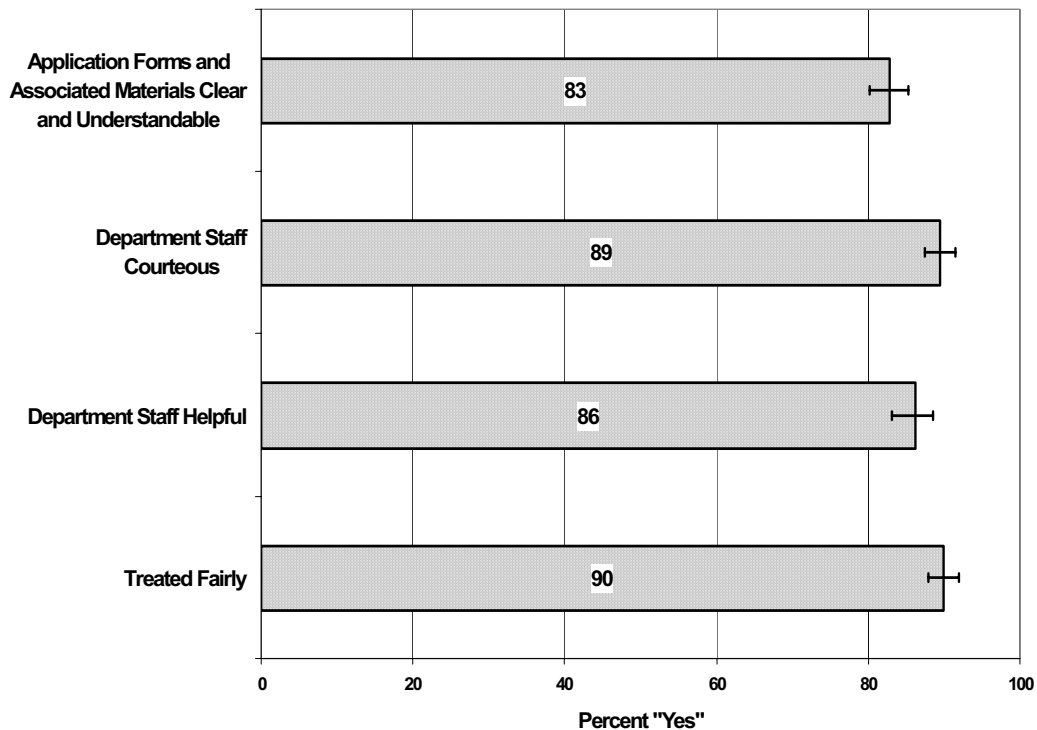
Most of these respondents interacted with department permit staff from the beginning of the process: Overall, more than three-quarters (77%) of respondents dealt directly with department permit program staff at the beginning of the application process, whereas 20% indicated that they had not dealt with staff. In addition, 3% did not know whether they had dealt with staff.

Multiple program permit holders (85%) and consultants (83%) were more likely than single program permit holders (74%) and non-consultants (72%) to deal directly with DEC staff at the beginning of the process. No significant difference was found between the percentages of first-time and experienced respondents who dealt with DEC staff at the beginning of the process.

Application Forms and Interactions with Staff

Overall, respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with the application form and department staff. More than 80% of respondents who had been through the process personally found the application forms and associated instruction forms to be clear and understandable; felt that department staff with whom they dealt were courteous and helpful; and felt that they were treated fairly by department staff during the permitting process.

Q. C20-C23: Application Forms and Interaction with Staff



These high marks were found across the board: no significant differences in these opinions were found between consultants and non-consultants, single and multiple program permit holders, or first-time and experienced respondents.

The permittees who reported that they were not treated fairly by department staff (6%) were asked why they thought they were treated unfairly. A variety of responses were provided (see Appendix E for a list), including confusion about the project, lack of communication, untimely processing, and staff inexperience.

Permit Processing Time

Next, respondents were asked about their experiences with the processing time for their permit. Seventy-two percent of respondents said they were informed of the likely processing time for their permits, while 18% said they were not, and 9% said they did not know. No differences were found among comparison groups.

Of those who were informed of the likely processing time, 41% reported that they were informed before submitting their application, 30% were informed after, 10% were not informed until they asked, and 16% did not know. More single program permit holders reported that they were informed of the likely processing time before submitting the application, as compared to multiple program permit holders (47% vs. 30%). Conversely, multiple program permit holders were more likely to have been informed after submitting the application (41% vs. 26%). While there were no significant differences between the percentages of consultants and non-consultants who were informed before submitting their application, consultants were more likely to be informed after submitting their application (39% vs. 25%). Finally, non-consultants (21%) were significantly more likely to report that they did not know, as compared to consultants (8%).

Those who were informed of the likely processing time (72% overall) were then asked if the time estimate was accurate. Of that group, 77% reported that the time estimate was accurate, while 10% reported that it was not, and 11% did not know. Consultants were more likely than non-consultants to report that the processing time estimate was accurate (84% vs. 73%).

These respondents were asked if the time it took to issue their permits caused them any problems. More than three-quarters of respondents reported that the time it took to issue their permit did not cause them problems, while 22% reported that timing caused them problems. No significant differences were found between comparison groups.

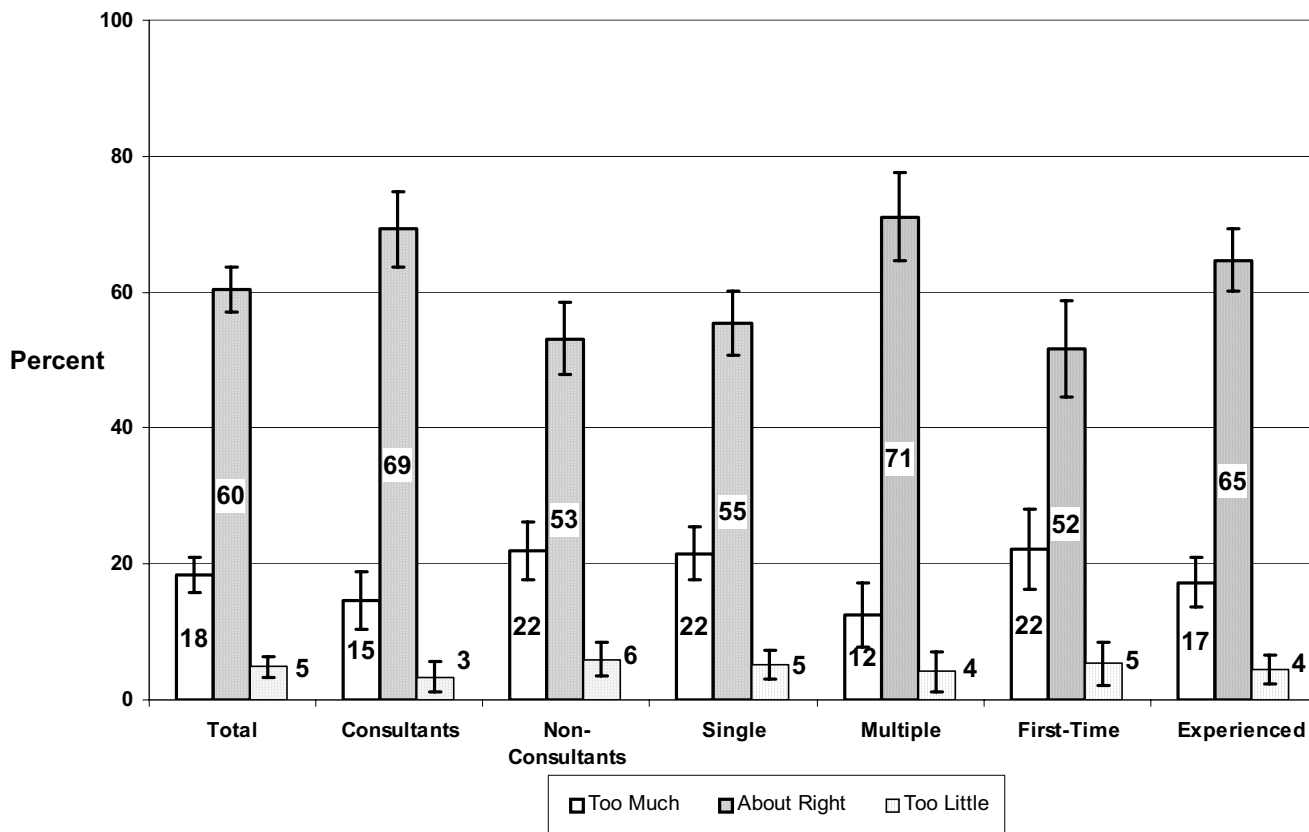
Those who reported that the processing time caused problems were asked to elaborate on the problems caused by the delay. Refer to Appendix E for a listing of responses. Most responses related to delays in the project and/or increased cost incurred because of the delay. Others reported increased frustration and aggravation because of the delay.

Level of Public Involvement

These respondents were asked whether they considered the level of public involvement in the permitting process for their permit program to be too much, about right, or too little. The permit programs include both those with and without a public involvement process as described earlier. Overall, 18% felt that there was too much public involvement. Single program permit holders were more likely than multiple program permit holders to feel that there was too much involvement (22% vs. 12%). Overall, 60% of respondents felt that it was about right. Experienced respondents were more likely than first-time permittees to feel that the public involvement was about right (67% vs. 52%), as were multiple program permit holders as compared to single program permit holders (71% vs. 55%). Overall, only 5% felt there was too

little public involvement in the permitting process, with no difference between comparison groups. Fifteen percent of respondents reported that they did not know.

Q. C26: Level of Public Involvement in the Permitting Process



Are Permitting Regulations Reasonable?

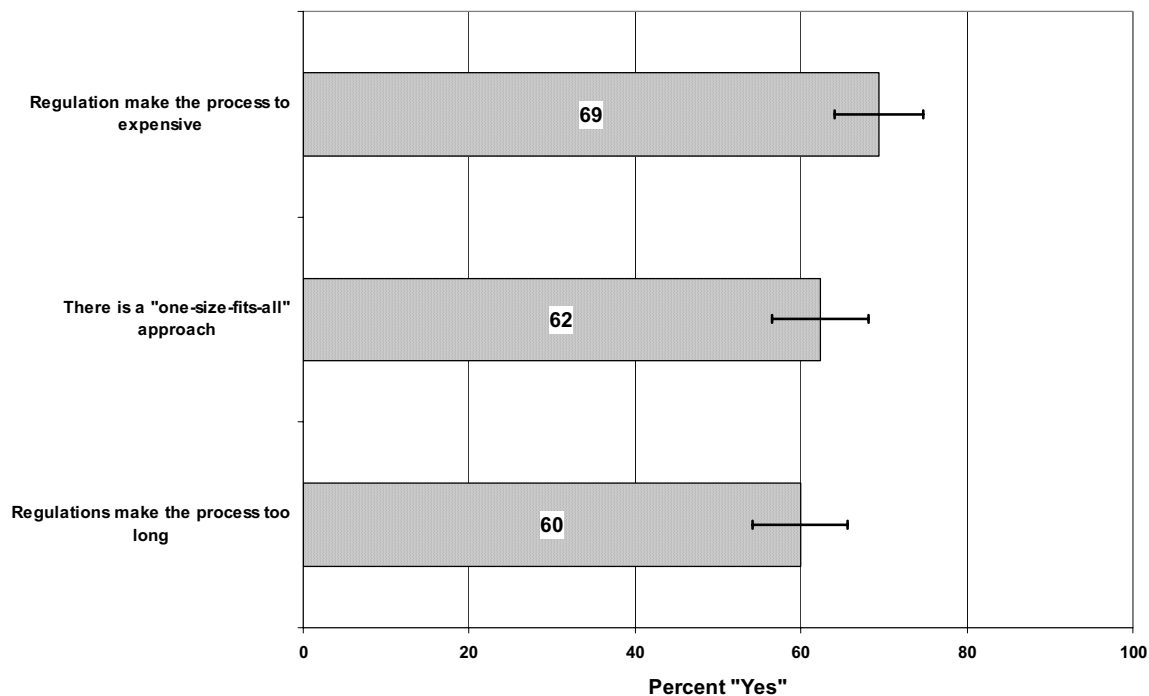
These respondents were also asked if, based on their knowledge of the permitting process, they thought the permitting regulations were reasonable. Overall, 71% of respondents felt they were reasonable, while 24% felt they were not, and 4% did not know. No significant differences were found among comparison groups.

Those respondents who felt that the regulations were unreasonable (24%) were presented with several reasons why they might consider permitting regulations unreasonable, including:

- The regulations are not individualized; there is a “one-size-fits-all” approach
- The regulations make the process too expensive
- The regulations make the process too lengthy

Nearly 60% of those who felt that the permitting regulations were unreasonable agreed with all of the reasons presented. Nearly 70% felt that the regulations make the process too expensive, while approximately 60% indicated that the remaining two reasons were equally important factors in making regulations unreasonable. No significant differences were found among comparison groups for these reasons.

Q. C27a-C27c: Reasons the Permitting Regulations are Unreasonable



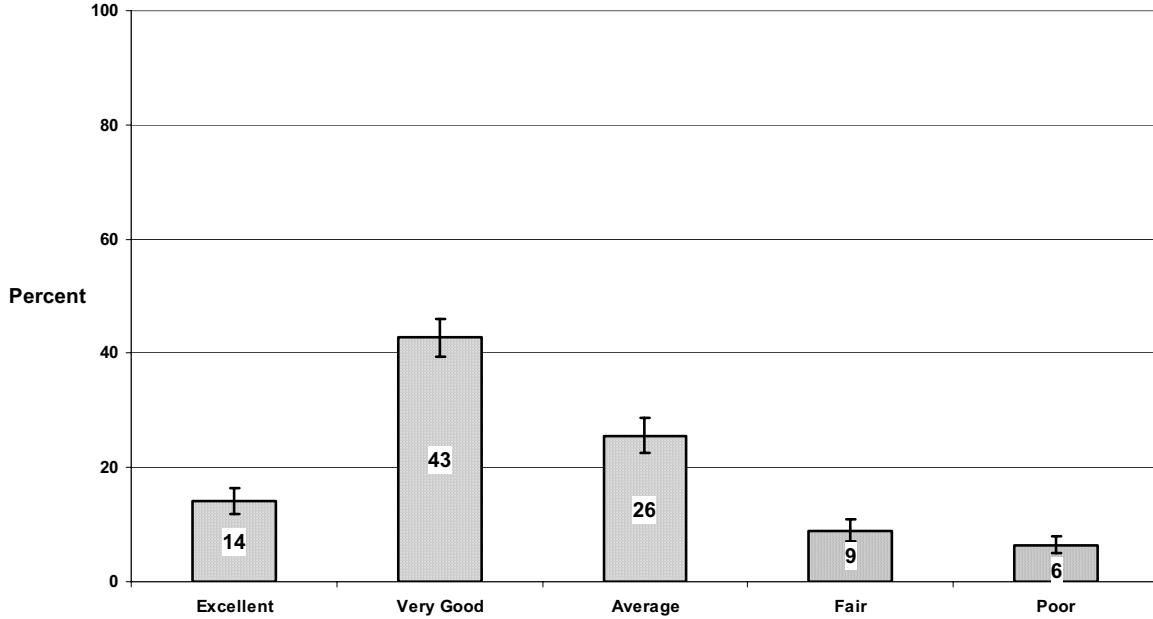
These respondents were asked if there were any other reasons (not mentioned) why they considered the permit regulations unreasonable. More than half (57%) reported additional reasons. Unlike permittees who did not go through the process themselves, those that went through the process were more likely to report specific problems or obstacles created by the regulations. A list of responses to this question is provided in Appendix E.

Overall Opinion of the Department

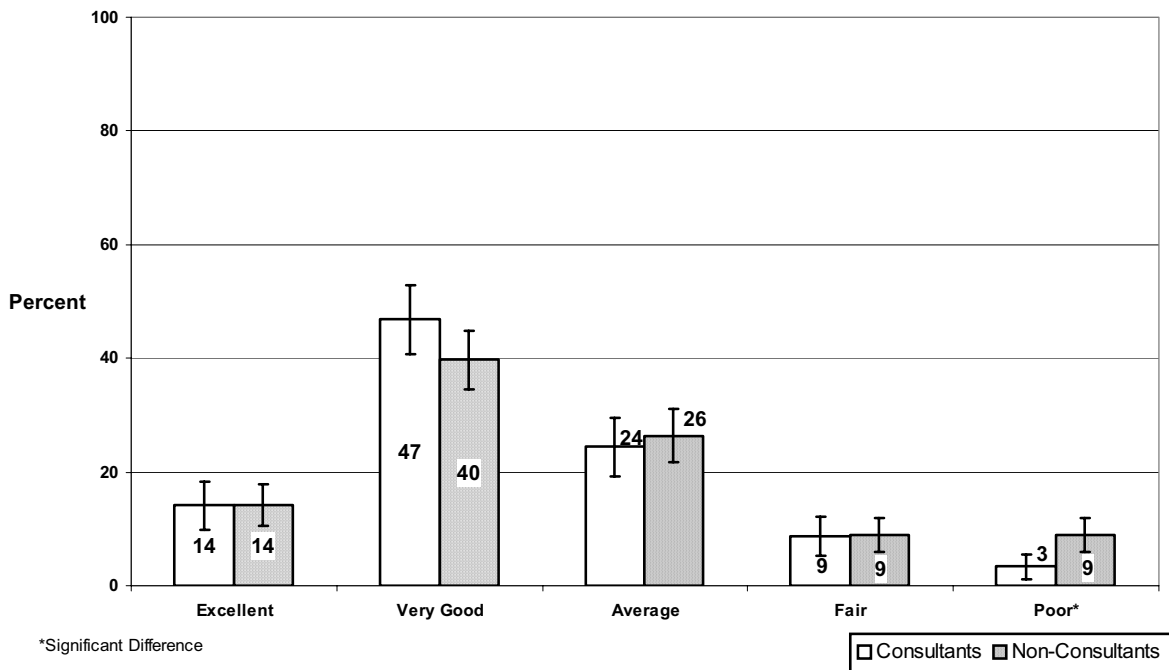
All respondents who went through the process themselves were asked for their overall opinion of the department’s permitting process on a five-point scale, from excellent to poor: 14% of respondents said their experience was excellent; 43% said it was very good; 26% said it was average; 9% said it was fair; and 6% said it was poor.

The only significant difference found between comparison groups was that non-consultants were more likely to rate their experience as poor (9%), as compared to consultants (3%).

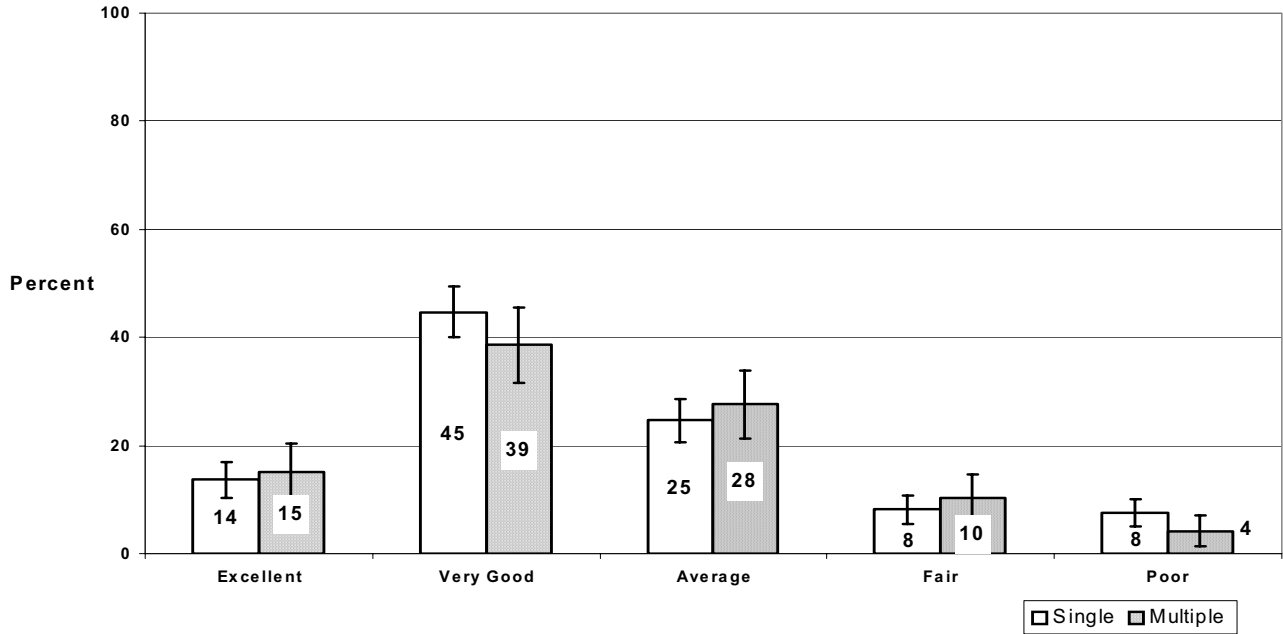
**Q. C28: Overall Opinion of the Permitting Process -
Permittees Who Went Through the Process**



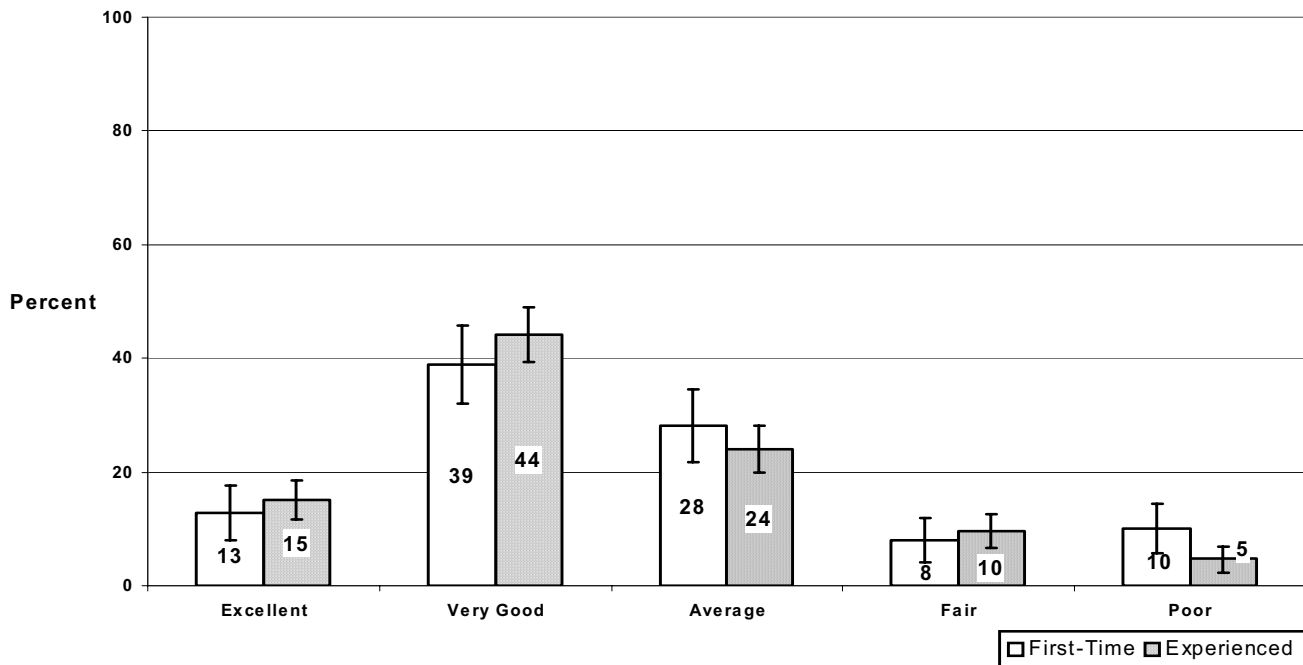
**Q. C28: Overall Opinion of the Permitting Process -
Consultants vs. Non-Consultants**



**Q. C28: Overall Opinion of the Permitting Process -
Single Permit Holder vs. Multiple Permit Holder**



**Q. C28: Overall Opinion of the Permitting Process -
First-Time vs. Experienced**

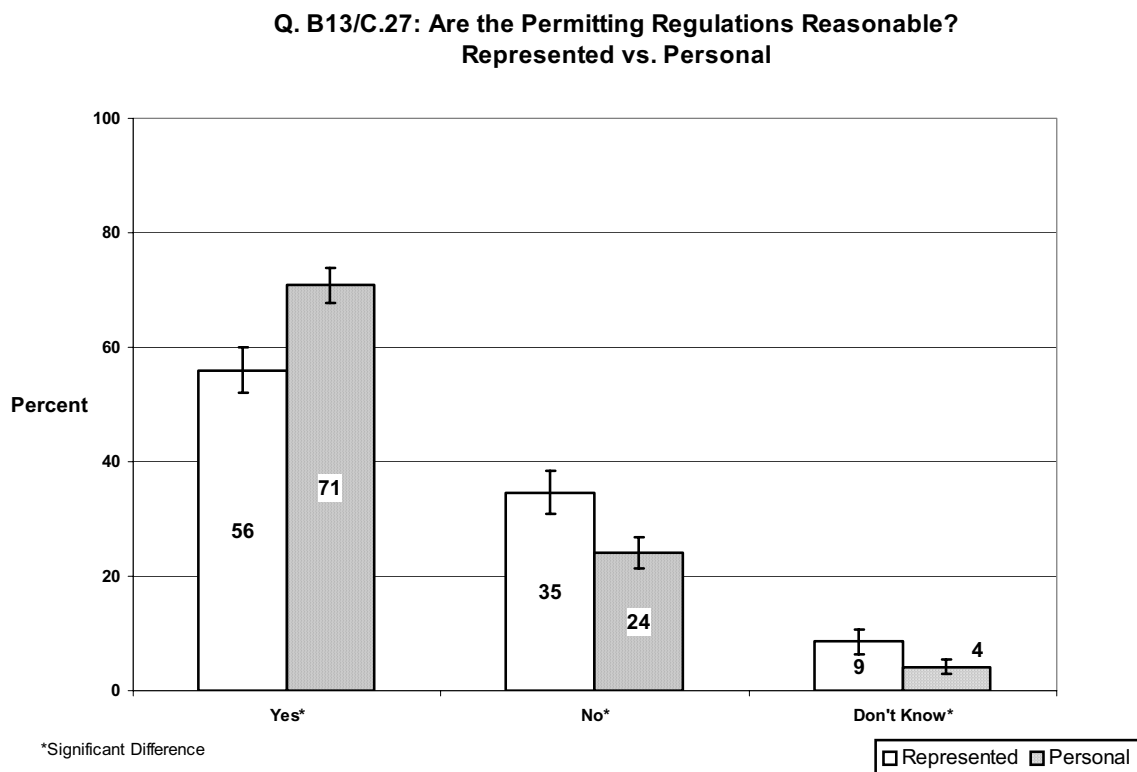


Suggestions for Improvement

Finally, respondents who went through the process themselves were asked how the department could improve the permitting process for the particular program they experienced. Similar to permittees who did not go through the process themselves, the most common comment related to reducing the amount of time it takes to obtain a permit. However, another very common response related to the workload of department staff. Many respondents commented that staff was overworked. Many of these permittees also felt that the process should be more individualized. A full list of comments appears in Appendix E.

Comparing Represented Permittees to Permittees or Consultants with Personal Experience

Section B of the questionnaire was designed to determine what those people who held permits, but who did not go through the permitting process themselves (referred to as “represented permittees”), thought of the process. Several of the questions asked in this section were also asked of those who did go through the process themselves (referred to as “permittees with personal experience”). The latter group included consultants who had experience with programs’ permitting processes. The DEC wanted to compare the perceptions of those who did not experience the process with the opinions of those who did.



All respondents were asked if they thought the permitting regulations were reasonable. A significantly higher percentage of those respondents who went through the process themselves

thought the regulations were reasonable (71%) as compared to those who did not go through the process (56%). As might be expected, a significantly higher proportion of those who did not have first-hand experience with the process said that they didn't know whether the regulations were reasonable or not (9% vs. 4%).

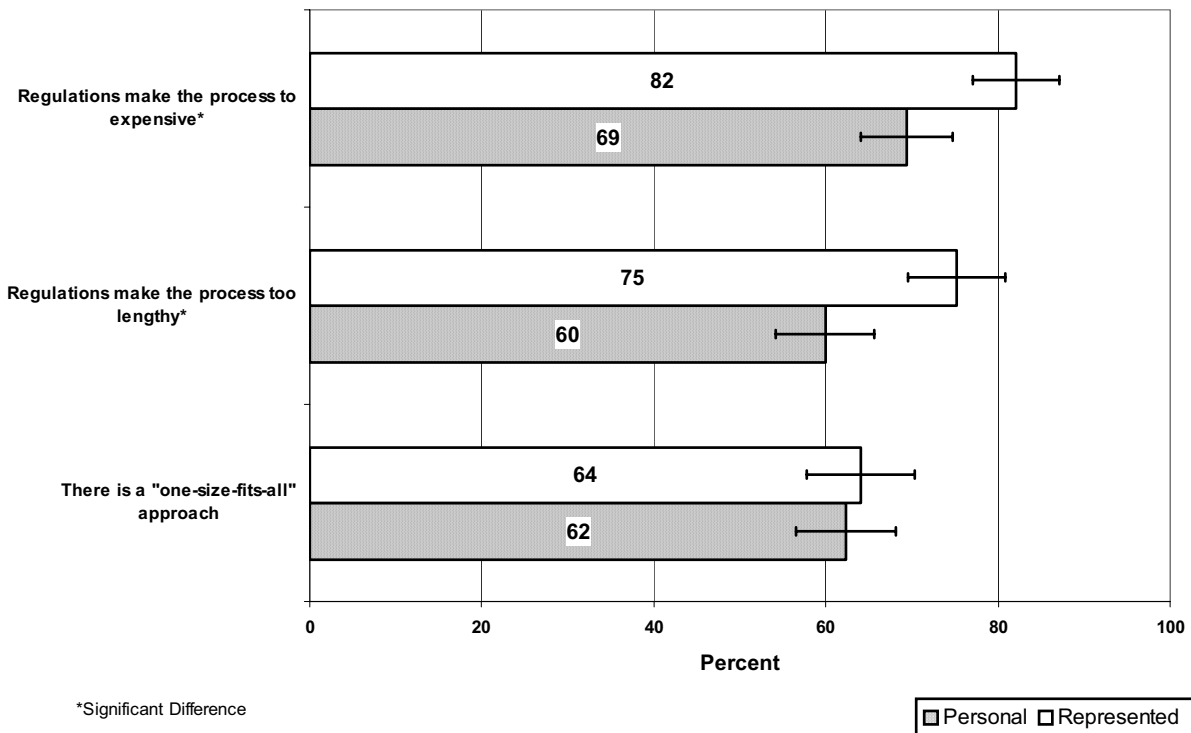
Those who said they thought the permitting regulations were unreasonable were presented with three possible reasons and were asked, for each reason, whether it reflected why they thought the regulations were unreasonable.

A significantly higher percentage of those who did not go through the process themselves felt that the regulations made the process too expensive. For both groups, this was the most highly rated reason why the regulations were unreasonable: 82% for those who did not go through the process and 69% for those who did.

Those who did not go through the process were also significantly more likely to report that the regulations make the process too lengthy and that that was the reason they found the regulations unreasonable, compared to those who did go through the process (75% vs. 60%).

There was no difference in the percentage of those who thought there was a one-size-fits-all approach to the regulations. A majority of both groups found this to be true: 64% for those who did not experience the process, and 62% for those who did.

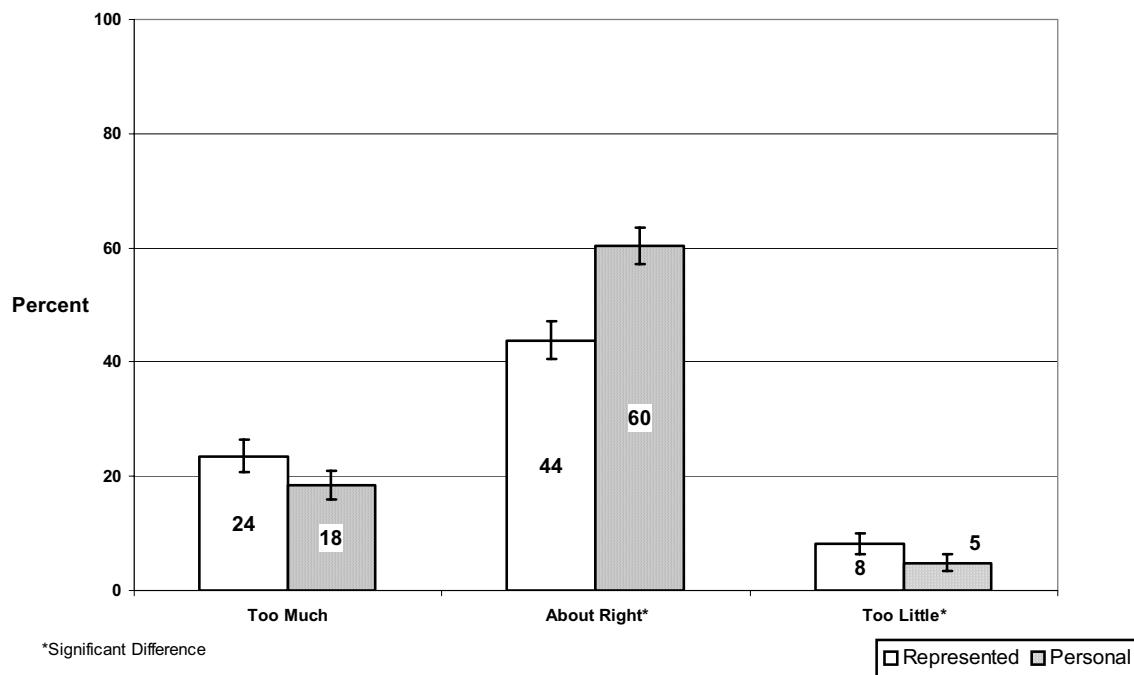
Q. B13a-c/ C27a-c: Reasons Regulations are Unreasonable Represented vs. Personal



All respondents were asked whether they thought the level of public involvement associated with their particular permit program was reasonable. Only 24% of those who did not go through the process, and 18% of those who did, thought the level of public involvement was too high. This was not a significant difference. A majority (60%) of those who went through the process themselves thought the level of public involvement was about right, while a significantly lower proportion (44%) of those without first-hand experience thought the same. A significantly smaller percentage of those with direct experience thought there was too little public involvement as compared to those who did not go through the process, although it should be noted that this was a very small percentage for both groups (5% and 8% respectively).

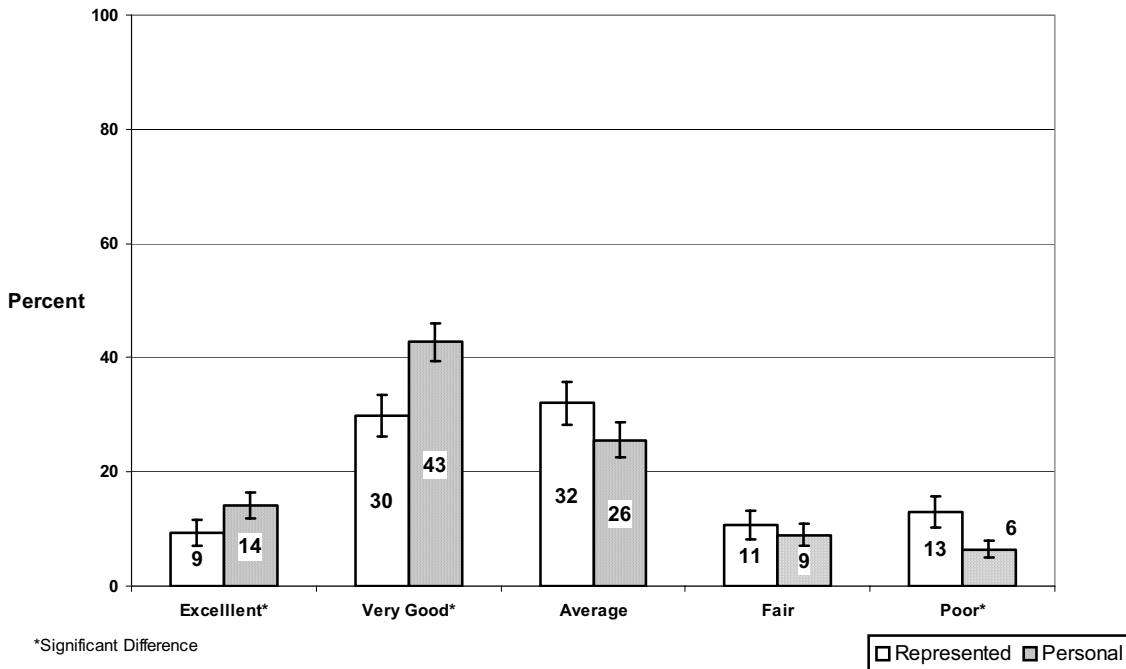
Again, it is not surprising to find that a significantly higher proportion (24%) of those without direct experience with the process said they “didn’t know” about the appropriateness of the level of public involvement than did those who went through the process personally (15%).

Q. B14/ C26: Level of Public Involvement in the Permitting Process Represented vs. Personal



Finally, respondents were asked to rate their overall opinion of the permitting process. A significantly higher percentage of those who went through the process themselves rated it as excellent or very good (14% and 43%, respectively) than those who did not go through the process personally (9% and 30% respectively). A significantly higher percentage of those who did not go through the process (13%) rated it as poor than did those who went through the process themselves (6%). Overall, of those who went through the permitting process, more rated the process as very good (43%) than all of the other categories, while those who did not go through the process rated the process as average (32%), more than any other category.

**Q. B15/C.28: Overall Opinion of the Permitting Process
Represented vs. Personal**



Section D: Permit Program Coordination

This section was administered only to those permittees who obtained permits from multiple permit programs, or consultants who worked with multiple permit programs. The purpose of this section was to obtain information about how well the 18 different permit programs coordinated with one another.

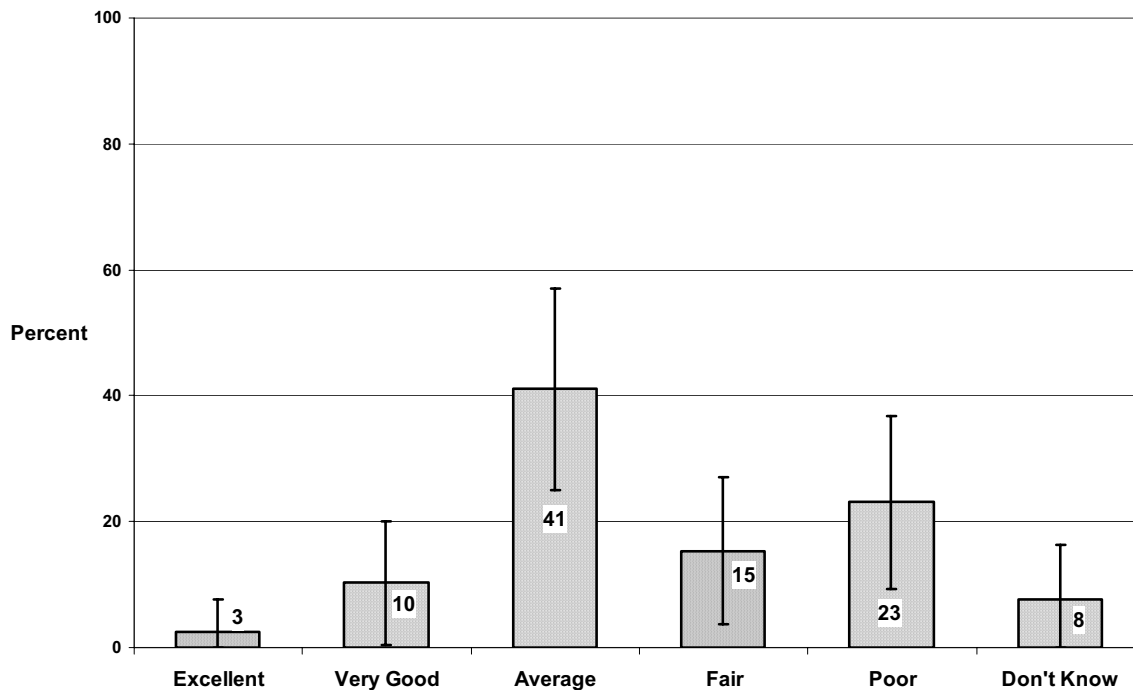
Coordination of Different Permit Programs

Multiple program permit holders were identified in the sample frame. By design, only those 54 respondents who were flagged as multiple program permit holders were administered Section D. Respondents directed to this section were asked if they obtained permits from more than one DEC permit program *for any single project* during the study period. Thirty-nine respondents (72%) indicated that they did obtain permits from more than one DEC permit program for a single project. These eligible respondents were asked how well the different permit program staff coordinated with each other.⁴

Three percent of the eligible respondents rated the coordination as excellent, while 10% rated it as very good. Slightly more than 40% rated the coordination as average, while 15% rated it as fair. Nearly one-quarter of eligible respondents rated inter-program coordination as poor.

⁴ Because of the relatively small number of respondents who met these criteria, the confidence intervals for these responses are larger than for most responses in the survey.

Q. D30a: Level of Coordination Between Program Staff



Section E: Vermont's Permitting Process as Compared to Other States'

Questions in this section were asked of consultants only. The intent of the section was to gather information about how many consultants served as an environmental permit consultant in other states. It also intended to provide insight into consultants' perceptions regarding permitting processes in Vermont as compared to those in other states.

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of consultants responded that they have served as consultants in another state.

Of those 40 consultants, 53% responded that the permitting process is more difficult in Vermont compared to those in the other state(s) where they serve as consultants, while 28% believed that it is about the same. Eighteen percent reported that Vermont's permit processes are easier than those in other states.

Both the group of consultants that find the Vermont permit process easier and the group that finds it more difficult were requested to specify the reasons for their opinion. A list of both sets of responses is provided in Appendix E.

Section F: Additional Comments for the DEC

The last section of the questionnaire is a closing section. It serves to capture any remaining information that the respondent would like to share that was not addressed in the other sections.

Relevant Information the DEC Should Know

All respondents, whether a single or multiple permit program holder, consultant or non-consultant, were asked if there was anything else they wished to share with the DEC about their permit processing experience. Of the 851 respondents, 31% indicated that they would like to share additional information and were given the opportunity to provide open-ended responses, in which the interviewers recorded the responses verbatim. A list of these responses is provided in Appendix E.

APPENDIX A: PERMIT PROGRAMS

Permit Program List

The following permit programs were included in the Permitting Process Survey:

1. Air Pollution Control
2. Direct Discharge
3. Shoreland Encroachment
4. Indirect Discharge
5. Residuals Management
6. Solid Waste
7. Stormwater
8. Stream Alteration - Essex
9. Stream Alteration - Rutland
10. Stream Alteration - St. Johnsbury
11. Underground Storage Tank
12. Wastewater - Barre
13. Wastewater - Essex
14. Wastewater - Rutland
15. Wastewater - Springfield
16. Wastewater - St. Johnsbury
17. Water Supply
18. Wetlands/Wetlands Conditional Use

APPENDIX B: PRENOTIFICATION LETTER

Commissioner's Office

103 South Main Street
Telephone (802) 241-3808
FAX (802) 244-5141

Dear [First Name],

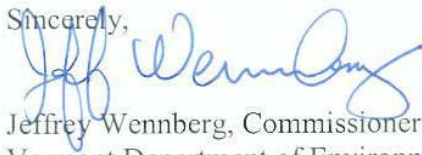
As Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation it is clear to me that Vermonters, from all walks of life, place great value in having a safe and healthy environment. Consistent with Vermont legislation, ensuring a quality environment and protecting the public health are the bases of the Department's mission. In pursuit of this mission, the Department is interested in continuously improving systems in part through customer feedback.

Currently, the Department is developing improvements to our permit systems. In order to obtain your opinion on the regulatory processes and possible improvements to it, the Department has hired ORC Macro, an independent research firm, to conduct a telephone survey of Department of Environmental Conservation permittees and consultants. We will be asking about Department permits only, not Act 250 or other state agencies' permits. You have been selected to participate because you received a Department permit between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003, or because you represented at least one client in a permitting process during that timeframe.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. However, for this survey to have meaning, it is very important that we talk to everyone selected to participate. Your answers to these questions will be kept in the strictest confidence. We (The Department) will not even know the source of specific responses. Your answers will, however, help the Department to better understand and improve the permitting processes. So when ORC Macro calls in the next several days, I would appreciate your taking the time to participate in our survey.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Wennberg, Commissioner
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Section A: Core [THIS SECTION IS ADMINISTERED TO EVERYONE WHO IS CONTACTED.]

Introduction

Hello, my name is [INSERT NAME]. I am calling on behalf of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. We are conducting a survey regarding permitting process experiences.

{INSERT BUSINESS AND NAME FIELDS}

Our records indicate that you had experience with the Department of Environmental Conservation [INSERT PERMIT PROGRAMS DRAWN] permit program within the last year. I would like to ask you some questions about that experience. Please keep in mind that this survey relates to the [INSERT PERMIT PROGRAMS DRAWN] permits that you received from Department of Environmental Conservation, not any Act 250 permit that you may have received from the District Environmental Commission. Your responses to this survey are confidential. This call may be monitored for quality assurance.

First I'd like to ask you some questions about how you prepared for the permitting process for any permits you received between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003.

{ROTATE QUESTIONS A1-A7. QUESTIONS A2 AND A2a MUST REMAIN LINKED TOGETHER IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY APPEAR HERE}

//BEGIN ROTATE//

A1 Did you review the Department's "Permit Handbook"?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A2 Did you talk to a regional office permit specialist?

01 Yes
02 {SKIP TO QUEST.A3} No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A2a Was this prior to submitting your first application?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A3 Did you receive a project review sheet from the Department?
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: ALSO KNOWN AS PR SHEET.]

01 Yes
02 No

98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A4 Did you visit the Department's web sites?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A5 Did you talk with someone else who has been through the permitting process?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A6 Did you talk with a permit consultant or expert?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A7 Did you talk with a city or town official?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

//END ROTATE//

A8 Did you do anything else to prepare for obtaining your permit that I have not mentioned?

95 Other - specify
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

A9 Have you ever received a permit from the Department prior to July 1, 2002?

01		Yes
02	{//GO TO TEST#1}	No
98	{//GO TO TEST#1}	DON'T KNOW
99	{//GO TO TEST#1}	REFUSED

A9a How many permits have you received prior to July 1, 2002

01	Five or fewer
02	More than five
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

{TEST#1: IF CONSULTANT=1, GO TO C17}

Sometimes permit applicants hire professional consultants or others to represent them during the permitting process.

A10 Did you go through the permitting process yourself or did someone else represent you?

01	Self	[FOR ANY OR ALL PERMITS]
02	{SKIP TO QUEST. B12}	Someone else
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

A11 Did you represent someone else in the permitting process?

01		Yes
02	{SKIP TO Q. C17 }	No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

A11a Are you a professional consultant? That is, are you in the business of providing design, technical, or permitting process advice to permit applicants?

[HELP SCREEN: advice includes developing plans, application forms and/or going through the permitting process.]

01	{SKIP TO QUEST. C17}	Yes
02	{SKIP TO QUEST. C17}	No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

Section B: No Personal Experience

I'm going to read you a list of common reasons people choose not to go through the permitting process themselves. For each reason, please tell me if it was a reason you choose not to go through the permitting process.

{ROTATE QUESTIONS B12a-B12c}

//BEGIN ROTATE//

B12a The process is too time consuming.

01		Yes
02		No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

B12b The process is too complicated.

01		Yes
02		No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

B12c The regulations required me to use an engineer/consultant.

01		Yes
02		No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

//END ROTATE//

B12d Is there any other reason I have not mentioned?

95 Other - Specify
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

B13 Based on your knowledge of your permitting process, do you think the permitting regulations are reasonable?

01 {SKIP TO QUEST Yes
B14}
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

I am going to list several reasons why you may find the permitting regulations unreasonable. For each of these, please tell me if you think the reason reflects why you think the regulations are unreasonable

{ROTATE QUESTIONS B13a-B13c}
//BEGIN ROTATE//

B13a The regulations are not individualized – there is a one size fits all approach.

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

B13b The regulations make the process too expensive.

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

B13c The regulations make the process take too long.

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

//END ROTATE//

B13d Are there any other reasons why you think the permit regulations are unreasonable?

95 Other - Specify
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

B14 Do you consider the level of public involvement in the {insert permit program} permitting process to be too much, about right, or to little?

[FOR SOME OF THE PERMIT PROGRAMS THERE IS NO PUBLIC PROCESS. THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES SHOULD STILL WORK. EXPLAIN TO THE RESPONDENT THAT YOU ARE ASKING, IF THERE IS NONE, WHETHER THAT IS APPROPRIATE OR SHOULD THERE BE MORE?]

01	Too much
02	About right
03	Too little
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

B15 Overall, what is your opinion of the Department's permitting process? Would you say your experience with the process has been...

01	Excellent
02	Very Good
03	Average
04	Fair
05	Poor
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

B16 Based on your knowledge of the permitting process, what can the Department do to improve the process?

95	Other - Specify
02	No improvement needed
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

[END INTERVIEW – GO TO CLOSING]

Section C: Program Specific Questions

Now I would like to ask you some specific questions about your experience with the [INSERT TYPE OF PERMIT] permitting process.

C17a Were any of the [INSERT TYPE OF PERMIT] permits you received new permits?

01	Yes
02	No
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

C17b Were any of the [INSERT TYPE OF PERMIT] permits you received amended permits?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C17c Were any of the [INSERT TYPE OF PERMIT] permits you received renewed permits?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C18 At the time you filed your permit application, do you feel that you understood what you needed to do to prepare a complete application?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C19 Did you deal directly with the Department [INSERT TYPE OF PERMIT] permit program staff at the beginning of the application process?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C20 Were the application forms and associated instruction forms clear and understandable?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C21 Were all the Department staff with whom you dealt courteous?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C22 Were all the Department staff with whom you dealt helpful?

01 Some
02 All
03 None
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C23 Do you feel that you were treated fairly by the Department's staff during your permitting process?

01 {SKIP TO QUEST. Yes
C24}
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C23a Why do you think you were treated unfairly?

95 Specify
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C24 Were you informed of the likely processing time for your permit?

01 Yes
02 {SKIP TO QUEST. No
C25}
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C24a When were you informed of the likely processing time? Was it...

01 Before submitting the application
02 After submitting the application
03 Not until you asked about it
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C24b Was the time estimate accurate?

01 Yes
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

C25 Did the amount of time it took to issue you the permit cause you any problems?

01		Yes
02	{SKIP TO QUEST. 26}	No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

C25a What problems did it cause you?

95		Specify
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

C26 Do you consider the level of public involvement in the {insert permit program} permitting process to be too much, about right, or to little?

[FOR SOME OF THE PERMIT PROGRAMS THERE IS NO PUBLIC PROCESS. THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES SHOULD STILL WORK. EXPLAIN TO THE INTERVIEWEE THAT YOU ARE ASKING, IF THERE IS NONE, WHETHER THAT IS APPROPRIATE OR SHOULD THERE BE MORE?]

01		Too much
02		About right
03		Too little
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

C27 Based on your knowledge of the permitting process, do you think the permitting regulations are reasonable?

01	{SKIP TO QUEST. 28}	Yes
02		No
98		DON'T KNOW
99		REFUSED

I am going to list several reasons why you may find the permitting regulations unreasonable. For each of these, please tell me if you think the reason reflects why you think the regulations are unreasonable.

{ROTATE QUESTIONS C27a-C27d}

//BEGIN ROTATE//

C27a The regulations are not individualized, so there is a “one size fits all” approach.

01	Yes
02	No
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

C27b The regulations make the process too expensive.

01	Yes
02	No
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

C27c The regulations make the process take too long

01	Yes
02	No
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

//END ROTATE//

C27d Is there any other reason I have not mentioned?

95	Other--specify
02	None
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

C28 Overall, what is your opinion of the Department’s permitting process?
Would you say your experience with the process has been...

01	Excellent
02	Very Good
03	Average
04	Fair
05	Poor
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

C29 Specifically, how can the Department improve the {insert permit program} permitting process?

95	OTHER--SPECIFY
01	NO IMPROVEMENT NEEDED
98	DON'T KNOW
99	REFUSED

{SINGLE PROGRAM PERMIT HOLDERS: END INTERVIEW—GO TO CLOSING}
{MULTIPLE PROGRAM PERMIT HOLDERS: REPEAT QUESTIONS IN SECTION C FOR EACH PROGRAM FOR WHICH THE PERMITTEE WAS SELECTED}

Section D: Coordination Questions

D30 For any single project you worked on between July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003, did you obtain permits from more than one DEC permit program?

01		Yes
02	{GO TO TEST #2}	No
98	{GO TO TEST #2}	DON'T KNOW
99	{GO TO TEST #2}	REFUSED

D30a How well did the different program staff coordinate with each other? Would you say their level of coordination was ...

01	{GO TO TEST #2}	Excellent
02	{GO TO TEST #2}	Very Good
03	{GO TO TEST #2}	Average
04	{GO TO TEST #2}	Fair
05	{GO TO TEST #2}	Poor
98	{GO TO TEST #2}	DON'T KNOW
99	{GO TO TEST #2}	REFUSED

{TEST 2: if consultant= 1 or Q.A11=1, go to E 31, otherwise go to closing}

Section E: Consultant Questions

E31 Do you serve as a consultant for environmental permits in any other states?

01		Yes
02	{GO TO CLOSING}	No
98	{GO TO CLOSING}	DON'T KNOW
99	{GO TO CLOSING}	REFUSED

E31a How would you say that the permitting process in Vermont compares to those other states?

01	{skip to 31b}	Easier than most
02	{skip to 31c}	More difficult than most
03	{GO TO CLOSING}	About the same
98	{GO TO CLOSING}	DON'T KNOW
99	{GO TO CLOSING}	REFUSED

E31b Why would you say that the permitting process is easier in Vermont than in other states?

95 {GO TO CLOSING} Other--specify
98 {GO TO CLOSING} DON'T KNOW
99 {GO TO CLOSING} REFUSED

E31c Why would you say that the permitting process is more difficult in Vermont than in other states?

95 {GO TO CLOSING} Other--specify
98 {GO TO CLOSING} DON'T KNOW
99 {GO TO CLOSING} REFUSED

Section F: Closing

F32 Is there anything else you think the DEC should know about your permit processing experience?

95 Yes--specify
02 No
98 DON'T KNOW
99 REFUSED

May I please have your initials so that a quality assurance monitor may call back to verify your answers if necessary?

Those are all of the questions that I have. Thank you for your participation in the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Permit process survey!

APPENDIX D: WEIGHTED SURVEY FREQUENCIES

AppendixD overall frequencies.txt
 DEC Permitting Process Survey

Table of Confidence Intervals by Program

09:53 Friday, November 14, 2003

Total N	Question	Response	Percent	Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Limit
851	a1_new	1	33.61%	31.18%	36.03%
851	a1_new	2	63.22%	60.74%	65.70%
851	a1_new	98	3.17%	2.27%	4.07%
851	a2_new	1	40.07%	37.55%	42.59%
851	a2_new	2	54.05%	51.49%	56.61%
851	a2_new	98	5.76%	4.56%	6.95%
851	a2_new	99	0.12%	0.00%	0.29%
341	a2a_new	1	75.07%	70.86%	79.28%
341	a2a_new	2	21.41%	17.42%	25.40%
341	a2a_new	98	3.52%	1.73%	5.31%
851	a3_new	1	53.00%	50.43%	55.56%
851	a3_new	2	27.38%	25.09%	29.67%
851	a3_new	98	19.62%	17.58%	21.66%
851	a4_new	1	15.51%	13.65%	17.37%
851	a4_new	2	83.55%	81.64%	85.45%
851	a4_new	98	0.94%	0.44%	1.44%
851	a5_new	1	38.78%	36.28%	41.28%
851	a5_new	2	60.52%	58.01%	63.03%
851	a5_new	98	0.71%	0.28%	1.13%
771	a6_new	1	58.63%	55.88%	61.37%
771	a6_new	2	39.56%	36.83%	42.29%
771	a6_new	98	1.82%	1.07%	2.56%
851	a7_new	1	57.93%	55.40%	60.47%
851	a7_new	2	41.25%	38.72%	43.77%
851	a7_new	98	0.82%	0.36%	1.29%
851	a8_new	2	67.57%	65.16%	69.97%
851	a8_new	95	31.49%	29.11%	33.88%
851	a8_new	98	0.94%	0.44%	1.44%
851	a9_new	1	49.35%	46.79%	51.92%
851	a9_new	2	46.06%	43.50%	48.62%
851	a9_new	98	4.58%	3.51%	5.66%
420	a9a_new	1	52.62%	48.35%	56.89%
420	a9a_new	2	45.71%	41.45%	49.98%
420	a9a_new	98	1.67%	0.57%	2.76%
771	a10_new	1	38.39%	35.68%	41.10%
771	a10_new	2	60.70%	57.98%	63.42%
771	a10_new	98	0.91%	0.38%	1.44%
303	a11_new	1	16.17%	12.33%	20.02%
303	a11_new	2	83.83%	79.98%	87.67%
49	a11a_new	1	26.53%	13.87%	39.19%
49	a11a_new	2	73.47%	60.81%	86.13%
468	b12a_new	1	54.06%	50.08%	58.04%
468	b12a_new	2	41.24%	37.31%	45.17%
468	b12a_new	98	4.70%	3.01%	6.39%
468	b12b_new	1	61.97%	58.09%	65.84%
468	b12b_new	2	32.26%	28.53%	36.00%
468	b12b_new	98	5.77%	3.91%	7.63%
468	b12c_new	1	78.85%	75.59%	82.11%
468	b12c_new	2	15.38%	12.51%	18.26%
468	b12c_new	98	5.56%	3.73%	7.38%
468	b12c_new	99	0.21%	0.00%	0.58%
468	b12d_new	2	65.17%	61.37%	68.97%
468	b12d_new	95	34.40%	30.61%	38.19%
468	b12d_new	98	0.43%	0.00%	0.95%

AppendixD overall frequencies.txt

468	b13_new	1	55.98%	52.02%	59.94%
468	b13_new	2	34.62%	30.82%	38.41%
468	b13_new	98	8.55%	6.32%	10.78%
468	b13_new	99	0.85%	0.12%	1.59%
206	b13a_new	1	64.08%	57.81%	70.34%
206	b13a_new	2	16.50%	11.66%	21.35%
206	b13a_new	98	18.45%	13.38%	23.51%
206	b13a_new	99	0.97%	0.00%	2.25%
206	b13b_new	1	82.04%	77.03%	87.05%
206	b13b_new	2	9.22%	5.45%	13.00%
206	b13b_new	98	8.25%	4.66%	11.84%
206	b13b_new	99	0.49%	0.00%	1.39%
206	b13c_new	1	75.24%	69.61%	80.88%
206	b13c_new	2	15.53%	10.81%	20.26%
206	b13c_new	98	8.74%	5.05%	12.42%
206	b13c_new	99	0.49%	0.00%	1.39%
206	b13d_new	2	37.86%	31.53%	44.20%
206	b13d_new	95	55.34%	48.85%	61.83%
206	b13d_new	98	6.31%	3.14%	9.49%
206	b13d_new	99	0.49%	0.00%	1.39%
491	b14	1	23.55%	20.73%	26.38%
491	b14	2	43.83%	40.55%	47.12%
491	b14	3	8.23%	6.45%	10.00%
491	b14	98	23.65%	20.96%	26.33%
491	b14	99	0.74%	0.24%	1.23%
468	b15_new	1	9.40%	7.07%	11.73%
468	b15_new	2	29.91%	26.26%	33.57%
468	b15_new	3	32.05%	28.33%	35.78%
468	b15_new	4	10.68%	8.22%	13.15%
468	b15_new	5	13.03%	10.35%	15.72%
468	b15_new	98	4.49%	2.84%	6.14%
468	b15_new	99	0.43%	0.00%	0.95%
468	b16_new	2	16.03%	13.10%	18.95%
468	b16_new	95	67.31%	63.56%	71.05%
468	b16_new	98	16.24%	13.30%	19.18%
468	b16_new	99	0.43%	0.00%	0.95%
474	c17a	1	70.11%	67.26%	72.96%
474	c17a	2	26.24%	23.52%	28.96%
474	c17a	98	3.20%	2.11%	4.30%
474	c17a	99	0.45%	0.00%	0.91%
474	c17b	1	38.73%	35.61%	41.84%
474	c17b	2	54.80%	51.60%	58.00%
474	c17b	98	6.02%	4.55%	7.50%
474	c17b	99	0.45%	0.00%	0.91%
474	c17c	1	30.19%	27.59%	32.79%
474	c17c	2	66.50%	63.79%	69.21%
474	c17c	98	2.86%	1.80%	3.92%
474	c17c	99	0.45%	0.00%	0.91%
474	c18	1	85.29%	82.88%	87.71%
474	c18	2	12.60%	10.33%	14.86%
474	c18	98	1.66%	0.83%	2.49%
474	c18	99	0.45%	0.00%	0.91%
474	c19	1	76.55%	73.65%	79.46%
474	c19	2	19.93%	17.16%	22.71%
474	c19	98	3.06%	1.97%	4.16%
474	c19	99	0.45%	0.00%	0.91%
474	c20	1	82.76%	80.21%	85.30%
474	c20	2	12.29%	10.16%	14.43%
474	c20	98	4.32%	2.86%	5.77%
474	c20	99	0.63%	0.11%	1.16%
474	c21	1	89.48%	87.40%	91.55%
474	c21	2	4.99%	3.65%	6.33%
474	c21	98	4.91%	3.36%	6.47%

AppendixD overall frequencies.txt

474	c21	99	0.62%	0.11%	1.13%
474	c22	1	86.20%	83.10%	83.508%
474	c22	2	8.00%	6.30%	9.80%
474	c22	98	4.94%	3.37%	6.51%
474	c22	99	0.86%	0.24%	1.49%
474	c23	1	89.91%	87.94%	91.88%
474	c23	2	6.45%	4.86%	8.05%
474	c23	98	2.78%	1.69%	3.86%
474	c23	99	0.86%	0.24%	1.49%
48	c23a	95	70.54%	61.44%	79.63%
48	c23a	98	23.18%	14.37%	32.00%
48	c23a	99	6.28%	0.88%	11.67%
474	c24	1	72.14%	69.12%	75.15%
474	c24	2	18.48%	15.82%	21.14%
474	c24	98	8.75%	6.83%	10.67%
474	c24	99	0.63%	0.11%	1.16%
388	c24a	1	41.39%	37.68%	45.10%
388	c24a	2	29.67%	26.42%	32.92%
388	c24a	3	11.73%	9.31%	14.16%
388	c24a	98	16.15%	13.29%	19.01%
388	c24a	99	1.06%	0.29%	1.83%
388	c24b	1	77.46%	74.28%	80.65%
388	c24b	2	10.27%	7.91%	12.64%
388	c24b	98	11.20%	8.92%	13.49%
388	c24b	99	1.06%	0.29%	1.83%
474	c25	1	21.50%	18.87%	24.14%
474	c25	2	76.16%	73.40%	78.92%
474	c25	98	1.70%	0.84%	2.56%
474	c25	99	0.63%	0.11%	1.16%
114	c25a	95	90.21%	86.76%	93.65%
114	c25a	98	6.12%	3.55%	8.69%
114	c25a	99	3.67%	1.30%	6.05%
474	c26	1	18.39%	15.90%	20.89%
474	c26	2	60.41%	57.15%	63.66%
474	c26	3	4.88%	3.38%	6.37%
474	c26	98	15.30%	12.88%	17.73%
474	c26	99	1.02%	0.38%	1.67%
474	c27	1	70.82%	67.83%	73.82%
474	c27	2	24.10%	21.30%	26.89%
474	c27	98	4.20%	2.89%	5.52%
474	c27	99	0.88%	0.24%	1.51%
140	c27a	1	62.32%	56.54%	68.10%
140	c27a	2	24.03%	18.92%	29.14%
140	c27a	98	11.01%	7.38%	14.64%
140	c27a	99	2.64%	0.76%	4.52%
140	c27b	1	69.39%	63.98%	74.80%
140	c27b	2	21.12%	16.57%	25.66%
140	c27b	98	7.32%	4.25%	10.40%
140	c27b	99	2.17%	0.35%	3.99%
140	c27c	1	59.94%	54.23%	65.65%
140	c27c	2	29.39%	24.02%	34.75%
140	c27c	98	8.50%	5.22%	11.78%
140	c27c	99	2.17%	0.35%	3.99%
140	c27d	2	34.10%	28.54%	39.66%
140	c27d	95	57.31%	51.64%	62.99%
140	c27d	98	6.42%	3.55%	9.28%
140	c27d	99	2.17%	0.35%	3.99%
474	c28	1	14.10%	11.82%	16.38%
474	c28	2	42.73%	39.35%	46.11%
474	c28	3	25.61%	22.58%	28.65%
474	c28	4	8.99%	6.96%	11.02%
474	c28	5	6.48%	4.90%	8.07%
474	c28	98	1.22%	0.52%	1.91%

AppendixD overall frequencies.txt

474	c28	99	0.86%	0.24%	1.49%
474	c29	2	26.46%	23.48%	29.43%
474	c29	95	62.25%	58.98%	65.52%
474	c29	98	10.20%	8.04%	12.35%
474	c29	99	1.10%	0.38%	1.82%
54	d30_new	1	72.22%	60.05%	84.40%
54	d30_new	2	25.93%	14.01%	37.84%
54	d30_new	98	1.85%	0.00%	5.52%
39	d30a_new	1	2.56%	0.00%	7.70%
39	d30a_new	2	10.26%	0.39%	20.12%
39	d30a_new	3	41.03%	25.03%	57.02%
39	d30a_new	4	15.38%	3.65%	27.12%
39	d30a_new	5	23.08%	9.37%	36.78%
39	d30a_new	98	7.69%	0.00%	16.36%
173	e31_new	1	23.12%	17.05%	29.19%
173	e31_new	2	76.30%	70.18%	82.42%
173	e31_new	99	0.58%	0.00%	1.67%
40	e31a_new	1	17.50%	5.31%	29.69%
40	e31a_new	2	52.50%	36.49%	68.51%
40	e31a_new	3	27.50%	13.18%	41.82%
40	e31a_new	98	2.50%	0.00%	7.51%
7	e31b_new	95	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
21	e31c_new	95	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
851	f32_new	2	68.39%	66.00%	70.78%
851	f32_new	95	30.55%	28.19%	32.92%
851	f32_new	98	0.35%	0.05%	0.66%
851	f32_new	99	0.71%	0.28%	1.13%

APPENDIX E: OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

Appendix E: Open-ended Responses

Please note: Responses were typed, as each interviewer understood them. Although most responses are essentially verbatim, abbreviations and paraphrasing have been used in some entries for clarity. Brackets indicate places where a person's name has been replaced.

Report Section A: All Respondents

Question A8: Other actions taken to prepare for obtaining a permit: 269 responses

- Hired or consulted with an engineer, site technician or lawyer (Note: 73 similar responses)
- Reviewed previous or other people's permits (Note: 13 similar responses)
- Talked with permit program staff before application (Note: 21 similar responses)
- Talked with town or other local officials (Note: 4 similar responses)
- Check on to see if needed them, called the office
- Hired a backhoe for testing soil soc and design septic system
- Tried to get info from town official; dir to call state, no answer
- Drew up plans and did design work
- Did everything we thought we had to do
- Site visit; talked with enforcement officer; checked maps
- Granddaughter assisted; did all legwork
- Enlisted a meeting to initiate permit process; they called state to look
- [Consulting engineer] handled, hired surveyor, contact with DEC
- 6-year resident; hydrogen testing [wastewater regional engineer]; drilled water
- Internal preparation in the office
- Asked a lot of specific questions

- Review recent suc application; in house review of suc design approved; Vermont environmental rules
- Lots of internal talking with those who had experience
- Visited site
- Gathered information for the permit
- Had to create system to remove uranium from water; no help from DEC
- Spent a lot of money on the process
- Did some testing; hired testing expert (soil testing)
- Reviewed the water supply rules
- Soil testing by technician
- Comply with EPA rules and regulations
- I gave it to my son to process
- Familiarized self in general with process first time through
- We go through a design process
- Timely and efficient
- Had to take out a loan to pay engineer to redesign septic approved by town
- Found out at last minute we needed a wastewater permit
- Research on mats and wetland, sight investigations
- Just doing paperwork
- Asked who could do it (engineering work); from out of state
- Looked up past test permit data from 1994
- Did the field work reviewed NWI maps, significant habitat maps and soil maps
- Devised strategy for handling, reviewed regulations, went to specialist [wastewater regional engineer], asked if comfortable, include any suggestions

- Sent buyers engineer previously approved on site system design that is subject of permit
- Did what St. Johnsbury office and engineer told him to do
- Done with a contractor who did many things; he was prepared because he had done it before
- Attended evening class on permit process; video conference with people from state; was helpful
- Had to dig holes for state soil testing; hired back hoe
- Went through list of legislative change; DEC didn't have paperwork to match new legislation; application said didn't need permit, but new legislation required; obtained legal opinion if needed; DEC so behind delayed to obtain through winter
- Surveyor did a lot of work
- Had survey done by surveyor
- Mechanical drafting of design of wastewater/storm drainage system
- Visit the site
- Got the surveyor
- I invited the water resources to determine whether it was a wetland under the rules
- Had to deal with state licensing for my daycare business
- A whole plan that was developed
- Making copies of site plan, gathering papers of all sorts
- Visited people in the field
- Worked my tail off putting an abutment back in the stream
- Collected plans from our consultants
- Obtain information from variety of sources inc property owner, applicant, town records, other resources to provide background and factual info of the wetland to include all public info, maps, aerial records
- More direction to those who unfamiliar

- Numerous trips to town office, land site survey, site plan preparation
- Spoke with someone familiar with the process
- Had all three people involved
- Field work and coordinated with one of the state engineers
- Worked with the specialist from the agency of commerce and community development
- Used the small business administration; dealt with state/local and regional officials
- Soil testing
- Reviewed facts sheets, contacted the district wetlands ecologists, and reviewed the Vermont wetland rules
- Had the tank tested
- Our own internal check sheet
- Check with zoning on size; had a soil test done
- Sample of my well required; got written rights of way to cross a property
- Did a site walk of the property/project
- We did percolation tests
- Did do a plan view survey, a list of adjacent land owners, copy of the proposed design
- Discussed it with the contractor when I bought the house
- Survey the project, draw up a plan, review the scope of the project
- Had an on site meeting with engineers to walk the site
- All I did was call [Act 250 coordinator] down in St. Johnsbury, he put me in contact with a man in St. Albans
- We kept records and they were helpful
- Coordinate the sight plan house placement
- Design engineering

- Worked with the expert
- Had people come in and do percolation tests
- Went to info meeting about new septic rules in Vermont
- Wrote a large check
- Prepared the payment
- A lot of coordination meetings prior to applying
- Only whatever the road foreman would have said at the time
- Followed the regulations and submitted complete package
- Prepare data
- Had kerosene tank removed
- Relied upon our own experience with the permit program that we had built up over a number of years; and we would have talked to a regional engineers
- Filled out application and worked with surveyor
- Nobody knew what they were supposed to do, because the permit was not cut-and-dry
- Gathered info that permit required
- Phone conferences with [wastewater regional engineer]; was prompt and courteous
- Raise the money
- Get someone to look at zoning in your town and wastewater
- I talked with a contractor who built my property and had the original permits for the septic system
- Submitted required info
- Local boundary and deed research
- Consulted with rules, consulted with a specialist
- Had 3 title searches done before laws were done

- Spoke to the coordinator, they had helpful hints to do with permits, also met with two different people but we couldn't get help from them
- Talked with farmers and had to get signatures
- Took pictures of the site and took measurements
- Met originally to discuss elements of design
- Got paperwork to fill out
- Researched wastewater usage pertaining to my size business in the area
- Relied on prior experience
- Soil testing, topographic surveys
- We consulted with wildlife and plant experts 2 teams of engineers, and wetlands specialist and the neighbors retained an endangered plant expert
- Reviewed S-27 law
- Designed the project
- My personal site evaluation
- Write lots of checks
- Reviewed city ordinances
- Contacted town, checked Web site
- Read all statistical sheets, administrative laws
- Paid to have surveying done
- Engineering work
- Calling different agencies
- Attended 3 sessions put on by 3 different organizations
- Talked to real estate agents about permit
- Paid surveyor great sum of money and also various contractors

- I did a groundwater level testing
- We had a surveyor come
- Got the regional consultant up there and gave us advice on what we needed to do to maintain our road and to have adequate runoff and be environmentally aware and appropriate
- Site visit from the state
- We had my son in law research what had to be done, he made appointments, he made out the paperwork
- I went to a seminar, I contacted somebody from the wastewater division
- Hold meetings with central office staff
- Tons of site work and design work
- Prepared an application
- Prayed spent a lot of money
- My only other contact with them was to determine if my permit needed Act 250 review
- I requested information from prior management
- Site visits, did a complete design to be in compliance, hired consultants
- Had to talk to fire department
- I got the application on line filled it out and sent it in
- Talked to public works, consultant, and in house folks
- Spoke to contractor
- I had to change the right-of-way width on my driveway so that it wouldn't touch any part of the septic field
- Worked for same company for 18 years doing nothing but permitting
- Read letter and completed the form, wrote a check and sent it in
- Did a lot of research, industrial suppliers

- Others in the company and a lawyer prepared the permits
- Put [company employee] in charge of it
- Paid a lot of money before obtaining the permit
- Reviewed permit applications
- I told my wife to take care of it
- Field work and wetland evaluation
- Produced plans and specifications
- I reviewed the environmental protection rule book
- Talked to town at length regarding their interpretation of wetland regulations; town was ignorant of wetlands regulations and processes; if had been knowledgeable, would have lowered time cost for him to get permit
- Had to do a site plan
- Had a conversation with the director other compliance officer
- Read new regulations thoroughly
- Meet the necessary requirements
- Got delineation
- Other agencies for info
- Read regulations, previously visited Web sites, were involved in DEC regulations; corresponded with DEC regulation engineers, been in business 20 yr.; very familiar with agency and with permitting process
- Talked to daughter in law who handled everything because buying the land
- 15 years experience
- Cry

Section B. Permittees without Personal Experience

Question B12d: Additional reasons for choosing not to participate in permit process (161 total responses)

- Didn't have specialized knowledge or contacts to successfully complete process (45 similar responses)
- Regulations require you to hire an engineer (11 similar responses)
- Process is too confusing and complicated (10 similar responses)
- Daughter in law did all work on permit
- Granddaughter wanted to build on land so she took of getting permit
- It's ridiculous; should be able to do on your land what you want; son helped
- Expert had all done ready for Act 250 process, septic design done
- So slow
- Too costly
- With your own land, you should do what you want to do
- She's in New Jersey
- Should be current on all regulations, knowledgeable; permittee is a farmer
- Doesn't like the DEC people, not nice; no solutions provided, no help
- The state doesn't have time for the small people
- Developer handled; hired engineer, attorney, a professional
- Unfamiliar, must hire expert; state unfriendly, doesn't help through
- Convenience
- We signed for the permit after agreeing with town officials
- Daughter applied for permit in my name, I owned the property

- Not interested; did the permit for the benefit of a developer who planned to further develop, so hands off
- Too costly, too time consuming, beyond expertise, too expensive; buyer willing to take on the expense and responsibility
- Chittenden county coordinator said must hire a wetlands consultant
- Trying to save money
- Grandson wanted to build on the land and handled the required permits
- Another party was responsible for getting amendment to the permit so relied on that party to handle
- New legislation, new rules, no DEC guidelines on what to do or how attempted to do permit himself, DEC changed answers, New Hampshire helpful so had to hire expert to assist in obtaining application
- No reason to do; surveyor offered to do, was a personal friend
- Field engineers at DEC [wastewater regional engineer] so difficult to deal with, need private engineer to handle
- Easier to hire a consultant and let him take care of all details, would do the same thing if had to do it again
- Easier
- They knew what they were doing new to the area
- Legal stuff
- It was part of the title search, the attorney discovered the matter and handled it
- Exclusively because was required, wanted to do himself and has background; legally required to retain a professional engineer registered in state of Vermont; is a hydrogeologist
- Didn't need a permit, so there was no reason for me to be involved, my son did it for me
- Town was very difficult to deal with; wanted a professional to handle to assist with city
- Paperwork

- Couldn't do it himself, needed the permit
- Not good dealings, hired someone to deal with them
- Never saw the handbook!
- I didn't have the time; the consultant had done the other three
- Live three and half hours away
- Have so many other things to do
- Too many kingdoms within the DEC itself
- Subjects you to appeal
- Consultants work with us on other projects
- I was too busy, farmed it out
- We don't have the staff to process this type of permit
- Went through road foreman, chain of command, I signed off with their permission
- Could afford it
- Personnel in the state, engineers more diplomatic than consultants, easier before government regulations, costly and frustrating
- Neither I nor the guy I hired knew what the new regulations were, and what we had to do to comply with them (neither did the lawyer)
- Didn't want to get involved
- Make sure done properly, consultant did designing
- You hire a professional to take the emotion out of the issue
- No consistency state create laws the common person cannot understand
- Everybody involved wasn't on the same page
- Too intimidating, and too much of a worry that you'd mess something up that would take months to straighten out

- We belong to a solid waste district and part of the cost of joining it is for them to handle this
- Even professional contractors are intimidated by the process
- His time, needed consultant anyway
- Times constraints
- Costly
- Funds available to hire consultant for the permit process
- It was part of the development and design of the project the contract covered permits as part of the package we hired them for
- Bad attitude and politics on the behalf of the state employees; incompetence of the state employees; they have neither the education, background knowledge, or attitude needed
- My son is an attorney, and he gave me a hand with it
- Had my engineer do it because he designed the project
- Large project, engineers involved
- Were not in state
- It was very expensive
- It's not user-friendly
- Being up-to-date on the current regulations
- Complete duplication if I have to hire engineer
- We got engineer to do a road design for us and septic
- We got different information from different people at different times
- I'm self-employed and I work seven days a week
- Lived out of state
- What I found was it just

- Took years to get to the point we are now exploring every aspect of the pollution and trying to find another way to deal with it they finally solved it
- I hate paper work
- Jurisdiction not sure if it's state or town
- Lack of common sense in approach to the permit
- Because we get bullied around if we don't
- We often get consultants as a second opinion
- That particular attorney was part of the selling process to begin with
- There's too much political favoritism
- Tried to do it as economical as we could
- To do this whole thing was for my son's benefit so I let him do it
- Someone else will take care of it quicker than myself
- Lawyer we used is familiar with the process
- There is an employee to do this
- On a project of this size we would normally hire a consultant to do the designs
- Couldn't understand the language
- They designed it originally
- For own person reason, person buying land and town engineer told her what to do, town engineer assisted her in completing process
- Cost for design
- Part of the contract
- My property was already permitted

Section B. Permittees without Personal Experience

Question B13d: Reasons permitting regulations are perceived of as unreasonable (114 total responses)

- Regulations make process too complicated and confusing for lay people (14 similar responses)
- Regulations make process not follow common sense / irrational (8 similar responses)
- Make it too expensive (6 similar responses)
- Makes it too time consuming (5 similar responses)
- Stream line the process, use email to speed up
- Everybody running the show are radicals
- Confusing, no central phone number, no one stop shop
- Very expensive both fees and associated costs to complete
- Multiple consultants required despite Web pages
- Changed requirements during design
- Should be able to build on your own land without going over whole state
- People own their own land, shouldn't have to go through, use common sense
- Variable interpretations by DEC field workers
- Lack of certainty
- Arbitrary standards for Uranium water; no solution from DEC to reach standards
- Won't take the time for the small projects
- Too many regulations to go through; unclear bet DEC and DNR, experts too expensive
- We're losing our property rights through regulation
- Money
- Justification of job, also too many people doing the same thing

- I can build a system on my land that will work better than what the state says I have to have
- They're subject to the people approving them, also move at own pace
- Too many categories to mitigate wetlands; ridiculous categories; add eda cost relative cost/soft buffer zone; paid over \$2,000 in impact fee excessive
- Failure to provide transition with new legislation
- Government can't do business, make difficult to do business, process political, made Vermont not friendly for business; regulations are used to control our lives, experience, businesses; regulations need to be less formal, less extensive
- Shouldn't require engineer to supply as much as is required
- Can't understand why had to test water, provide alternative sewage system just to sell off land
- The two contractors who gave me estimates told me it was overkill, my septic system could serve a 14-room hotel, you could land a helicopter on it
- Requirement for the well is too far away from the septic system, single family home should not require a back up system
- Some regulations estimated for standard, typical application/conditions without ability to look at individual circumstance/case a water line came within "x f to f" skeptics or eq special pipe required; has knowledge not really required; time and money unnecessary
- Limits my development; criteria that push me toward Act 250 are not helpful
- They should inform people that they need to design a backup for all systems before they can approve anything
- Bureaucratic overkill, the local and state building departments perform same functions (people have to deal with both state and local permit process)
- The district lacks adequate staffing to cover the work load
- Depends on who you deal with in the department
- Too much red tape to go through, I want to increases my search plans in Colchester, and the red tape is ridiculous, the engineering are too expensive, they take their time
- Shouldn't have to have the engineer

- A regulation came up after the whole thing was done; it was my understanding that it was voluntary, now it's forced; it's in regards to start homes
- People in the department incompetent, couldn't trust what they said, their story changed from week to week, permits denied for wrong reasons
- A lot of duplications at state and local level
- Why was it necessary to get a permit all? If in this case the property was conveyed with restrictive convenience, prohibiting developments or use of land as anything but lawn
- Some are unrealistic, too many opportunities for appeals
- Customer service is very poor, one division doesn't know what the other is doing; permits overlap themselves; redundancy in the permits; poor coordination; complicated
- Individuals in position to give permits are more problematic than the regulations
- Not cut-and-dry
- Man in charge [wastewater regional engineer] could have signed it a lot sooner than it happened (sat on his desk for a while)
- Should be able to do what they want to do with property
- Process works for the state and not person
- This problem happened in 1974-bought in 1986-once a title search is done-buying in good faith that was clear title; state changes rules, clear title done, should be exempt
- Too easy for someone to upset the whole process
- The various designations of wet lands are quite unreasonable
- The employees can't implement the regulation in a timely or reasonable way because they lack the skills to do it
- Too many different departments/people involved
- Too cumbersome too many layers to get a water supply
- All permits should be done individually
- If the property is acceptable to a septic system there's no reason for it to be engineered

- Everyone has their own rules, state and town need to get together
- We had to pay for a back up system in case this one fails
- Only one solution used
- Pay \$85 to get permit, after paying town for local permit
- I think the permitting process sometimes shouldn't apply in certain situations, think it might just be a moneymaking process in some situations, very time consuming
- It's unnecessary for my house, that I owned for over 20 years, to pay for all these permits
- It would be more environmental friendly if I did it my self
- They fail to help people who are trying to do what's right
- Too much paper work
- Administered by staff who follow their own opinions, they don't follow the reference to standards, set their own standards
- Local consultant to work through process a lot needs to be taken into consideration
- Self-serving type of process
- Compared to history, there are so many rules about doing anything, they could get simpler
- Human personalities involved; some DEC staff have their own agendas; they seem to want to stop or slow the process down
- I live in state-approved development, where I had to go through more than the average Joe
- The regulations overlap and duplicate; review of engineering for waste water permit and then a discharge determination as well
- It doesn't justify itself
- More thorough first time review
- They made me put in a curtain drain (\$800 to put in, doesn't amount to anything)

- Because it's political, someone who just moved to the area has to go through the state for the same thing, it's wrong
- I don't like anybody trying to tell me what to do about anything
- Had to make several subdivisions with separate permits because person I hired wasn't engineer with degree
- Property I purchased was cornfield and hayfield, I needed to trench the edges, and since I didn't, it's all wet, and they called it a wetland
- It forced people who had existing approved functioning septic systems to acquire a permit
- Required to show amount of water was more excessive than what we use
- Too many agencies are involved
- Inflexible
- It's because they tried to fit you into a category and it may not apply to the project you are doing
- Should say what need to, do but don't tell how to do it, DEC wanted you to put in a 75 car parking lot for a 15-employee business; seemed unnecessary and expensive, won't be used
- Some of the things have to go through
- The state and local staff aren't properly trained
- Cost very high to get just a deli, cost of the engineer, preparation required (grease storage, water storage, 1000 gallon res trap), unnecessary for deli
- Compared to other states, more straight forward, hard to keep up with Vermont regulations, what is required for what size land continues to be changed

Section B. Permittees without Personal Experience

Question B16: Suggestions for improvements from those without first-hand process experience (335 total responses)

- Streamline; put in lay terms; one central phone number (37 similar responses)

- Make process more timely (43 similar responses)
- Reduce the cost of the process (7 similar responses)
- Personalize solutions more; permit better suit individual situations (14 similar responses)
- Have guidelines in place before they make a law
- [Consultant] should answer; went through
- Need one person to go to; different folks equal different answers
- Yes improve it
- Take out the politics (at state level)
- Hire more people; use more computers, use email; listen to engineer
- Allow newer septic system designs working in other states, allow new tech
- All permit process up to 250 review is the problem
- Glad they do permits so neighbors aren't polluting water
- There was a gas leak they were aware of, our office wasn't
- Remember to give permits based on the rules; not reject
- To make it easier to get a second opinion from the DEC
- Step-by-step outline needed town versus state regulations
- Make it more owner friendly
- More public input would be good; requirements seem excessive stringent; alternatives available
- Be less restrictive; one septic tank was enough
- Simple projects shouldn't require engineers
- The rules take too much time to process not cookie cutter
- Know what they are doing; must have answers, standards for regulations;

- Send someone out that know what they are doing
- Smaller projects should have small project DEC help
- One stop process instead of many departments; unsure if problem is regulations and people
- Fast form for simple projects without 45 day review
- DEC back up workload; took a longtime to get; regulations take less time
- Educate people; package so less intimidating; offer alternatives; friendlier
- Prior baggage spilled over into this permit; not fair
- Have to ask somebody else how I can use my land
- Less regulations; i.e., septic rules; use more modern rules
- Have less permit requirements
- Stream alteration staff probably overworked
- Not have so many people doing the same job (same offices)
- More staff to speed up; put all in one building; were nice
- Everybody did a great job, very well organized
- More familiarity with the regulations
- Department employees should go through the process
- When regulations change, make sure all parties are aware
- Send applicant more information
- Because of laws, rules, and regulations, I don't think they can do anything to improve the process
- They need to find people concerned about taxpayers and want to get permits through they should be working for us, I hand-delivered the application to save time
- Keep [wastewater regional engineer], and clone him (clone all people with the most experience)

- Vermont does above average on waste water
- Less stringent regulations to quality for waste water system, all own new designs that are not as expensive and take up less room
- Regulations are good for Chittenden county, incompetent not helpful, not user-friendly; eliminate mitigation criteria; state didn't provide any help, overstepped authority, told where to put house and road
- State person could only stay 10 min, so had to pay someone to dig twice, double the expense
- List of rec engineers should have to meet a time requirement; engineer took way too long; engineer should have to finish within time frame
- Let the owner do it instead of having to hire an engineer
- Staff not nice, overworked, failed to deal with individual situations, result house purchase up \$8k+\$6k cost of septic system; \$2,500 in engineer fee seventh rough was a working existing septic system; delays equal \$8k up home cost
- Disagrees that new regulation requires engineer to design septic system; regulations worked for years before this requirement fine
- State engineers in the field need to be more consistent; same engineer tells different things appears inconsistent
- Shouldn't need new system when had a system working perfectly just to sell some land (had to show alternative exists if system broke); excessive
- Look at the standards more
- Shouldn't have to get a permit to give self a piece of land should be the city not the state costs money
- Let people know if you can put up a building yes or no before the permit process, we know there are requirements, but we had to spend \$42,000 just to know if we could build
- Neighboring home should not require a back up system when new home is being built, permit state officials should approve or disapprove with in 15 days
- First on site visit should have been sooner (11 mo too long) working attitude of DEC was good; more time needed on their part; this would make them easier to consult
- Had to go through process again

- Do away with the process, give the people back their land, they pay taxes on it, they should be able to use it
- Work more one on one
- Coordinate with all other facets of the process; remove the redundancies; i.e., Act 250 is just another re-filing of the waste water permit
- Once I'd done it once, subdividing should have made no difference; another \$600 seems excessive; the land was sold to my daughter
- They need to get rid of the permitting process altogether when adding property to another property next door (both of which are owned by same person) should be no permit
- Better communication and coordination with town officials extremely important, town requirements sometimes contradictory to state requirements; puts applicant in very difficult position, need greater flexibility to specific circumstances versus cookbook approach
- Has become a way to keep the engineers in Vermont employed, forces you to spend more money to make everything happen
- Allow more permits, more development, more homes
- Level of bureaucracy/paperwork unnecessary, could have granted permit in time required to send letter of acknowledgment and unnecessary
- Issue them no questions asked (not really)
- They can assign the process to local instead of state authorities (don't duplicate the process)
- The district engineer needs to be authorized to use professional engineering judgment
- Be a little more lenient all the way around shorten the process in any way possible paperwork turn around time should be quicker
- Hire more people
- Time consuming need people
- Use a little common sense (one year old leech field had to be replaced with a newer one, I'll never build in the state of Vermont again)

- Department can help more, the road is caving in, I reported I needed help, they didn't do anything financially they don't want to spend any funds
- Localize personnel, have to be understanding of public's viewpoint
- I think the people need to be more friendly, outgoing, and cooperative; we pay for the permit, without the public, they wouldn't have a job
- Could have someone more local, perhaps in Rutland
- At the town level give them phone numbers to call to help with the process
- Stop more upfront about what you actually need
- Less paperwork
- Provide consistent answers, stop denying permits based on unwritten rules
- Public education
- Provide their own experts to assist in the permitting process, encourage us to do it ourselves
- The regulations are frustrating because a lot of them don't make sense
- Have more informational meetings or booklets for the reasons why; complicated; educate public
- Charge more, get more people, that way things get in and out more quickly (this would take away some job security)
- They should physically visit the site before making design recommendations
- Look into alternative ecological methods and support them more
- Make use current with reality, limit opportunity for excessive public involvement
- Hire more qualified people
- It seemed that the office had too much on its plate, it appeared to be understaffed
- Handled by a layman
- Allow the consumer to talk more with the staff

- Improve customer service; requests for information were not answered or referred properly the rules are subjective to personal interpretation; not consistent
- Less duplication
- The timeliness – going back and forth verifying steps needing to be done – e-mail would expedite that – this particular person didn't have it – new road foreman does
- Remember that they are a public entity and work for the people, and that a good attitude is always appreciated
- Build better surveys
- User-friendly
- Be more customer oriented, and more supporting, also regulations have to be more user-friendly
- I would do spot checking of engineer information provided rather than a review of every application, I don't think department has to be second guessing
- Department heads should issue guidelines to the staff so they don't use their personal opinion – but have specific rules
- Let the town do it!
- They get picky; there's a small error, and they tell me I have to start all over again
- They could have you hire less expensive people to help you
- Getting the town more involved and informed on what is needed, redundancy
- Get someone who has a way with people
- Make sure people in charge in towns know the laws
- Cut down on the bureaucracy
- Remove [Act 250 district coordinator], they need to look at the fact that businesses need room to make money and improve employment opportunities
- Streamline it; look for alternative ways to look for septic permit possibilities
- Work with landowners; they have to get it done

- The officials need to be better trained and staffed, info is not passed as quickly as it should be between them
- Hire someone with common sense; work with the people
- Less paperwork to get through faster; more people for doing soil analysis
- More information
- The person who was supposed to sign off for December was hard to locate; vacations should not cause delays in permitting
- Stay current with science of waste water management, be more process on soil mottling
- People in the Barre office are rude and obnoxious; had a title search – once this is done it should be done no matter whether refinanced or sold
- [Wastewater regional engineer] was a little unreasonable when he was on the site: specifically, my property is pure beach sand and I wanted to expand the existing septic, he said to replace it
- The fact that anything you deal with requires an engineer; the average land owner just can't do it
- Trust the operators more – we do the best we can with the guidelines and we ask if we need additional information
- Get more public involvement
- When they request more information they start the 45 day processing time all over again, that's irritating
- Make it less complicated, I don't think the public should be so involved in it; too many whistle blowers, if you turn a piece of dirt over everyone is involved
- Instruct municipalities on their role in the process
- Nothing
- More personal contact and advice
- Difficult and expensive, simplify process (shorten) and make application more user-friendly

- Let the engineers do their job; timing was just after regulations changed; we were used as guinea pigs by DEC and the engineer; nothing changed
- Address my comments in this survey; turn negative to positive
- Terminate a large number of employees, probably 15 of them adopt a site, visit preliminary, plan within 2 hours; no permit takes more than 2 months
- Need some more help to make the permits more quicker, and maybe a little more reactive
- Make it user-friendly
- Three weeks of vacation with permits on desks don't work; understaffing may be the problem, this can be very frustrating
- Provide a permit handbook; I didn't get one, we weren't clear about the newer regulations
- Rely more heavily on professional engineers to meet the requirements of the regulations without so much in house review
- Get rid of it, there are other ways to do this
- Would have to speak to engineers that did most of work; based on what they said it was timely
- Not stick nose in your business
- Should reduce time before log in process
- Reduction in some of the fees
- Need more people to deal with permits
- They should eliminate local involvement
- More public awareness; inform people; should not have to go through codes
- Reduction in fee for amended permit
- They have to make less rules and regulations
- They should go back to the way it was before, the 10 acre parcel
- Start at ground zero; exercise political science

- Leave it to town to sub-divide permit
- Quite a bit of paperwork to be done
- More user-friendly for non professionals
- Allow for alternative systems
- Keep it right where it is, do not dilute the process
- Somebody else should be aware of ones situation in case they get sick
- Hire more state engineers to review applications
- Let the department provide the consultants
- Be more sensitive to applicants
- Lower the fee changing the permit, make the re-application process easier
- Give field technicians more power than you give engineers
- Review the requirements on existing property
- They could make an engineer responsible for his actions, just as I am as a real estate broker; they come late, they take twice the time, and have to come back
- Lessen restrictions on perk tests for septic systems; make other septic systems available for land that has 12 inches of soil; lessen time for inspections to about 30 days
- License the contractors to oversee their own work
- Keep going ahead, the way you are
- Documents should not cost that much to file, some documents could be condensed
- Be more responsive to new technology
- Don't cut staff
- Eliminate the permit regulations that differ from region to region
- Once the perk tests go through, I think you should be able to go ahead and do your work
- Have more people do it; review permits

- More availability to the public for preliminary guidance
- Better response, more public-oriented
- They need to streamline the applications; need more knowledgeable staff, more individualized permits, and cut down on time for permit
- Make the phone lines easier to use; you never know who you are dealing with it; is such a pain
- Get rid of it
- Need to relax standards, and take new tech into consideration to speed up process; need more staff to speed things up
- Streamline; they need to spell out the regulations, this even confuses the DEC staff; everybody in the DEC is always on a learning curve
- They use a one step approach
- They should let the towns be more authoritative
- Not sure whose has jurisdiction
- Incorporate common sense in the process; separate permits for sludge removal
- Cut the red tape; less renewal process repetition
- Too expensive for smaller systems
- They need to set their standards and follow them; staff members should not have the flexibility to change standards
- Simplify; be at the point of service; more service less process
- Have the reps come on sight earlier
- Cut back on the appeals; limit the amount of time
- Stream alt; user-friendly for municipal water sewer and electric
- The process could be less restrictive; there are modern technologies and methods that are currently disallowed
- Follow-up with developers when they're putting stuff in

- More general permits with individual engineer certifications; put the responsibility on the engineer, not DEC
- Coordinate with the towns a little more, and in the Act 250 process
- Process has a double jeopardy policy
- Environmental concerns should outweigh the realities
- Fire [wastewater regional engineer], I don't feel it was handled promptly or appropriately
- Common sense would help; getting land owner more involved as to why they make you put stuff in (like a curtain drain, etc)
- Stop requirement of involving professional assistance; look for opportunities where permitting process could be waived
- Get rid of it altogether
- Keep it simple
- Quit having the permit process
- They can look at land as what it used to be, what it is now, and decide what it should be called
- Keep people out that have no reason to be there
- Less regulation, more freedom to do things with their property, less government involvement
- I think the consideration of the individual and the cost-effectiveness of what was being done
- They're fast and helpful
- Department was fine; regulations not appropriate for our situation; it was a "one-size-fits-all" approach requiring a lot of unused water
- They could have more public officials explaining and facilitating the process
- Cut out some of the red tape
- A great deal more flexibility in different applications for specific situations; site visits are needed by DEC in some instances

- Be more reasonable and realistic; there is a great deal of expense, delays and hard work but no positive outcome
- I thought it was unnecessary for the state to oversee my consultant to dig a hole
- Could ensure that licensed/registered engineers/experts for septic tanks are qualified, and are fully aware of rule changes during process; was in violation of new regs despite having professional
- Conversations with specialist very drawn out because specialist was unavailable when called; specialist was very accommodating by allowing to skip some steps due to type of system installation
- No suggestions
- Need someone in DEC to inform/walk you through process so don't need engineer; many things didn't make sense
- After correct order, process smooth (feds first; Vermont second; town third), this knowledge should have been passed on at beginning, saved him 1yr; DEC doesn't tell you about Army Corps of Engineers
- Drop it
- Train staff
- Their representatives should have more courtesy with clients
- Not enough knowledge
- My experience and interaction with DEC was affected by Wolferson City, so I never questioned it; it would make sense to you to ensure criteria of safe ww met
- Was fairly speedy, only took weeks
- State needs more engineers, current engineers are so backed up
- Do not give land use permits without checking previous permits that might be attached to the land
- Never received a handbook
- Seemed a little complicated, but engineer handled

- Decrease grant time, when permit was sent back to the engineer for corrections, engineer said it was common for applications to return
- Be a little friendlier

Section C. Permittees with Personal Experience

Question C23a: Reasons for feeling unfair treatment (34 total responses)

- There were specific requirements added; testing unfair
- [Program staff engineer] had a hidden agenda about the lake; we heard that he hadn't granted any permits around the lake
- It took too long for the amount of information; there really was not much info needed
- Permit conditions were arbitrary
- Lack of professional courtesy and common sense by one of the staff
- Didn't talk to anyone (2)
- [Program staff] was difficult, not sure if she had the experience needed
- Because the law has no flexibility
- This was an outrageous refusal, to move the blueprint 6 feet from where it was, I never got the permit and gave up
- It took a year to get the permit; new objections, 2 weeks each
- They are untimely, and do not know what they want
- Too much confusion; time delay (construction crew delayed 5 months)
- Many arbitrary decisions are made without basis; a knee jerk approach to applying the regulations that lack continuity; common sense should be applied to process
- Did it for 5 years, now they changed forms
- The Essex office is notorious for waiting the full 60 days before commenting; they cause major delays; the average time to get a permit is 4-6months, rather than 1-2

- The state told me to do one thing, and I followed the rules, then they said they never told me to do what they said
- I would think there would be a different priority for projects depending on complexity
- Discourtesy and non responsiveness led to poor process
- We were misinformed; I think our integrity was questioned
- Lack of understanding the new program regulations by 2 staff
- To much going on; have to be specific about exactly what they want
- Springfield office is too one-size-fits-all
- It was complicated and was hung up on a small issue; it shouldn't have been a complicated issue
- To do mound system, costs 1,000 more
- I've been on commission a few years now and I feel the laws are unreasonable (they weren't ready for the policy that was handed to them) it was very expensive and time consuming
- I felt that he had it out for us
- The review engineer took a great deal of time to make a review, did not provide written comments; then changed comments as the process went forward
- Person who he dealt with was unfair
- Staff overzealous in wetland rules
- Staff didn't like project!
- I was told I did not need a permit then, I was told I needed a permit; was a wetland, was not a wetland; I ended up paying the price
- Different standards are sometimes applied for whether a project will impact different wetland functions and values; incorrect interpretation of what wetland rules require; avoidance of impact to sig and protected wetland functions/value
- The person that runs the wetlands office is fairly young, she didn't know how to read plans and abused her authority

Section C. Permittees with Personal Experience

Question C25a: Problems caused by the permit issuance timing (103 total responses)

- Caused delays in project or construction (33 similar responses)
- Trying to make business decisions around the presence of the permit
- Took a lot of time on my part; had from December to March to assemble it and it wasn't approved August, it shouldn't take that long; very long process
- Can not use lake front without a dock in the water
- Time estimate was inaccurate; that caused aggravation(s)
- It's a sequence of activities, some are slowed down, funding can be lost due to time constraints
- Applied for permit 4/22/03; installation of dry hydrant in dog river construction date 7/8/03; permit issued 9/25/03, clear of stream deadline 10/1/03 will delay project 1 yr
- Timing of permit as related to entering the Act 250 process
- Longer, costlier; winter an issue; costs if delay to spring
- Scheduling, problems getting equipment in
- A little stress, but nothing really
- Had to work in high water level
- Set us back a week or two
- Ran out of time
- The turnaround time was too short
- Took long time
- Had to use engineer more; spent more money
- Everybody has to have it today!
- Had to pay higher interest rates on mortgage

- Nobody I dealt with knew what to do with this process. The Vermont employees knew, but I needed to feed them the right information.
- Submission takes 1-3 weeks before it is logged in; if a minor correction is needed don't get notified till the end of the 45 days; can't they email?; shorten process
- Couldn't sell the piece of property on city water or sewer
- Time and finances
- Lost a sale
- Time was limited before the fair
- Frustration because didn't know what was going on; no understanding
- It caused increase engineering costs and added expenses
- Cost money, time, and almost cost construction crew the job; DEC delays caused stress \$
- We couldn't begin construction early enough
- Was a little slow needed to be quicker
- Money and time
- Late start on excavation pushed whole construction schedule back; financial impact: paid more for concrete/trucking
- In one case, they needed a hydrogeologist, there wasn't one in their department, so they had to go to another agency, causing major delays
- Caused my clients time
- Clients had problems
- Without permit, can't proceed
- Identical to the reason I already gave
- Ready to open business before permit was issued
- Needed to constantly follow up

- Our clients not able to begin construction at a reasonable time, also had clients who had their closing time delayed
- Owner in a hurry
- Any application with municipal water and sewer should take 2 weeks; 60% to 80% should take this time as opposed to 45 days; should have 2 separate piles
- We didn't know that the permit was issued
- Changing the closing date
- Language required from town sewer and water co; DEC should do; fee calculated as if by 2 states
- Couldn't start work or get people to work with no date
- Had to reschedule one job
- Just scheduling and trying to beat winter weather
- Couldn't open a business until I had the permit
- I had to move plans along; it took longer than expected
- Problems with bank financing
- Long delays, inconstant guidance from Waterbury
- Loss time and money; rework things; difficult to satisfy them
- We were trying to do a real estate closing and one of the contingencies of the closing is getting permit; we scrambled down to the wire; the paper work was huge
- Stressful and cumbersome; too many people involved
- Yard was a wreck for over year
- Aggravation of waiting so long, unnecessary
- Monetary value and hardships
- Delays without formal comments received regarding the application; got verbal rather than written comments, which could not be addressed

- Problem for the landowner, takes a long time
- Need to coincide with the wastewater permit and the redundancy of both office reviews
- Loss of opportunity/money; having substandard water systems while waiting
- Took a long time to get the permit; had to call and find things out over the phone
- Delay in finalizing approval for Act 250
- Long duration of process was the problem
- Needless delays and unnecessary processes for simple projects
- At times the process costs applicants significant amounts of money and time; delays without any clear or consistent understanding throughout the process
- Just time
- Long delays and financial hardships on my clients; missed construction season; mixed messages
- They just take too long, there is no reason why it should take so long; they take way longer than they have to in my opinion
- It caused my clients problems; delayed permitting from other permits

Section C. Permittees with Personal Experience

Question C27d: Reasons regulations seem unreasonable (81 total responses)

- Regulations are too strict, unreasonable or inflexible (12 similar responses)
- Permits are too incendiary; they rely too much on public opinion and not on research; it brings up other issues
- Required testing condition extensive, not justified
- Too complex to discuss in a short survey; regulations get in peoples way because they don't read the regulations enough to understand how the process works
- Regulations should not apply to condos that are small; receive nothing in return for permit fee

- There is no limit on the annual engineers review cost
- Felt there was no need for permit
- The regulations conflict with other permits
- Culverts are standard; Vermont doesn't want to put in culvert; bridge is expensive replacement for culvert, did not do; cleaned out and using existing culvert because didn't change to save on cost
- Pay all this money and state pays the balance; it's up to them to pay for it then reimburse
- A small business too expensive to add on; can't get enough revenue
- When they have existing tanks, some people get assistance, we have to replace something after owning a business, and it is our responsibility, we do the right thing and get penalized
- Just too many regulations
- Should make it easier for people who want to start a business
- Too many problems from the public
- A lot of inconsistency from one regional engineer to another
- Made no sense to do a GPS because already hooked up to city water
- It ought to be more localized
- Regulations delve into private property with issues that shouldn't concern them; can only have 2 chairs in store for seating because of septic system
- System does not understand the costs involved; to follow \$200 for survey for land 800-900 yards away from septic system; \$185 for other lot
- Lack of competent technical reviewers within the state agency
- Relatively narrow level of technical and scientific knowledge from the DEC
- Had to prove house existed; well existed, already had been proven
- I don't understand how somebody can build on a small lot and go through less than I did only subdividing 5 acres (too many regulations)

- Everything is associated with developing land, my land was not being developed; the plot was just being added to a large plot; if land is not being developed, no permit needed
- It doesn't seem like I should have had to go through this when the town was dealing with it
- The regulations ignore the fact that building is on city water and sewer, so wastewater permit is not needed
- Too many gray areas; too vague and inconsistent
- Feel the process is ambiguous, not very clear and hard to meet the objectives
- Do not see the need to immediately installing a drill well for compliance to a replacement area, since drill well meets isolation to existing septic system
- We need flexibility to recognize new technology or new design
- Process cumbersome
- Administration with exemptions are unreal; variable interprets
- Mound system, approved by town, state should have approved + cost to redo
- Regulations do not force the state to stand behind decisions
- Confusing; staff at DEC and town don't understand/interpret same
- My biggest problem was not knowing I needed a permit
- DEC is too controlling; based on other contractors problems with wastewater permits
- Redundant and unnecessary
- Too much over sight by regional staff
- Barre permits see comments re:
- There are just not enough staff for the work
- Nose in their business
- I had to go through a complete re permitting process when one was already in place because of a preschool

- In terms a starting a business – have a lot of things you have to consider – some things may be a bit too much
- Needed to wait 87 days to confirm the town’s findings
- Too long a process to get permitted since Aug 16,2002
- Attitude of regional staff is poor
- The way the new rules are adopted by the legislature makes them more complicated than they needed to be
- Mound systems require vents pointing up, grease trap effluent output hard to calculate, required certification post project can never be met in reality
- Poorly crafted the regulations are confusing inconsistent and arbitrary
- Too complex, Aug 16, 2002 regulations are too wieldy
- Don’t require permit to get water co and town okay regarding capacity; DEC should do
- Should be one person who can handle all the permits overall, instead of compartmentalizing the process
- The kind/type of septic systems were limited, then the allowable systems are very costly
- Administration from district to district differ
- The changes that the legislature made to the rules are too complex
- Interpretation of the regulations
- Lack of proper management and co-ordinations
- Staff is not committed to making decisions don’t understand the issues
- Too much local involvement, it needs to be taken out
- There were different answers from different people we got conflicting information we didn’t really know what was required
- Frustrations of overly conservative design flows
- A special interest group can intervene to their advantage
- Some, not all regulators individualize regulations

- There is not too much judgment so that the criteria is not codified
- The regulations lend themselves to abuse by the authority in control
- There is a limited staff for the whole state and they think they are the only ones who know about wetlands and think they should be called in every time some are arrogant

Section C. Permittees with Personal Experience

Question C29: Suggested improvements from those experiencing the process (299 total responses)

- Elaboration of the guidance on the Web site/user-friendly
- Increase technical competency of staff
- Simplify the process (way too wordy)
- Indirect source permit doesn't seem to have a positive environmental result; the fee is exorbitant
- By speeding their time that it takes from submission to approval – shouldn't take 3 to 4 months
- The processing time could be shorter
- No way to improve; stick to guns
- Make sure that forms are very clear
- I can't think of any
- Old permits for replacement permits of wastewater should be discontinued
- Using the Internet for more activities
- By pre-scheduling sight visit that way if there are any concerns they will be out of the way with before we even start
- More timely turnaround would be good
- Replace [program staff person]

- Process works well; the staff is rigid in the engineering format process; there are newer processes (engineering) that the staff needs to acknowledge
- By reviewing the complexity of the project + prioritizing projects so that simple permits are taken care of in a timely manner field personal should finish paperwork ASAP
- Cut down time frame
- They need more direct contact with the people involved(come see the project to specialize needs)
- By becoming more interactive with the applicant
- Have proper paperwork and applications available
- New permit was a pain; renewal no problem no improvement suggestions
- Send out renewal info to the permittee in advance
- One-size-fits-all hurts the little guy
- Reduce the cost, make it a lifetime of ownership permit process
- I was required to hire an engineer at \$2,500 just to sign off on pre-existing permits that originated from the self-same engineer
- Put some caps on the inspections
- Public notification requirements could be more specific in the printed materials
- Too many other state departments have unnecessary input in the process, especially state Department of Health
- Faster turnaround time would be helpful
- More flexibility with permits that refer to smaller sites
- Not assuming everyone is big business – it’s intimidating for small business the amount of paperwork perhaps categorize the amount of solid waste
- Streamline the appeals process
- Shorten lag time between submission and approval

- Need a stronger education program for developers and applicants and they need more personnel
- Speed up process; make fees lower; need more manpower
- Timely reviews getting back to people
- Nothing specific; no problems
- Have someone answer the phone; too much talking to audix; often calls are not returned
- Have forms put everything on the Web site
- Could be quicker
- They need more staff or stream alteration people there are only 3 in the state and it would be nice to have another person and split it up a little
- Each engineer is very, very busy and some people have trouble getting calls back and site visits
- Communicating with DEC staff was delayed because of phone tag; staff swamped by overwork, which slowed the process down
- Hire more people and have walk through prior to engineering
- Have more than one person to talk with when I call and clarify things better
- Gentleman at the office had too much workload
- Make things easier too hard to understand at times
- More liaison between Corps of Engineers and DEC; blind sided by Corps of Engineers; whole project had to be put off because Corps required review of site for Indian relics; delayed 12 months; DEC attempted input, couldn't change
- Complaints about corporate permit violations go unnoticed
- Need more staff, seems they have a lot to do
- Little more discussion, a little better feedback (quicker notification if approval is going to be withheld)
- Take less time

- Better response time need more informed staff, felt person in charge was power happy
- When calling in more info could be given over the phone
- More staffing could be used
- Consistency within watersheds and streams, a permit at one crossing, you should expect the same permit conditions at another crossing on same stream
- Speed the process up and have more people
- Couldn't complain about responsiveness, quality of people; just what was required was excessive and too expensive
- An appeals process certain individuals have too much power and there should be more common sense used or an appeals process for someone else
- Had to deal with two people
- They issue a permit have the state have money available to complete the project in a state of emergency crisis
- Need more help people there are knowledgeable, but they need more people
- Put more staff on
- Satisfied as it is
- Expensive process at \$100/tank
- Too generalized
- Make less expensive
- Took a more pro business side then environmental side
- Simpler forms, cheaper; more individualized
- Tier two filings should not be public knowledge
- Come and talk to the people who have the permits
- Sent out earlier
- Cut down on the paper trail; money assessed into super fund would be helpful

- The top management needs to be more in touch with what is going on in the field they don't take input from engineers
- Have more faith in the people who run the stations
- Instead of just forms send more instructional information
- They have been talking about rewriting the regulations and I think that would be good idea
- Have more regular checkups without penalties
- Less regulation
- Make it easier, tell people up front exactly what they want
- May a multi-year thing instead of annually
- Sending us letters on updated changes, keeping us informed of new regulations, so that we can prepare
- Very organized department
- Terminate this department
- Do away with it
- Get rid of [wastewater regional engineer]
- Rewrite guidelines; wait too long site inspection; not quality coordination
- Eliminate requirements to do GPS when sewer connects to municipal
- Have a more clear cut appeal process
- Only 5% of work through Barre; pretty effective, very different than Essex
- Decrease turnaround time
- Combining review comments in one letter at one time
- Don't ask employees to work with out equipment (department moved)
- Get more staff

- Give more local control to the town
- The DEC officials could give classes to the local elected officials
- Legislature, not department can improve make process more predictable make parties who delay reimburse other party for cost limitability of parties to delay process(limit incentive to delay)
- Broaden spectrum from myopic perspective to real life perspective that serve the people rather than just enforce regulations very hostile business environment loves Vermont but very business hostile to buying 150 year old store
- More helpful personal
- Felt like a victim not a customer rules into effect that even DEC staff and town didn't know implement rules there was no continuity of instruction what needed to do process needs to be more in touch with reality
- Could work more autonomously rather than being interdependent on act 250 regulations for example the act 250 shouldn't be monitoring if we got out wastewater permit
- Let the town police the regulations
- Improve communication
- Require consultants
- I shouldn't have needed a permit; too many marginal cases are the system; this leads to backlog; that shouldn't be
- Think they need more men in field, lack of manpower is problem!
- Make sure people have the handbook
- Hire more technically competent staff
- Less nitpicking over microscopic issues
- Allow consultants authorized to do work and be responsible to do the work and be responsible
- Should have gotten a handbook with each permit documented more information for the consumer caused extra trips and phone calls
- Time factor – too long of a process

- By keeping track of records better, managing paperwork better
- More local consultants
- Get people around to judge gray areas and make them black and white too many gray areas to be bent and they don't bend
- Note from interviewer: respondent doesn't remember anything about obtaining a permit – he is 77 years old (doesn't remember being represented either)
- New wastewater rules require engineers to certify compliance with new regulations- responsibility rests on engineer – concentrate on protecting the groundwater
- Have someone go through the applications and make them a little more clear
- Change from one-size-fits-all, difficult ones require more thought than no-brainers
- I spent an hour while they tried to figure out what I had to pay for this permit
- They could have enough staff to go out to the field, should have more money allocated for the program
- Explain relationship to act 250 more clearly, give statutory sites for legal basis
- Explaining time involved
- Keep the people that are there stay there
- More knowledgeable and flexible staff
- Hire more people
- They need to listen to people, be more receptive!
- It should take less time
- Long and lengthy process
- Get better description on what soils will pass too costly to build septic systems
- The new set of rules in 2002 were supposed to ensure more difference to the designer and less nitpicking certain staff has not gotten on board with this and are still nit pick
- Be more individualized

- Think they need to do a better job with technical info, think it is very unclear about how to meet the objectives, the concept is lost in all the rules
- I think the office needs to ease up on their review, and since is being sampled by the engineer need more consistency in review by various districts in Vermont
- Return application if not complete in better timing
- Just redundancy – water supply has different design standards than wastewater – design flows
- Don't like that businesses can pay to pollute (fee related to amount pollute rec DEC require businesses to purify wastewater prior to discharge into any body of water; no pay a fee to pollute
- The application forms need to be more informative and town officials come out and let us know what all needs to done
- So little exposure with Barre office; no comment
- The department should provide a mechanism for the applicants collection of data on adjacent water supplies and sewage disposal systems
- Not sure; understand process better at beginning + what permit is for
- More timely manner with a list of to-dos
- Some staff need to return calls timely; unnecessary formality front offices
- 45 day performance standards causes delays; over design favored
- Difficult to reach regional engineer; may be too busy
- Shorten paperwork, unnecessary
- Eg too strict (removals and frm, rigid)
- Pending request through Essex not responded to at this time
- Require employees to respond in timely manner
- More staff
- Educate DEC, towns, engineers so can get consist answers, get rid of gray areas

- Hooking to town water shouldn't require a wastewater permit
- Time
- Regulations could be better defined, refer to specific situations; resolutions require specified, not left to discretion of state specialists some staff take individual/adversarial approach to protecting the environment; should problem solve/assist
- Reduce time to 30 days vs. 45 days would be an improvement
- Be consistent
- I think it needs to be more clear who you need to speak to
- Provide more staff for the office; they're overworked
- They're too stringent with some of the regulations
- Eliminate the permit
- Get more engineers to help state should assume the costs of the state required engineer, design, etc instead of permit applicant
- Offer them more staff they take on a lot more than the other branch offices
- More staff
- To rely strictly on Vermont registered professional engineers
- They can change rules and vote out Act 250
- Shorten time frame
- More timely review when the initial application is submitted and less nit picking
- Let the responsible designers be responsible for their works
- Speed it up
- They need more staff. They can't go by their own rule book
- Exercise more flexibility in processing permit application, associate with existing projects that did not originally receive the permit!
- They should individualize the permit more instead of sending whole package

- Trying to coordinate state and town-requirements are too strict-should all be looked at separately
- I think it's confusing and I didn't really know how to approach it it's not spelled out clearly
- Providing enough office staff to make things happen faster
- Town and state determinations in conflict; this cost \$1000 both parties should be on the
- Same page
- Same reasons as b4
- Individualize each situation especially small businesses instead of putting all permits in
- Same category
- People should have someone professional to help them, that's the right way of doing it
- I think they may need more staff there
- Being more responsive and more accurate
- Initial reviews of applications to make sure they're complete
- They abuse their time limits and wait until the 11th hour to nit pick to get the permit off their "clock" this applies only to certain members of the staff
- Do away
- Offer people in position in regulating the laws more latitude
- We had a good experience
- Redundancy of water supply permitting – issue in design flows
- Could be faster
- Greater enforcement
- Do a great job. A bit shorter review time not many complaints. Communication good between DEC staff; get fair evaluation
- Timeframe and the style of their records need to be updated and computerized

- Have Waterbury official low regional office more authority dealing with permit issues have been instances when permits not issued timely staff not as helpful as engineers
- Focus on new wastewater disposal permits with less emphasis on expanding existing permits
- Need to give same answers as other offices
- More response to applicants; reply back in reasonable time
- Eliminate percolation test for wastewater permit can manipulate it fairly well; wastes time and money
- They need to clarify their rules, specifically the state rules are in conflict with the town rules, with Rutland, they've got four engineers will give different answers
- Better public relations; more courteous phone behavior, including returning calls promptly
- The lead engineer needs to have a little more involvement in technical projects
- Fewer days when the office was totally closes phone calls to department should be returned promptly, waiting causes anxiety
- For the most part the staff is good, we have an issue with one individual we won't deal with anymore because of personality conflicts, design issues and tardiness
- Staff inconsistencies cause delays; we need better turn around time on the permits
- Rely solely on Vermont registered engineers, do not have cookbook design give more flexibility to regional office staff, less reliance on Waterbury
- Not micromanage what they are doing
- Spend less time on site visits
- Provide an easier appeal process
- Should have 2 piles – most permits should take 2-3 weeks and not 45 days – for any minor change one must resubmit – something simple should be emailed instead
- Accepting online applications, and the fees are too high for review
- If they could get the permits out a little sooner it would be helpful for the property owners

- I deal specifically with one member who is excellent there are others in the office who are unresponsive and unprofessional I deal with the effective member only
- Get interoperations and rules out to the public
- Better administration out of Waterbury excellent Rutland office needs Waterbury support
- Redundancy in the water supply review – inconsistency in water and wastewater design flows
- In past have had long delays in responding subjective, inconsistent answers that differ widely to technical qs like DEC is spending more time in field, less reviewing plans-good
- Getting out in the field and working with the applicant
- He was able to deal with one person was helpful
- Decrease waiting time
- Fill out forms for him
- Eliminate need for permits by municipal applicants; direct communication between DEC and “mn”
- Making forms simpler-more individual
- Take less time
- Eliminate perc test town rules often based on 83 health reg,20 yrs out of date with env’02 reg need to get orchestrated as 1 set of rules, or eliminate town rules completely, on list
- Terminology could be more geared to layman’s knowledge
- Need on person to oversee the overall permit process when there are multiple permits needed
- Doesn’t have to take so long it took me a while, when I called, to get someone on the phone
- Make the public more aware of the information that is available
- Very small activities seem to bring about a permit requirement
- Make Web site easier to navigate

- Helping people unfamiliar with process to become familiar also, filing process for previous permits on specific properties was ineffective-data was filed by name of owner
- There are very gray areas-we are not doing what needs to be done
- Screen their list of recommended people better, designers, private person hired to design the septic tank
- The process required me to spend too much money with outside people
- Do review quicker
- Speed up the process
- Online information helps – and forms; there a few gray areas that could be improved and simplified – can't think of specifics
- The time process was too particular
- To many people involved, also regulations way to stringent, needs to be some give and take
- Make public aware of interpretations of the regulations
- Better management out of Waterbury consistent interoperation
- They can make decisions timely they can adhere to a reasonableness standard spend the time to learn and understand the real issues
- Redundancy of water supply review – and inconsistency between water and sewer design flows
- Support consistency among the reviewers
- Education ad far materials change the application to be specific for the type of permit that you need and there should be somebody else that tells you what type of permit
- Maybe shorten the review time frames
- Allowing more alternative systems
- Increase enforcement
- Had a good experience; don't know how could improve since have done an amendment and was accomplished in one day

- Equal age opportunities whether you're 18 to 90 yrs old it should be age friendly
- Get [wastewater regional engineer] some extra help
- They need more staff
- Put out a better guideline about what, how, and who in the presenting process to get a permit should be formatted according to what you're doing
- Make it less expensive for the land/homeowner, and make it a little quicker
- Reduce the complexity of the regulations
- Too many damn regulations most people know what they're doing, so the regulations are, too
- The message machine is awkward (waiting for call back) need more people on the job
- Have person show up
- Hooking into an existing system with town approval shouldn't cause loss of time and money; seemed a lot when the existing system was designed for a hook up
- How the requirements are written, they need to be more diverse and flexible also, regulate the costs
- Less time for process
- I think they set the state up for hardships
- They could improve it by having their staff be able to help guide you through the permitting process
- Stricter enforcement of not letting people do illegal things, more fines, or not letting people continue in loopholes everyone should have to have state approved ww treatment
- Faster turn around of inquiries and replies
- Decrease the turn around time
- More staff where the permit crunch is
- Make sure any regulatory changes are made available, people are notified of changes
- Standardize review procedure and have all comments on writing

- Let applicants know that the staff is there before submitting the applications; this makes the process smooth
- Water supply division is the best division in state government
- The regulations for fees differ from waste water; would be nice if both were in sync
- Improved level of tech staff, qualifications as well as attention to schedules and deadlines it's just one person, [water supply engineer] is the culprit
- There are a lot of projects need more people to process quicker turn around time
- Review staff needs more background in technical matters
- Should work on training staff
- General streamlining of the process
- Need to be more timely – getting their comments back so we can revise plans if need be
- Quicker review and turnaround time
- Eliminate some of the permit requirements
- Make sure the reviews are timely
- Reduction in time of processing
- Minor permits should be more expeditiously handled
- Simplified approach for simple project; address goals, not just process
- Different coordinators arbitrary; need one standard in dealing
- Streamline the process make it harder for special interest
- Specify time periods; less zeal, opinions;
- Keep staff bias out of project
- Better explaining the processing time that would be required
- Should have exact wetland maps, when opinion is issued you should stick with it, if you're going to keep same level of regulation have staff to implement

- They could use more staff
- Note hand written notes (see)
- Conditional use criteria more clearly
- They can clarify the Vermont wetlands rules, there's not enough predictability about the decisions going to be made, improve Web site
- Make it less intimidating, before I was intimidated because I was told it was hard so went to a consultant, got frustrated with him, went to department and it was fine
- They need to fire the person that is running the program
- Accept applications online
- I just think it should be a little more individual and up for discussion and not just black and white
- By becoming more user-friendly, accepting the work of qualified consultants and being less conservative in their overall assessments
- The notification for the abutters, in common instances we have to contact many people who aren't interested
- Respondent is not aware of any separate wetlands conditional use determination permit process as pertains to his renewed + amended permits discussed above
- Consistency, if you apply for a permit near Burlington, you should get the same response time as if you applied for it in Rutland or Bennington uniformity

Section E. Vermont's Permitting Process as Compared to Other States'

Question E31b: Reasons that the permitting process is easier in Vermont (7 total responses)

- Got a straighter answer from the regulator
- More service/support offered vs. other states
- Less categories to deal with
- In Massachusetts, rules are with a sound scientific basis, in Vermont rules are with science

- They don't have as strict guidelines
- Permit specialist and ease of contacting programs, cheaper fees
- Better staffed

Section E. Vermont's Permitting Process as Compared to Other States'

Question E31c: Reasons that the permitting process is more difficult in Vermont (21 total responses)

- The state staff is schooled to create difficulties
- Time of process; requirement too stringent; big/little equal
- Difficulty and amount of regs more in Vermont; more and stricter
- More uncertainty in process
- In New Hampshire, can talk with compliance officer and work through issue; there are other ways to work, more receptive to alternative ideas and in separate solution
- Because it is less predictable and more subject to the review of the individual reviewer
- It's more voluminous and triggered by smaller projects
- In New York they consolidate all of their permits relating to environmental impacts and their Web site is comprehensive and set up for the lay person
- Amount of info the timeframe it takes to get the permits and the level of appeal is different to the public
- It's over-regulated, the regulations themselves are unclear and complicated limited flexibility is given to the designer most DEC staff is inexperienced
- Lack of competent technical reviewers lack of coordination between DEC divisions and departments inconsistent rules varied interpretations of rules
- Too subjective – too much personal opinion on the part of the staff as opposed to what the regulations are
- Because of the overlap of authority, the sense of one person looking over someone else's shoulders

- Review time and interpretation
- It's more detailed
- People tend to work with you than put obstacles in the way of the project
- They require more info
- Lack of cohesiveness
- Inconsistency and unpredictability
- In many cases it is a one stop thing here you have to jump through a number of hoops, many of them are duplicate
- Scrutiny placed on single permits is excessive

Report Section F: Additional comments for DEC (263 total responses)

- Frustrating, process took too long [11 similar comments]
- I think if it was more personalized it work better, if the department worked with the applicant
- The people are enforcing the law should be knowledgeable about the law before enforcing the law
- Too cumbersome; instructions for town clerks so can get you started instead of directing to state immediately
- Allowing different sewer systems to be put on properties that you did not used to be able to
- It's been a fairly painless process simple gone well
- Storm water regulations – too complicated, costly, time consuming to get permit; not too effective; whole permit process needs to be coordinated to reduce redundancy; better correspondence with 250
- Person dealt with was very competent [UST program staff] - excellent
- Some regional (state) engineers required some design components not in rule books (i.e., cleanouts) that result in extra costs for the applicant

- Was very pleased with reception received and all people dealt with
- The people are helpful in the process; they want us to meet specs
- Wasn't involved; daughter-in-law did all, doesn't know,
- Unclear; frustrated, from foreign country some idea what was going on; called expert only at end (engineer) to review; required from department to call engineering consultant; should have told call expert at first of process not end
- Web documentation is excellent; staff responsive and politic
- Please with survey to find out what is going on
- Away from goals of laws; too process focused, fail to adhere/succeeding goals of law; too "one-size-fits-all" = unnecessary cost, time; apply this to all permits; need more staff and check phone messages; simpler rules for simple projects
- Not create barriers to development; keep the politics out of the process at all levels
- Engineer did everything; need a good engineer to represent because needed to go through; work must be done by an engineer anyway
- Son handled getting, handling getting appropriate engineer/experts/attorney; husband ill, unable
- Very difficult, different for those who didn't know what to expect older, farmers with big tax burden, regulations were overwhelming engineer handled
- People unresponsive at state level, need to respond; were tax payers need more staff need system too overlay parts of process-person who approves permit shouldn't do site visit, should look at info on computer in
- Positive experience; took longer; waiting after inspection to confirm long; need more staff; can't start 250 permit process (very long) until state permit given make 2 weeks, not 3 months be nice modern tech for septic system
- Absolutely terrible with fish and wildlife; deer management areas as mapped are antiquated and inadequate
- Get the guidelines better
- Generally favorable except new 2002 environmental protection rules; responsibility shifted to consulting engineers; deal between permittee and DEC completely

- Regarding storm water permit, staff need to respond more timely; 2 wk delay in getting answers a problem
- It cost almost a \$1,000 to get a well permit to replace a spring system
- Supports environmental protection, can get things as needed if willing to go extra mile to meet with appropriate DEC personnel
- Nightmare; too costly; in New Jersey could do for \$2,000; in Vermont cost over \$50,000; \$40,000 into it, no construction yet started! For a 15-foot leach field; worked 1 year on getting permit
- A bit more latitude with grand-fathered properties
- I think it went great
- Some regulations cumbersome when large parcels (+1,000 acres) must be surveyed to cover a small portion that is being developed; limits needed here
- Not pleasant
- Wetlands permit process is extremely frustrating; timing is slow; also an overzealous determination of what is a wetland; applicants have to prove no wetlands on site
- Thanks to the governor for the survey; somebody needs to control the environmental people inside the department
- Need standards, solutions so permittee can meet health regulations (uranium in water) received no help! From Vermont had to create and test solution with out DEC assist before received permit New Hampshire would have had solution and helped expensive
- No town permit
- Most of the time, things are fine; very disturbed that larger companies get their way
- Took 6 months, very slow, results great, glad got permit, okay for environment; very costly was closed down 6 months to get permit business should be allowed to stay open during process very anti-business, hurt state tax, employees and bus
- \$450 penalty to not have permit when Bianci changed law, attorney, previous owner should have handled fee cal went up \$100; staff uncertain DEC should handle water co. and town approvals “late” penalty unfair; db cost
- Send copy of rules; different people gave different information

- Delays ran into winter; couldn't determine where/how to do septic system so couldn't build house; delay until March when planned to build in August; inconvenience, tied up time
- Offer subsidies, state consulting to assist individual with cost need process to amend, inform about, provide process with out requiring high paid experts to do; too difficult to understand, be more user-friendly, helpful
- Current fee schedule for water/waste water permits is very confusing; fee is okay, the issue is how to calculate it
- Regional engineer does good job; he's probably overworked; without him [] turn around could be a problem
- Originally it was five dollars per lot and now it is 185 dollars per lot the inflation is atrocious
- Department staff calls with questions, rather than sending a letter; calling expedites the review process
- They could have made an exception to require to make soil test in location obviously had no effect (sub div of uphill of dwelling d site 23 ac from 140 acre; site test 100 acres away, so far away shouldn't have required it
- People from outside the department should read over the forms for understandability and readability
- Happy were flexible reapplication of a rule that would have cost \$1000; DEC was flexible and made an exception; waived requirement for upgrade, made exception in individual case appreciate very much
- Should talk with my son, [name] at [phone number]
- DEC staff first said could go through town, then said had to go through DEC and hire engineer, redesign septic
- For DEC approval; costs = \$5k for engineer + higher cost of sys + delay construction cost + stress + loan + interest + requires mortgage
- Pretty easy process
- Doesn't bother me
- They gave us a hard time about the test pit data being used currently, knowing it was the best soil in Franklin county

- [Wastewater regional engineer] does a good job
- DEC tried to intervene with Army Corps, too late, no fault of DEC wish had better heads up from
- DEC regarding input from Corps of Engineers
- Too many departments, too many regulators, try to dictate everything a business does; 3 Vermont departments for water from faucet to waste pipe for deli, way out of control most would have not made through process
- Wetland consultant had many bad experiences with the [wetland program specialist]
- Take things in process it earlier
- Survey doesn't allow accurate response on some items
- Delay DEC process your application caused delay in putting in septic sys prior to home sale okay under old system; "failed system" under new rules delayed 1 yr in buying home, \$8k higher cost; \$6k cost of ww system disable dv exp
- Friend assisted and represented in process; believe other wise might have had a worse
- Experience intend to control people's lives by keeping paper work in process for most, political, makes hard to do business
- Apply the process where it can do some good; in this situation, completely useless obligation put on a land owner had he known what he had to do to give daughter some land, wouldn't have done \$4k cost
- Need to hire more help, understaffed people were very knowledgeable and helpful, but very busy
- Painful because cost so much money to have to have an engineer should be able to do own self, but faster, less painful to hire engineer simplify process; ensure field eng must be consistent
- People not trying to solve, problem solve; attitude of protecting environment from enemy (public and business); arbitrary, not usually well defined approach act like you are the bad guy; go past time estimate because state requires more than first requirement
- 20% slope limitation for new subdivisions should be eliminated; no scientific basis, is arbitrary can get public building permit but not a subdivision permit although both ww because slope limit; unnecessary hardship

- If applicants were called back, more could get done the trouble for a private developer must be awful
- With wastewater the offices are not coordinated, they have no clear time with which they have to issue a permit, if they haven't done the work yet you should get automatic permit
- Not only did they require I have space for an expensive mound system I also had to have room for an additional system if the other failed, it is a burden on my business
- [Wastewater regional engineer] is an invaluable commodity
- If someone from the DEC could personally come down and review it and be reasonable about it; every situation is different not every regulation fits every piece of land
- The maps are pathetic of the wetlands
- I've been pleased with water supply; my question now is how will the reorganization affect the water supply permit process
- It's frustrating when you visit a regulator and it takes a month to answer a simple letter
- The fees are steep
- Why they change rules midstream
- They could have this folder about the project; I'll never sell the farm with this process; it's terrible
- Doing a good job
- The few personnel over there were helpful and pleasant
- I found the instructions to be very confusing, they were not meant for your average everyday person
- Getting a license has been a problem lack of communication between here and Waterbury
- Eliminate having to get the permit for certain cases (small ones)
- People are professional and dedicated, not all negative sometimes the politics of the rules dominate the rule, so followed whether makes sense or not, Vermont apris legal liability avoidance, political, need common sense
- Compliments to [Essex regional office staff] for their efforts; this doesn't happen everywhere

- It was very frustrating (every moment was a waste of time and money)
- A good experience; the people I worked with were very efficient, they went above the call of duty on many occasions
- Wasn't unsatisfactory process wasn't that bad, used engineer
- The DEC needs to have others work the process, not just one man
- Only problem was with the town; town doesn't want any development, number one; people were very supportive only dilemma was figuring out specifically what steps we needed to doing this case because no existing permits were found
- All permits issues should be published so that everyone knows who seeks permission to do what is known
- The people at the state level were very excellent, and worked very hard it just took a long time because there was so much to do
- I won't do it again
- They may want to consider consolidating all DEC permits, the public should not need to hire a consultant for a lot of the work for the CUD permit
- There are problems with the storm water in regards to timing
- I had to put in a mound system in place of an in ground system I have 50 acres not one
- There is an individual down there, that may need to be refocused he has no budget, \$ is no object, he needs to work towards a solution not be a stumbling block
- Way too much government control, local, regional, state most regulations should be undone or abolished
- They were in designing, but they were not good in helping to finance and funds not willing to spend funds to help
- They need to gain an appreciation that time is money to the applicants, need to understand that the engineering consultants can be an ally to them
- Too many permits needed if you only need one permit the jobs are going because you need all these permits
- Erosion control/storm water permits, requirements too complex and offices too understaffed

- Some DEC staff demands might have been unreasonable; we complied anyway (why are we doing this?)
- It's far from perfect the water supply renewal should be sent out in advance wastewater management is nonspecific the application forms should be reviewed before submitted question not apply
- Too many state agencies involved in gas stations
- Said you should talk to her contractor [], he will call [DEC permit coordinator]
- The permit was actually the easiest part
- There are some great people working in Springfield; they helped me a lot, answering questions and helping me get what I had to get
- I don't trust them! Lack of trust and respect can only breed further problems
- Person hired to do work, everything wrong
- It went fine, we're very happy
- DEC has been very helpful; everything has gone smoothly
- Be involved
- Everyone involved with the state directly was helpful supportive and informative, application questions are tedious difficult to understand for lay person
- I'm glad this is in place; to me it protects the public when the permit has to be processed this way
- I was happy with the results and process with wastewater permit, with other permits time frame too long, information requested redundant
- They came after him and blindsided him
- The office staff was really helpful
- Don't pay so much attention to the Conservation Law Foundation
- Come out personally and inspect the tanks
- Did exactly what they were supposed to do

- There are some really good people out there and there are some antidevelopment people out there that micromanage and harm developers
- Delayed the project a year; cost taxpayers \$3 million plus another \$6 million of costs may be incurred by the process
- Be consistent with similar projects
- Focus on getting the paper work reviewed and the papers issued and less time in the field depend on the licenses and certifications of the consultants submitting applications
- Permitting process is reasonable but not predictable, runs on different timelines
- Not all offices are the same variations of the different regional offices, need to be careful at taking information from each office and applying it statewide
- Regulations can be interpreted in different ways, should have some guidelines for staff so opinions don't come into it, district coordinators should just do paperwork
- They need to improve upon this system is because what is happening is there is too much homework for businesses it costs too much and I businesses may move out of state
- Too expensive
- More flexibility with permits
- Act 250 – currently dealing with client who's going through act 250 permit process- people are great, but process is long, arduous, and expensive
- Very happy with it
- The long tedious process, laypeople are not informed that it may be a better deal to hire someone, it took me many hours to do this
- Very frustrating, should be a simpler way to get permits without so many loops less costly
- Should be ten year not 5 year permit
- There needs to be fewer people do deal with
- It was costly, we had to get percolation tests twice, it became a very costly situation
- Requirements are all not needed, more info needed

- Too complicated
- Didn't realize you had a Web site
- Simplify and not have to go through this process
- Damned expensive, and the inspector was overkill, this cost me almost \$2,000
- Appreciated the employee that helped clarified some of the statements
- Note from interviewer: respondent says he is drawing a blank, doesn't remember it or being represented, said at 77 years old he's doing good remembering his wife's name
- Move to simplify; the change to 10 acre rules is a tragedy
- I went through 2 years of headaches because of new state laws, any title searches completed prior to new laws should be exempt
- Springfield office was very helpful
- 60-80 percent of applications should take between 2-3 weeks and not 45 days, should be two different piles, ones less complicated should be shorter time
- Staff at both locations always very helpful when I call with questions
- Some of the wording on the papers is unclear or inappropriate
- On wastewater and storm water and erosion control, they don't have sufficient staff, no real standard on storm water or erosion control
- I didn't see the point
- I am never going through it again!
- This was a very minor adjustment and we were responsible for it when it should have been rectified before we obtained the property
- DEC permit handbook should be readily available; at town offices, with engineers, not just on the Internet
- They need to recognize that man can do a better job keeping the water clean, wildlife healthy than just abandonment of the portions of the plant
- Disappointed that they changed to 2004

- If people would get off their butts and complete paperwork on time, it would make the process easier and quicker
- I am outraged about permits generically we have over 200,000 dollars tied up in permits and we will never get anything out of it there is outright bribery
- Should have some self explained manuals
- Voicemail was good, secretaries are good, and people go out of their way to answer questions Act 250, personal opinions gets in the way
- No explanation as to why the process works this way; I spoke with the author of the regulations, she couldn't explain them
- Interdepartmental coordination needs to be greatly improved department don't talk frequently with each other timeliness suffers, one stall creates another
- Something that allows for application to be taken to the next step
- The fees are too expensive for consultants and you're required consultants things need to be signed by engineers
- It was convenient and good experience
- The average person knows well enough on some things and I think the state is over regulating on these things
- Slow down or stop growth
- I'd like my land to be no zoning but they rely too much on the state we should be able to be available to the new regulations as much as everyone else in the state
- Overly expensive three times cost to eventual buyer of lot
- I can see no benefit when there is no building taking place I don't know what the permit was for
- The people I have dealt with at DEC regarding permits have been knowledgeable and helpful
- It was just the most awful thing that I've ever been through
- It's so difficult to complete the permitting process
- Train there field personnel to exacting standards

- The buffer zones are a little bit excessive, considering it's barely a stream, a 50-ft buffer zone seems a little bit excessive
- Get clearer information to the engineers
- I'm required to run my leech field over 1000 yards per there requirements
- The responsibility should be on the engineer's shoulders
- None
- Needs to be streamlined
- The public needs to be able to come in and discuss their permitting problems in advance more easily
- It required getting outside help
- After submitting my application it took several weeks for them to send it back to me because I didn't pay a fee I wasn't aware of and answer a question that was already there
- Younger staff have no experience in the real world and have no sense that there is such a thing as responsible development they also step outside their field of expertise
- Cut the red tape
- If I had a better idea of the objectives I would comment, but I didn't understand all we did
- Has problems with everything
- The staff at the office do a great job
- The DEC has been very courteous and very nice
- I think the recent changes in the environmental protection laws are good, but difficult to interpret
- I didn't have a bad experience in water supply delays are the biggest problem in industrial waste I think it is handled better than it used to be
- Mine are fine, the DEC people I deal with are fine
- The need for their permit in my opinion was unnecessary, they flip flopped on whether I needed a new permit to reduce usage

- Poorly written regulations ineffective management that cumbersome
- Many of the residents think requirements are burden and administration easier
- Staff should have better training with actual construction issues
- Wastewater environmental said we had to build bridge instead of culvert; I don't agree
- They held check too long, should have been deposited and not held with permit wanted to close acc but check wasn't deposited
- Time and regulation equals money, which drives up the cost
- Process took long time to even start, and once we thought it was done, they said we forgot arsenic test, also \$780+
- Very frustrating, and doesn't give people interested in environment a good view of them, nothing was accomplished with relationship to protecting the environment took 6 months
- Wording should be more in layman's terms (language could be simpler with same point) at end, there should be an overview of what you have to do
- Make sure there's thorough review of project the first time so there's no repeats, more money, time, etc
- When I called the permit desk to see what was taking so long, individual said he was too busy, and couldn't get to it
- Expense, waste of time, land owner involvement
- Permit process needs to be waived if there's no outcome from process (no influence on things) if there's no benefit of going through process, there should be other options
- Go through the checklist and that's the end of it simplify it
- A way of informing the people that this is required would be helpful
- I think they should have a different price for people that have owned land for a while (because they've paid taxes, paid other things, etc., that this is overkill)
- Permit application sat on [wastewater regional engineer]'s desk for a while; he said he voluntarily let the application sit on his desk to make a statement about being understaffed
- I had to get a survey after I bought a house

- State is over-regulated, but people in Essex office were nice and helpful
- I thought it was costly just to jump through the DEC's hoops; some things unnecessary
- This interview should be formatted and sent into mail so people have more time to think about responses
- Combine everything instead of having to go through different agencies, one tank has a divider, we thought it would be 2 tanks; misread, form unclear on this
- Person we dealt with was professional and reliable
- Local level is very burdensome on the businesses, way over board on the public comment very expensive, very frustrating
- Find the wetlands office has personnel that are not qualified arbitrary and it takes much too long, they don't follow scientific principles, individuals don't have supers
- I don't understand why a septic field can be within 50' of the lake, but a well must be
- 100' from a septic field
- They take the rules and regulations to fit that they don't want a parking lot
- I submitted a letter asking for some permit amends there were no forms to fill out and it was handled in a timely fashion
- I don't see much value in the questionnaire
- The representatives that came were pleasant, knowledgeable and interested in helping
- Some of the rules are not readily available and seem to be subjective on the part of
- The reviewer I think they're understaffed for what they're trying to do
- Almost lost refinancing because in violation submitted new design, talked with DEC personally add expense to amend permit; added time attorney caught; would have lost refinancing (\$1,000s) if not caught; attorney fees
- Own process okay; pleased cities/towns with waste disposal plants should have auxiliary tank to reprocess, excess water after storms, or a filter to hold solids, release water
- System applying regulations ½ domestic ½ comm; a lot more restrictions required by the regulations than was necessary; most regulations based on a town, not really good

- Town zoning laws are nothing; should be more regulatory involvement of residential construction to ensure things done right not cut corners regarding ww town zoning laws not enforced
- Permitting process and DEC's execution of are perfectly reasonable many have problems because want to do something not good for neighbors
- When apply, provide contact person and phone to go through application, instead of just getting big application, then must hire engineer, etc \$\$\$\$
- Vermont should tell you about Army Corps at first; pulled in later than should be, next time will go to the feds first, probably won't do wetlands project again, town ignorance adds cost + time; DEC do seminars – town, fed
- Need to hire qualified educated people greater commitment to dissemination to consultants
- The fees need to be explained better
- [Wastewater regional engineer] seemed very available completed all within time limits
- It was much better than the act 250 permit
- When change regulations, should provide better info sooner to contractors and public they mandate but then must inform and educate those affected cant get answers with new regulations, process
- I'm experienced enough to be considered as a consultant
- Feel DEC did its part; did not drag feet, obtained permit in reasonable amount time
- New rules are complex need to work toward simplification of rules like flexibility of new rules but in their complication, difficult to describe to client
- They shouldn't give a land use permit unless it's a viable septic system and I think the state owes me compensation
- It worked out good for us
- Confusing, very slow process, not a good impression of whole process, uncertain whose fault, representative of DEC who came on site very efficient
- Get done quicker so people not delayed building