

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC

Public participation in the environmental review process is essential. If potential effects of developments were not of concern, there would not be a need for their review. Those who may be most affected by the development are given the opportunity to provide their perspective.

Why get involved?

Projects subject to environmental assessment have the potential to impact a community or region. Even though some public consultation may have taken place, Proponents may not be able to identify all issues of concern or have a full understanding or appreciation of the development impacts. Public input is important in identifying these issues and furthering the understanding of the project impacts.

When to get involved

The public and stakeholders are advised to get involved as early as possible in the review process. Early identification of potential impacts and issues can assist in project planning to minimize negative effects and enhance positive effects. Opportunities to comment on proposals exist through the Public Registry as well as participation in a public hearing through the Clean Environment Commission.

For More Information Contact:

Manitoba Clean Environment
Commission
305-155 Carlton St.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 3H8

204-945-7091
800-597-3556 (toll free in Manitoba)

FAX 945-0090

www.cecmanitoba.ca



Participate in an Environmental Hearing

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The environmental licensing process in Manitoba begins with the proponent, or the party(ies) wishing to undertake an activity or development, filing an application with Manitoba Conservation, Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch. This application is placed in the public registry for a specified time to allow for public review and comment. The proposal is also reviewed by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

The Environment Act provides authority for the Minister of Conservation to call public hearings to consider proposals filed under the Act. Hearings are not mandatory, but generally are called when a development proposal is of general interest to, or will affect, a large number of Manitobans or where, through the screening process, there are significant public concerns identified.

When called, hearings are conducted by an independent panel, the **Clean Environment Commission (CEC)**. During such a hearing, the CEC receives representations from the project proponent, the general public - both supporters and opponents, and from the various government departments responsible for reviewing the proposal. The CEC reviews the evidence and information presented at the hearing and prepares a report containing advice and recommendations for the Minister.



PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

There are many parties to a Hearing Process of the CEC: the Hearing Panel, the Proponent, Participants, Presenters and the General Public.

Hearing Panel

The Panel, composed of 3 or more CEC members, conducts the hearing, considers the evidence presented and reports to the Minister its recommendations.

Proponent

The Proponent is the corporation, organization or agency which has made application under the *Act* for an environmental licence to proceed with the proposed Project.

Participants

Participants are those determined by the CEC to be directly or substantially affected by the project and who will bring additional comprehensive information to the hearing. Participants, funded and non-funded must be committed and prepared to actively participate in the pre-hearing and hearing activities.

Presenters

The CEC may name persons to be Presenters in all or part of a proceeding on such conditions as the Panel considers appropriate.

The commitment for Presenters is somewhat less than for Participants.

General Public

At specific, designated times, a member of the public may make a statement in respect of the proposal under consideration.

Questions

At specific, designated times, members of the public may ask questions of the Proponent, in respect of the proposal under review.

Written Submissions

Written submissions are also accepted by the CEC during the public hearing process.

FUNDING

Funding is available to assist with participation in selected public hearings. Funding is awarded based on a variety of criteria. Please contact the Clean Environment Commission for further details.

THE HEARING

Once a hearing has been ordered by the Minister of Conservation, a call will be placed in the local media and on Manitoba Conservation and Clean Environment websites to solicit participation from those groups or individuals who would like to be considered Participants. Participants must be registered with the Commission well before any formal proceedings begin.

Notice of the hearing dates and times will be placed in the media as described above approximately 30 days before the hearing is to begin.

During the hearing the CEC Panel hears representation from the Proponent, Participants, Presenters and the General Public. Written submissions are also considered.

Once all evidence has been presented the Panel, within 90 days of the completion of the hearing, prepares a report and recommendations for the Minister of Conservation.

The Minister then instructs the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch to either deny or prepare an environmental license based on the recommendations provided by the CEC. Should the Minister not accept CEC recommendations, the reasons must be provided.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Once you have reviewed the available information and have decided that you want to make your concerns heard, careful consideration on how to participate should be made. Following are some suggestions:

- Form or join a stakeholders group, that enrolls as a Participant or Presenter and may elect to engage technical experts to assist with the presentation. A written submission may be developed and a spokesperson(s) from the group may make the presentation to the CEC panel.
- Make an oral presentation on your own behalf, enrolling as a Participant, Presenter or private citizen depending upon your level of commitment and technical knowledge.
- Submit a written presentation if you are not available during the hearing dates and times, or do not feel comfortable making an oral presentation. A written presentation may be a short comment or you may provide technical detail and background.

If you wish to make representation at a public environmental hearing, please contact the Secretary to the Commission or visit our website www.cecmnitoba.ca. You will then be provided specific details on the hearing, requirements for participation and the necessary documents to register.

