




Overview of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB)

Presented By: Will Seuffert, Executive Director, EQB
MSBA

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The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) draws together the Governor's Office, five citizens, and the heads of nine state agencies to coordinate the development of environmental policy and plans, and ensure adequate review of proposed projects that would significantly influence Minnesota's environment and development.

Executive Order 25, 1972

WHEREAS, it is a necessity in state government to provide continuous, comprehensive evaluation of the quality of the environment; and,

WHEREAS, because of the multitude of institutions, public and private, that variously affect the quality of our air, water, and land resources, no single state department or agency exerts a profound influence in environmental planning; and,

WHEREAS, it is mandatory to establish an interdepartmental advisory structure to consider the policy and planning of the State of Minnesota on environmental matters;

Environmental Quality Board

- **Governor's representative**
- **Nine Agency Commissioners**
 - **Administration**
 - **Agriculture**
 - **Commerce**
 - **Employment & Economic Development**
 - **Health**
 - **Natural Resources**
 - **Pollution Control**
 - **Transportation**
 - **Water & Soil Resources**
- **Five Citizen Members**
- **Metropolitan Council**

EQB Mission

The Board's mission is to ...

- Investigate environmental issues that cut across agency interests
- Coordinate state plans and policy
- Ensure compliance with state environmental policy
- Engage Minnesotans

MS 103A, 103B, 116C and 116D provide for the Environmental Quality Board to:

- administer the statewide environmental review program;
- coordinate environmental policy, agencies and programs;
- develop the state water plan and water policy reports;
- study environmental issues;
- convene environmental congresses; and
- advise the governor and the legislature.

Environmental Review Program Basics

- Established by MEPA – Minn. Stat. §116D.04
- Rulemaking and coordinating authority assigned to Environmental Quality Board
- ER rules (Minn. Rules, chapter 4410) prescribe what projects need review and how review is to be done
- EQB provides standard forms, guidance documents, and consultation and advice
- Applies to projects that “may have potential for significant environmental effects”
- Intended to disclose information through a systematic, public process
- Works in conjunction with permits and other approvals

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- EQB was established in 1973 as the state's environmental coordinating body.
- Over the last 40 years it has undertaken a broad range of environmental studies, barge fleetings on the Mississippi River, animal agriculture, forestry, urban development, copper-nickel mining, genetically modified organisms, land use management, water management, and sustainable development.
- 1980 (decentralization of environmental review),
- 1983 (addition of water planning duties),
- 1987 (environmental review and siting requirements for large natural gas and petroleum product pipelines),

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- 1991 (energy and environment strategy reporting),
- 1995 (siting of large wind energy conversion systems),
- 2003 (elimination of the Office of Strategic and Long-Range Planning, which provided administrative and staff support to the EQB), and
- 2005 (transfer of energy facilities siting to the Department of Commerce and the Public Utilities Commission).

Year	# Members	# Staff ⁱ
1973	11 ⁱⁱ	5
1974	12	18
1976	12	18-26
1981	12	18-26
1982	12	18-26
1983	12	18
1987	14	18
1988	15	18
1989	15	18
1991	15	18
1994	15	18
1997	16	18
2001	16	16
2003	16	16
2005	15	7
2007-8	15	5
2009-11	15	5

EQB in Recent Years

- 2011 Legislative Session
- Administrative Reorganization
- Executive Order 11-32
- Citizen Forums
- Environmental Congress
- GICD
- 2013 Session
- Silica Sand...

STATE OF MINNESOTA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT



MARK DAYTON
GOVERNOR

Executive Order 11-32

Directing the Work of the Environmental Quality Board

I, Mark Dayton, Governor of the State of Minnesota, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and applicable statutes, do hereby issue this Executive Order:

Whereas, the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) is composed of nine state agency heads, five citizen members, and a governor's representative, who serves as chair;

Whereas, the EQB is directed by law to:

1. Determine which environmental problems of interdepartmental concern to state government it shall consider and initiate interdepartmental investigations into those matters that it determines are in need of study, including but not limited to topics of future population and settlement patterns, air and water resources and quality, solid waste management, transportation and utility corridors, economically productive open space, energy policy and need, growth and development, and land use planning;
2. Review programs of state agencies that significantly affect the environment and coordinate those it determines are interdepartmental in nature, and ensure agency compliance with state environmental policy; and

Whereas, Minnesota's environmental review processes are complex, with multiple policy-setting and governing bodies, and are in need of review and revision to ensure that they respond to the public value of promoting economic growth, while also protecting Minnesota's precious natural resources; and

Whereas, the EQB by virtue of its composition is uniquely able to align state economic, energy and environmental policies to create a sustainable future for the our state, our economy, and our environment; and

Whereas, a well-functioning EQB can advance this Administration's goal to deliver the best services to the public at the best price; and


Whereas, the EQB does not have sufficient dedicated staff resources to undertake these vital planning and policy coordination functions.

Now, Therefore, in order to ensure that the EQB fulfills its policy-making and coordination roles I hereby order that:

1. By November 15, 2012, the EQB shall evaluate and make recommendations on how to improve environmental review, given the changes made in Chapter 4, House File 1, and the recommendations contained in the Office of the Legislative Auditor Environmental Review and Permitting Report.
2. By November 15, 2012, the EQB will evaluate and make recommendations for improved environmental governance and coordination.
3. By November 15, 2012, the EQB shall prepare an environmental and energy report card that identifies metrics which the State of Minnesota can use to measure its performance and progress protecting Minnesota's valuable air, water and land resources. Once initially established, the environment and energy report card shall be an annual report with renewed priorities, initiatives, and goals and an updated report card.
4. By January 15, 2013, the EQB shall organize and host an environmental congress focused on the current state of Minnesota's environment, utilizing the elements in the report card.
5. Each member agency of the EQB shall dedicate to the EQB the staff resources requested by the EQB Chair, for purposes of carrying out the work directed by this Executive Order.

Under Minnesota Statutes 2011, Section 4.035, subdivision 2, this Executive Order is effective 15 days after publication in the State Register and filing with the Secretary of State and shall remain in effect until rescinded by proper authority or it expires in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 2011, Section 4.035, subdivision 3.

In Testimony Whereof, I have set my hand on November 16, 2011.


Mark Dayton
Governor

Filed According to Law:


Mark Ritchie
Secretary of State



Executive Order 11-32

- Develop recommendations on how to improve the environmental review process,
- Evaluate and make recommendations for improved environmental governance and coordination,
- Prepare an environment and energy report card,
- Host an environmental congress.

Public engagement was a critical part of the entire process.

December 14th:
Moorhead
~120 attendees



November 28th:
Duluth
~200 attendees



December 12th:
St. Cloud
~225 attendees



November 27th:
Bloomington
~450 attendees



December 10th:
Worthington
~70 attendees



November 27th:
Rochester
~200 attendees





Minnesota Environmental Congress

Air · Water · Land · Energy · Climate: Our Voice, Our Future

March 15, 2013

Governors Institute on Community Design (GICD)

- GICD mission: to assist governors and their cabinets and staffs as they seek to guide growth and development in their states.
- May 2, 2013 workshop
- Establish the EQB as the central point for implementing and tracking the State's climate change efforts
- Manage across all the various regulations and competing priorities to have more effective and efficient management of water resources

<http://silicasand.mn.gov/>

- 2013 Environment Budget Bill:
 - Sec. 91. develop model standards and criteria
 - Sec. 91. assemble silica sand technical assistance team
 - Sec. 93. ordinance and permit library
 - Sec. 105. amend rules for environmental review
- Multi-facility EIS

Questions?



Will Seuffert

Office: 651-757-2766

Email: Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us

Twitter: @willseuffert