
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



29 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 • (603) 271-3503 • www.des.nh.gov

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Frequently Asked Questions About Conducting Public Record File Reviews

Pursuant to RSA 91-A, Access to Governmental Records and Meetings, New Hampshire's "Right-to-Know Act," the public has a right to review and/or make copies of any document produced by, or submitted to, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), unless requested files are considered exempt and/or confidential, which is addressed in accordance with RSA 91-A:5 (Exemptions).

When the need arises to request a review of specific records maintained by NHDES, there are a number of common questions regarding the process. This document seeks to answer those questions prior to the file review, making it more efficient for both the file reviewer and NHDES.

1. Are NHDES records available online?

Yes. Many documents, with more being added daily, are now available online at www.des.nh.gov under the NHDES OneStop database system. Mapping, using Geographic Information System (GIS), [OneStop Data Mapper](#) and data layers, is also available to the public.

2. How are file review requests submitted?

There are several methods for submitting a file review request.

- The preferred method is filling out a file review form at <https://onlineforms.nh.gov/?FormTag=NHDES-C-07-004> online, which can be accessed by the link provided or by going to the NHDES homepage and clicking on "File Review" (located under the "Quick Links" section on the right-hand side). You will need to register with NH Online Forms to complete the form. Please include as much information as possible before submitting it electronically.
- A detailed email can be sent to filereview@des.nh.gov. Please incorporate the same information in the email as is requested in the online form (described above).
- Prepare a letter with the requested information and mail it to: **NHDES; Attn: File Review Section; Public Information and Permitting Unit, PO Box 95; Concord, NH 03302-0095.**
- The final method for submitting a file review request is to call NHDES at (603) 271-8808 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

3. Once I have submitted my file review request, how do I arrange an appointment?

A file review request will be acknowledged by email, telephone call, or through the NH Online Form submittal forum within no more than five business days. Some programs have specific procedures for processing a file review request; therefore the time it takes to fulfill a request can differ across programs. Files requested from the following programs take an average of three to five business days:

- Public Water Systems.
- Wetlands Bureau and Shoreland Program.
- Air Resources Division.
- Waste Management Division.
- Alteration of Terrain Bureau.
- Dam Bureau.

Subsurface Systems Bureau requests are made through a separate NH Online Form, located at <https://onlineforms.nh.gov/?FormTag=NHDES-W-05-010>. You can also find the link on the NHDES website by going to the “A to Z List,” and finding “Subsurface Systems File And Archive Record Request Form.” The amount of time it takes to complete the request depends on the location and availability of the requested archived files.

Once the files are delivered to or gathered by the File Review Section, the requestor will be contacted and an appointment arranged.

4. Where do I report for the file review appointment?

Most appointments are scheduled at the NHDES office complex located at 29 Hazen Drive in Concord, N.H. Our agency shares the building with the N.H. Department of Health and Human Services and signs are posted along Hazen Drive. Additional [directions to our office](#) can be obtained from the home page of the NHDES website, under the “Quick Links” section (right-hand side). Parking is available in the designated visitor parking spaces near the building’s front entrance. Our office hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointments are available between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. to ensure enough time is provided to review the records by the end of the business day.

Once inside the lobby at 29 Hazen Drive, please report to the NHDES receptionist. The receptionist will request a photo ID, (driver’s license, e.g.) to confirm identification before issuing a visitor badge. File review staff will then escort the reviewer to the File Review Section of the Public Information Center.

5. Will I be able to make copies during my file review?

Yes. The office is equipped with several copiers. Reviewers can pay for copies at the end of their review with cash, check (checks should be made out to: “Treasurer, State of New Hampshire”), Visa or MasterCard. Prices are as follows:

- Black-and-white copies (8½-x-11”) – \$0.15 each.
- Color copies (8½-x-11”) – \$0.35 each.
- Black-and-white copies (11-x-17”) – \$0.30 each.

- Color copies (11-x-17") – \$0.45 each.
- Blueprints or design plans – \$10 per sheet for paper copies.

NHDES File Review Section staff will prepare the blueprint or plan-sized copies for the client.—You may also choose to use the scan feature on our equipment. This is a flat rate of \$0.05 per page and \$5 per large plan set. Depending on the size of the document we will either compile a disc for \$10 containing the responsive documents, or for smaller documents File Review staff can email the contents to you for no fee.

6. If the file is large and I need a significant number of copies, does NHDES use the services of any outside copy vendors?

As a general rule, copies are made in our office with NHDES staff present to protect the integrity of the files. However, it is not NHDES' function to make these copies for you. Most divisions will not allow their records to leave the building. However, in special circumstances, certain records can go to a copying service of our choice. We will arrange the return of records and give them the requester's information to arrange pricing and pickup of the copies. If you are not able to make the copies yourself, that same copying service may arrange to come in and conduct an in-house copy service. This requires you to purchase this service from them.

7. What other resources can I access during my file review?

The File Review Section is part of the Public Information Center (PIC). The PIC has a wide variety of publications, which include forms, rules, guidance documents, bedrock and surficial geology maps and bulletins, fact sheets and brochures. File Review Section staff can also refer or connect file reviewers with specific NHDES specialists to answer any remaining questions before leaving the office.

For more information, contact the File Review Section at (603) 271-2919 or email filereview@des.nh.gov.