

# Terms of Reference for the Product Review Committee for Water and Wastewater

## 1.0 General

Niagara Region has approved the use of the Approved Product and Equipment List referenced in the Water and Wastewater Project Design Manual. The intent is to ensure that equipment that is specified in future contracts is appropriate in nature, represents best value and whenever possible, is similar to the equipment that is already incorporated in these facilities.

This reduces the number of spare parts that the Region must keep on hand in order to maintain its facilities working efficiently as well as to be able to respond effectively for emergency repairs. At the same time, it reduces the number of different equipment types that the maintenance staff must be familiar with in order to provide effective repair and maintenance services. Consultants shall specify which equipment, where applicable, in design and contract specifications.

## 2.0 Product Review Committee

The Product Review Committee stated purpose is to review and potentially approve new equipment materials for design purposes, equipment replacement and new equipment installations at the Regional water and wastewater treatment plants, water storage reservoirs, pumping stations, bio-solids works and other facilities within the division.

To provide timely responses to requests for product reviews, the chairperson will convene quarterly meetings to review any new submissions. Meetings to hear presentations from suppliers and equipment manufacturers and product reviews will be scheduled on a minimum quarterly basis, or more frequently as deemed necessary by the Product Review Committee chairperson. The committee's administration assistant and chair will meet one week prior to the quarterly meetings to review current and ongoing matters and to confirm quorum will be met.

Product Review Committee quorum is defined as eight members. If there's no prospect of there being a quorum, the chairperson will announce that there is no quorum and confirm that no official business will be conducted. The chair may then move to adjourn the meeting and reschedule it for another date. In the event that no quorum is present, the administrative assistant should reflect in the minutes how many members were present, that quorum was not achieved, the date and time of the rescheduled meeting and make not of any non-binding discussions that were held.

The structure of the committee allows input from the engineering, operations, maintenance and integrated systems section of the division. The associate director of water and wastewater engineering shall be the chair for the committee and the committee shall be comprised of 18 representatives from across the water and wastewater division as follow:

- Chair
- Administrative assistant (one)
- Engineering (one)
- Water operations and maintenance (six)
- Wastewater operations and maintenance (six)
- Integrated system (three)

These categories may include but aren't limited to:

- Electrical and Instrumentation
- SCADA
- Process
- Compliance
- Laboratory
- Mechanical
- Health and safety

Each subcommittee will meet at the direction of the Product Review Committee chair (frequency ultimately depends upon the quantity of products to be reviewed) in order to ensure timely consideration of submitted products for evaluation. Each subcommittee will review the product and submit a report to the Product Review Committee with its recommendations. The Product Review Committee will accept this report and render its decision within 30 days. Consensus by the committee is required to accept any new product.

Other interested Regional staff, not sitting on these committees, may become involved in the Product Review Process with specific products of interest to them. While non-committee members can be invited to attend committee meetings to offer their feedback, they won't carry an official vote with regards to committee approvals.

### 3.0 New Product Definition

New equipment and/or new material is defined as any product, which has not been included in the Water and Wastewater Project Design Manual. No new product shall be included on the Approved Product Equipment List in the Water Wastewater Project Design Manual without review and written approval by the Product Review Committee.

The Approved Product Equipment List applies to replacement and installation of equipment, as performed by plant operations, plant maintenance, and construction

projects under the capital project program at the Regional water and wastewater treatment plants, water storage reservoirs, pumping stations, bio-solids works, and other facilities within the division.

During emergency repairs required to restore services, products and materials not included on the Approved Product Equipment List may be used.

## 4.0 Lunch and Learn

Lunch and Learn or other information presentations and training sessions are considered external to the product review process. Suppliers and/or manufacturers of new products must follow the review process as defined in the terms of reference.

## 5.0 Requests for Consideration

To initiate a product review, complete and submit a request for consideration form. This can be done by water and wastewater staff, consultants, sales representatives or other interested parties. Submit one form per product. The Product Review Committee will review only one application for a specific product, regardless of applicant, once within a one year time frame.

The request for consideration must be accompanied by an information package before the product can be brought to the Product Review Committee for consideration. The request for consideration must consist of the online application with product attachments containing the following information:

1. Suppliers / manufacturer's company name and address including parent company information
2. Applicant contact name and information
3. Product name
4. Designed or intended use for the product
5. Manufacturer's brochure that provides a component-level understanding of the product
6. Product standards and specifications
7. Material safety data sheets, if applicable
8. Listing of applicable standards and the products status with regard to approval with reference numbers (American Water Works Association, American Society for Testing and Materials, American National Standards Institute, National Fire Protection Association and National Sanitation Foundation)
9. Test results showing compliance with applicable standards, including independent laboratory test results, if requested
10. Information on installation, use and product specifications
11. A brief history of the product manufacturer (ex: length of time in business, market and quality objectives, etc.)

12. A brief history of the product(s), (ex: length of time in production, modifications, compatibility with other similar products, how long the manufacturer expects to continue product(s) production)
13. Maintenance requirements, special equipment and procedures, recommended maintenance schedules, availability of service and training required
14. A statement on the availability of the product(s) and replacement parts (ex: supplier names and locations, origin of parts, size of inventory, maximum delivery time, etc.)
15. Cost to supply and maintain product, if applicable
16. Product references (municipal or public users within the Province of Ontario and in applicable industry) shall include users' name, address and telephone number, product application and number of years in use, and name and telephone number of a contact person having knowledge of the particular usage.)
17. Explanation of how the product benefits the division in terms of prolonged service life, reduced maintenance, reduced life-cycle cost and other relevant aspects.
18. Indicate if there are any special conditions (such as pipe size) for optimal performance of the product. Specify conditions or requirements for optimal performance. Where appropriate, include the engineering data required for proper application of the product. Indicate relevant safety factors, and pressure, temperature, or environmental limits.
19. Provide information relating to patents, licenses, user fees and/or franchises held on the product.
20. Provide any other related information

Only complete submissions will be considered by the Product Review Committee. If the submission is incomplete as determined by the committee subject matter expert, the applicant will be advised and provided an opportunity to update the information submitted.

Although not required, application submittal may include other data to assist the Product Review Committee in evaluating the product. This information could include brochures, videos, product samples and/or photographs. The Product Review Committee cannot be responsible for return of these materials. (One copy of video/media and product samples is sufficient for committee review.)

The applicant's request for consideration shall be submitted at least 30 days prior to a Product Review Committee meeting. The Product Review Committee's workload and the number of requests received will dictate the timeline for resolution. After a general review of the applications, one of five decisions will be reached if the product:

- Is not approved as per Section 5.1
- Is under evaluation
- Contains insufficient information to classify
- Is conditionally approved
- Is accepted for use as per Section 7.0

## 5.1 Not approved

The Product Review Committee may deem the product not approved based on the following:

1. The product isn't within the jurisdiction of the Product Review Committee
2. The Product Review Committee fails to find a value in the product
3. The number of similar products currently listed in the Water and Wastewater Project Design Manual is sufficient and additional products aren't needed
4. Other considerations dictate that the product not be approved

The proceedings will cease and the applicant will be notified specifying the reason for refusal.

If the product is not approved, the applicant, or any other person, must wait for one year from the date of decision before re-submission. The one year waiting period is to ensure that the manufacturer adequately reviews and assesses their product for significant changes to warrant re-submission.

## 5.2 Under evaluation

The Product Review Committee will further investigate the product as described in Section 6.0.

# 6.0 In-Depth Review Procedure

For products considered under evaluation under Section 5, an in-depth review will be conducted. The investigation may consist of any of the following:

- Presentation before Committee
- Reference checks
- Samples as appropriate
- In office or site demonstration
- In field application performed by municipal staff
- Site visit to previous installations or manufacturing facilities
- Laboratory testing
- Pilot study
- Other tests or demonstrations deemed necessary by the Committee
- Other information requirements as determined

## 6.1 Presentation

Following review of the submittals the Product Review Committee may request a presentation by the representative at a regularly scheduled Product Review Committee meeting to demonstrate the product or provide additional information. In addition, submitters may request time for a formal presentation to the Committee. This would be

especially beneficial for products or procedures that are unique or are significantly different from those currently approved or used. Such requests should be made through the Product Review Committee chairperson. Formal presentations, including questions, are limited to no more than 30 minutes.

Representatives at the meeting should be in a position to offer any type of background on product use and locations, design, and reference checks. These representatives should also have the authority to approve a trial run in the Niagara. When additional information is desired by the Product Review Committee, it may request additional information from the sales representative, or that they work with members of the Product Review Committee or their appointees to develop an in-depth study.

## 6.2 Product demonstration

The need for product demonstration or sample may be determined by sales representatives to better promote their product, or may be at the request of the Product Review Committee to gain a better understanding of the product. All costs associated with the supply and delivery of the product demonstrations purposes will be incurred by the supplier.

## 6.3 Field tests (less than six month duration)

Some products may require a test period to evaluate the field performance of the product. The requirement for test installations will generally be requested by the Product Review Committee during their review. The duration of the field test will be determined by the Product Review Committee for each individual product. The chairperson or his designate will serve as study coordinator in the development and presentation of these reports to the Product Review Committee. Procedures for testing or evaluation shall be as agreed upon between the supplier and the Product Review Committee. Results will become a part of the product file and will be made available to the supplier upon request.

All costs associated to the trial test period shall be borne by the applicant. These include but are not limited to: installation costs, the costs to remove or expose the product (in some cases), laboratory testing, and any other costs that may be deemed necessary by the Product Review Committee to fully monitor and evaluate the product. If the Region, after completing adequate field tests approves the product, the Region may reimburse the supplier for the cost of the product only. No compensation will be provided for a product that is not approved.

## 6.4 Pilot study (six months duration or greater)

If the Product Review Committee determines that a long term field test is required to adequately assess the product, a pilot study may be requested. The applicant may arrange for other municipalities to participate in the pilot study. The pilot study must be

fully documented to the satisfaction of the Product Review Committee and the participating municipality.

The trial test site location(s) will be recommended by the applicant for consideration by the Product Review Committee and the participating municipality. More than one test site location may be selected for trial. The performance of the product is to be evaluated at the end of the probationary period. The probationary period shall be of a minimum duration determined by the Product Review Committee. At any time the Product Review Committee reserves the right to extend this probationary period, as deemed necessary.

Procedures for testing or evaluation and cost sharing shall be as agreed upon between the supplier and the Product Review Committee. Results will become a part of the product file and will be made available to the supplier upon request.

## 7.0 Selection Criteria

Acceptance of the new product or equipment for addition into the Approved Product Equipment List will be guided based on performance, maintenance requirements, life cycle costs, availability of spare parts and response of vendor to the Region, as well as achieving successful field trial(s). In a similar manner, existing products or equipment may be de-listed based on the established criteria.

## 8.0 Approvals

Following the Product Review Committee review, and provided no further information is required, a letter outlining the Product Review Committee's decision will be sent to the applicant and other interested parties. The letter will also outline the reasons for that decision. This is the final step in the product review process. The decision rendered will be one of the following:

1. The product/equipment is accepted for use. The product/equipment is approved for general use and will become part of the Approved Product Equipment List of the Water Wastewater Product Design Manual when the subsequent issue of the specifications are released.
2. The product/equipment is conditionally approved. The Committee may choose to allow the use of a product, but with certain restrictions. The use of a product/equipment may be limited to pre-approved applications. If conditions or restrictions are imposed, the reasoning will be provided. The product shall be listed in the Approved Product Equipment List of the Water and Wastewater Project Design Manual with all applicable restrictions/conditions clearly noted.
3. The product/equipment is not approved. The product/equipment may not be used in the Division's systems. Notification will be sent to the applicant indicating that the product/equipment is not approved. Reasons will be provided.

The approval for a product or equipment is limited to the stated model(s), conditions or standards/specifications at the date of approval. Any modifications require additional review and approval. Products previously granted approval will not be required to be re-reviewed by the Product Review Committee for minor changes that do not impact the functionality of the product, unless it is determined that the changes may affect how the product performs for its intended use.

## 9.0 Maintenance of the Approved Product Lists

Once products have been approved, a letter will be sent to the product representative and other interested parties. The review process will be documented and kept on file by the Product Review Committee.

Products in use by the Region are subject to ongoing consideration and evaluation by the Product Review Committee.

A copy of the Approved Product Equipment List will be posted on the Product Review Committee SharePoint site and the Water and Wastewater division's external Product Review Committee website.

## 10.0 Removal of Products

Existing equipment may be de-listed as deemed necessary, by the Product Review Committee.

Products may be removed from the list for any of the following reasons:

1. The division changes specifications or standards that preclude the use of any particular product
2. Vendors fail to satisfactorily respond to inquiries or service requests
3. Non-use of a product for a period of two years or more may result in the removal from the list
4. Products will be removed from the list when they: are deemed obsolete by the Product Review Committee, are no longer manufactured, are requested to be removed by the vendor, or if the Product Review Committee deems the product has changed significantly enough to warrant a new submission
5. The product is found to be defective
6. Repeated or likely installation errors
7. Performance problems
8. No satisfactory action has been taken by the manufacturer to correct a defect or associated problems with a product
9. Parts or service has become difficult to obtain or is cost prohibitive
10. If the product no longer meets the relevant standards. For example, the current Ontario Provincial Standard Drawing or current Ontario Provincial Standard Specifications; American Water Works Association standards and amendments,



Canadian Standards Association, American Society for Testing and Materials, National Sanitation Foundation; other applicable standards

11. Local Municipal or Regional by-laws
12. Health or safety issues
13. Regulatory non-compliance
14. Process reliability

Any interested parties may notify the Product Review Committee of issues regarding the performance of new and existing products used in the field. Negative feedback shall be submitted to the Product Review Committee for review. Should it become necessary to consider a removal of a product from the Approved Product Equipment List, the procedure shall be as follows:

1. The review process will be initiated when a member of the Product Review Committee tables a motion for a product removal consideration.
2. The chairperson will notify the manufacturer or the supplier that consideration is being given to remove the product from the Water Wastewater Project Design Manual. The product manufacturer and/or its supplier representative will be given an opportunity to appear before the Committee.
3. Upon the completion of the Committee's review, the chairperson will remove the product (if so decided) from the Approved Product Equipment List and will notify the interested parties that the use of the product will be discontinued.

If the reason is health or safety related, regulatory non-compliance or process upset; removal from the Approved Product Equipment List may be issued prior to notifying a representative of the manufacturer. A notification will also be circulated to the users of the Water Wastewater Project Design Manual.

## 11.0 Moratorium

Products or equipment that are not approved may be reconsidered, if the applicant can supply additional information that may influence the stated basis for the Product Review Committee's decision. However, the Product Review Committee reserves the right to not approve any product or equipment deemed to be incompatible with our current methods and materials and to limit the number of approved manufacturers or models of any particular types of products. Ultimately the best interests of Niagara will be paramount in its decision.

The applicant, or any other person, must wait for one year from the date of rejection before re-application. The one year waiting period is to ensure that the manufacturer adequately reviews and assesses their product prior to re-submission.

If the product is removed from the Approved Product Equipment List, the manufacturer and supplier must wait for two years from the date of removal before re-submission, unless otherwise approved by the chairperson. The application for re-submission must

include a written statement outlining improvements/changes made to the product and/or its supply.

## 12.0 Tender Specifications

Once a product has been granted approval by the Product Review Committee, the product may be named in tender or quotation specifications. In case of any inconsistency, conflict, or differences by design decisions between the products named in the Approved Product Equipment List and the tender or quotation specifications, the tender or quotation specifications shall govern. Any specifications that deviate from the Approved Product Equipment List must be accompanied by a technical memorandum justifying the proposed deviation for Niagara Region project stakeholder review and approval.

Inclusion of a product into the Approved Product Equipment List does not constitute mandatory use of the product.

The Water Wastewater Project Design Manual and the Product Review Committee terms of reference are living documents and will be updated as required.