

### **How long will it take to get my permit?**

The permit development process has several steps, each of which has a target for completion time, beginning with receipt of the permit application. In a perfect world, the absolute minimum time required from the date of submittal of the application to the date a final and effective permit is issued is 120 days. The typical process takes about 270 days, but can be as long as two years for complex, controversial projects.

**First:** Ecology's Air Quality Program (AQP), several other Washington boundary states, and federal agencies review the application to determine whether it is "complete." What constitutes a complete application is discussed at ([WAC 173 400 730\(1\)\(a\)](#)). This review process can take from a minimum of 30 days, to as long as it takes for the applicant to fix any shortcomings in the application.

**Second:** AQP is supposed to either deny the permit or issue a draft permit for public review within one year from the date an application is judged to be complete. AQP tries to complete this process within 60 days. However, AQP's judgment that an application is complete does not mean that everything the applicant wants is acceptable for permitting. Frequently, what the applicant would like in the permit is not consistent with law, regulation, and guidance. Permit applicants unanimously agree that it is better to extend negotiation of permit terms than to deny the permit. AQP has a policy of working cooperatively with the applicant for as long as the applicant is willing to stay in the game, to find mutually acceptable permit terms and conditions.

**Third:** Once a "draft" permit is issued, the public gets 30 days to review it. If no one submits opposing comments on the permit terms and conditions, the draft permit is immediately final and effective. If anyone submits written objections to the permit terms and conditions, AQP must consider and formally respond to those objections. AQP will schedule a public hearing and/or modify the permit terms and conditions if it appears to be warranted. Following any public hearing and response to any comments, AQP will issue a final determination on the permit. If, as has always been the case so far, that final determination is that a final permit should be issued, the permit is final and effective 30 days later **if it is not appealed**, and after both the SEPA review and the EPA's endangered species act consultation have been completed. The latter two steps are processes that may occur while the PSD permit is being developed, but are not done by Ecology.

**Fourth:** The 30 day waiting period is intended to give any of the commenters on the draft permit time to file an appeal of the final determination. The permit is not final and effective until after any appeal is resolved. How that resolution comes about is discussed at [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/psd/psd\\_appeals.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/psd/psd_appeals.html). It is completely unpredictable how long that resolution may take. AQP stresses constructing highly defensible permits, and appeals are rare.