



Open, Participatory Process to Develop DEC's Proposed Dam Safety Regulations

Dam safety has become an increasing concern in New York as our infrastructure ages and local conditions such as climate and land use change. Recent events, such as the failure of the Hadlock Pond Dam in Fort Ann in 2005 and ongoing concerns about the Gilboa Dam on the Schoharie Reservoir, have put dam safety into the forefront of public awareness.

In New York, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is responsible for developing and updating state regulations that govern dam safety. In response to increasing concerns and statutory changes, the Division of Water has begun the process of drafting updated dam safety regulations.

We started by examining existing state regulations and legislative requirements. Regulations from other states with effective safety programs were reviewed, as was the model state dam safety program developed by the Association of State Dam Safety Officials. We also looked at federal regulations, to ensure New York's regulations would be in line with national programs. Based on this research and review, it became apparent that the key elements of the revised regulations should address the areas of inspections, monitoring, maintenance

and operation, emergency action planning, financial security, and record keeping and reporting.

Recognizing that a variety of stakeholders would have an interest in the revised regulations, we held a series of three information sessions for dam owners, municipalities, lake associations, environmental groups and legislative interests at which preliminary, "pre-draft" regulations were made available for informal comment. In response to these informal comments, additional changes were made, resulting in draft regulations ready for the formal review process.

We look forward to starting the formal adoption process soon. We will begin by publishing the proposed regulations for formal public review and comment in the Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB). The ENB is published weekly, and is posted on the DEC web site www.dec.ny.gov.

—Sandra L. Allen
 Director, NYSDEC Division of Water

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 October 3, 2007, IBM, Fishkill, NY
 October 4, 2007, TBA, Long Island, NY

WEFTEC
 October 13–17, 2007, San Diego, CA

NYSAWWA/NYWEA
Joint Water Resources Symposium
 November 13–15, 2007, Doubletree Inn, Syracuse, NY

80th Annual Meeting
 February 3–6, 2008, Marriott Marquis, New York City

Spring Technical Conference & Exhibition
 June 2–4, 2008
 The Sagamore Hotel, Bolton Landing, Lake George, NY