State Agencies Respond to COVID-19

Executive Order 7M authorizes state agencies to extend any statutory or regulatory time requirements, decision-making requirements, hearings, etc. as they deem reasonably necessary to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic or its effects. Below is a summary of some of the actions taken by state agencies affecting environmental compliance, water and wastewater operations, and grant applications.

DEEP Enforcement During COVID-19
The state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) has announced that regulated entities are expected to comply with Connecticut’s environmental laws during the public health emergency. Should, however, extenuating circumstances associated with the COVID-19 emergency prevent a regulated entity from fully complying with environmental laws, DEEP recommends that the regulated entity document in detail and communicate in writing with DEEP as soon as practicable concerning the entity’s inability to achieve full compliance. DEEP’s full statement on enforcement can be found on the DEEP Enforcement page. Additional information on DEEP’s COVID-19 Response is available here.

Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program
DEEP has extended the deadline for submission of applications for the state’s Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition and Urban Green and Community Garden Grant program by 30 days to July 1, 2020. DEEP is granting a 60-day extension for the property appraisal portion of the application, to August 1, 2020. Contact DEEP’s Nicole.lugli@ct.gov with any questions.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund - Deadline Extended to 4/30/2020
The DPH has announced the Call for Projects for SFY 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). Applications are now being accepted for projects that are expected to be funded during this time period. All applications must be submitted electronically to DPH.CTDWSRF@ct.gov no later than noon on Thursday, April 30, 2020 in order to be considered for inclusion on the SFY 2021 Project Priority List.

Certified Water Operators
Water utility operations are classified as essential services pursuant to Executive Order 7H. To ensure the continued operation of water treatment plants and distribution systems, the state Department of Public Health (DPH) posted information for certified water operators on its website. In addition, DPH suspended certification renewal requirements for those certifications that are due to expire during the declared emergency by extending expiration dates for a period of 6 months. Operators impacted by this extension will be notified via email. Additional information on COVID-19 information for Public Water Systems is available on DPH’s website.

Wastewater
Wastewater operations are classified as essential services pursuant to Executive Order No. 7H and DEEP has provided guidance to wastewater operators. DEEP has established a dedicated address (DEEP.WPCF@ct.gov) for submission of Monthly Operating Reports and Aquatic Toxicity Monitoring Reports to allow facilities to submit those permit-required documents by email.
Dam Safety
DEEP is receiving files from dam owners electronically through email to DEEP.DamSafety@ct.gov or by uploading files to the dam Safety FTP site. Please email DEEP to access this FTP site. Review of dam safety files is available on a limited basis. Please email DEEP.DamSafety@ct.gov to arrange access to electronic dam safety files.

For more information on the various Executive Orders, please visit www.ct.gov/coronavirus.

If you have any regulatory or statutory deadlines or requirements that you believe should be waived or extended at this time, please let CWWA know and we will communicate your concerns to the governor's office.

Thank you and stay safe!

Betsy Gara
CWWA
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