

Governor Quinn Announces Web Portal for Environmental Permitting Process

Written by Nafia Khan

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Illinois EPA Permitting Process is Now Faster and More Transparent

SPRINGFIELD – January 13, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn announced a new Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) online portal that will make the environmental permitting process more user-friendly by eliminating red tape for businesses in Illinois. It also increases transparency in the process by allowing applicants and other interested parties to track the progress of the Agency’s decision-making process. The portal is a result of Public Act 97-0094, which Governor Quinn signed last July.

“This process will help us grow our economy by cutting red tape for businesses, while also maintaining our strong commitment to the environment,” Governor Quinn said. “This site will allow companies to navigate the environmental permitting process more effectively and efficiently.”

“The improvements in the permitting process were developed in coordination with the Illinois business community with the goal of making compliance with environmental regulations less burdensome, yet without sacrificing protection of the state’s air, land and water, and public health,” said Illinois EPA Interim Director John Kim.

“The Illinois Environmental Regulatory Group, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, and the Agency developed this positive first step to implement permitting reforms. The changes should

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markedly improve the Agency's ability to respond to the needs of Illinois' businesses, and will result in cost, time, and resource savings. I commend the Agency for their fine work," said Todd Maisch, vice president of government affairs for the Illinois Chamber of Commerce.

In addition to the new portal, several other measures have been or will be implemented in the near future that will increase efficiency and reduce the time it takes to receive an environmental permit in Illinois. One such tool is the Registration of Smaller Sources (ROSS) program tailored to smaller sources of air pollution, rather than requiring them to undergo the extensive permitting process that larger emissions sources must go through.

Among the features of the web portal (epa.state.il.us) are:

§ Application forms; many can be edited, saved and submitted electronically

§ Application checklists, instructions and guidance

§ Summary information on permitted projects

§ An online permit tracking system that gives the status of a pending application

In the coming months, the Illinois EPA will be working with the regulated community to implement additional process improvements that will further reduce time and cost burdens on both business and the agency, while still meeting the same environmental protection goals.

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