

Maine Department of Transportation's
New Product Evaluation Process

PURPOSE

The New Product Evaluation Committees operate through the cooperative efforts of the Highway Program; Bridge Program; Multimodal Program; Highway Maintenance Division; Bridge and Structures Maintenance Division; Traffic Engineering Division; Environmental Office; Safety Office, Transportation Research Division; and the Maine FHWA Division Office. The Committees' purpose is to provide advice and guidance on the evaluation of new products and methods. The Committees may prequalify or dis-approve the use of these products or methods in the design, construction and maintenance of Maine's infrastructure. Under this Program, sales representatives submit their information to a single point of contact rather than several divisions within the Department.

Acceptance of a product for evaluation by MaineDOT, or the Committees' prequalification of the product after evaluation, shall in no way represent an endorsement, commitment to purchase, or intent to specify the product investigated regardless of its performance during evaluation.

THE NEW PRODUCT COMMITTEES

Three Committees are each responsible for specific categories of products. The categories and current committee member make-up are as follows:

Concrete and Bridge New Product Committee

Transportation Research Division
Multimodal Program
Bridge Program
Bridge and Structures Maintenance Division
FHWA Division Office

Highway, Safety, and Traffic New Product Committee

Transportation Research Division
Safety Office
Maintenance & Operations, Western Region
Highway Maintenance Division
Traffic Engineering Division
Highway Program
FHWA Division Office

Environmental New Product Committee

Transportation Research Division
Maintenance & Operations, Southern Region
Highway Program
Environmental Office
FHWA Division Office

Representatives from other units may serve on an as-needed basis as "friends of the Committee." The Committee Chairman and the Department's Product Evaluation Coordinator, is responsible for arranging meetings, receiving information from sales

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representatives, disseminating it to the other committee members, and the coordination of product studies as needed.

Each Committee typically meets quarterly (actual frequency ultimately depends upon the quantity of new products submitted for evaluation) in order to ensure timely consideration of products that have been submitted for evaluation.

PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

(1) Sales representatives seeking prequalification of new products should first check to see if a product acceptance criterion has been established for their category of product and adhere to those guidelines.

(2) Representatives should also check to see if the use of their product is addressed under the latest edition of the Department's Standard Specifications. Products that meet specifications are not typically evaluated.

This information is available for download from the Department's website or by contacting the Product Evaluation Coordinator directly.

(3) Representatives are instructed to submit their product information along with a completely filled-out and signed "New Product Evaluation" form (available for download from the QPL website) be sure to include other pertinent data such as SDS, Product Data Sheets, and Instructions for Use. Please indicate if the product has undergone testing by AASHTO's National Transportation Product Evaluation Program (NTPEP).

(4) The Committee members will examine product information and history of use by other agencies and NTPEP testing results. Testing of material properties may be requested at this time Please do not submit any product samples at this time.

(5) When requested by the Committee, the sales representative shall work directly with members of the Committee to provide additional information regarding their product submittal. A recommendation regarding the product will then be made to the full Committee. The Chairman or his designate will serve as study coordinator in the development and presentation of these reports to the Committee.

(6) The Committee may prequalify, require additional information, recommend a trial or limited use, prequalify with conditions, or not qualify product submittals. Regardless of the determination, all product submittals received with a completely filled-out "New Product Evaluation Form" will be given due consideration and be evaluated by the Committee. The Company representative that initiated the submittal will be notified in writing of the findings of the Committee.

(7) The Committee designate will coordinate the monitoring of trial installations and ensure that long term documentation on the durability and performance of the products and methods is obtained.

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(8) The Chairman may reject from evaluation, those products with no apparent or significant application for use by MaineDOT, or products that are deemed to be not far enough along in the development process to be effectively evaluated (not market ready).

(9) This program is intended for the evaluation of new and/or proprietary products that are market-ready. Products that meet the requirements of MaineDOT's Standard Specifications are not typically evaluated.

(10) Data resulting from an evaluation of the submitted product is public information and will not be considered privileged. All information developed during this product evaluation may be released by the Maine Department of Transportation at its discretion. For example: Information may be shared with other AASHTO member organizations through AASHTO's Product Evaluation List (APEL). Among other uses, APEL is a repository of findings from the evaluation and testing of new and/or proprietary transportation products that have been conducted by AASHTO member organizations.

RE-QUALIFICATION, REVISION, REMOVAL OF PRODUCTS

(1) The following items are required five years from the date of initial acceptance, and every five years thereafter for a product to remain on the Qualified Products List:

(a) Certificate of Compliance: A notarized certification of compliance letter on Company letterhead is required for every product presently on the QPL. Each certification letter must include a statement that the product presently furnished to MaineDOT is identical in formulation, composition, name, and physical properties to the product at the time of initial acceptance.

(b) Revisions: Any product changes, other than name, will require a new Product Evaluation Information Form, certified test report, materials technical data sheet, installation instructions, and MSDS. Essentially, the product will be treated as a new product submission. Product name changes alone with no change on formulation will require a certified letter requesting the name change.

(2) Products will be removed from the QPL for any of the following reasons:

(a) The Department changes specifications or standards that prevent the use of a particular product.

(b) Vendors fail to satisfactorily respond to inquiries or maintain contact with the Chairman/Coordinator. This shall include the required re-certification requirements mentioned above.

(c) Failure of the product to perform in the field. A feedback form is provided on the QPL website for notifying the Product Evaluation Coordinator of issues regarding the performance of new and existing products used in the field. Negative feedback reported on the form may lead to removal of a product from the QPL.

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(d) Non-use of a product for a period of two years or more may result in removal from the QPL.

(e) Products will be removed from the QPL when they: become obsolete, are no longer manufactured, or are requested to be removed by the vendor. The recertification process is an excellent opportunity to notify the Department of obsolete items as well as Company points of contact and address changes.

(3) Products that are removed from the QPL, for any reason, may be resubmitted for consideration, after a moratorium period of one year; if the vendor can demonstrate to the Committee's satisfaction that the root cause for removal from the list has been addressed.

PROMOTION AND USE OF QUALIFIED PRODUCTS

MaineDOT's internal and external partners are made aware of products that the Committee has prequalified through the Maine Department of Transportation's website where they will find a tabulated list of those products. However, they are under no obligation to specify or use specific products once this committee has prequalified them for use.

Vendors or manufacturers wishing to promote the use of their product(s) after receiving committee prequalification should consider the following:

(1) Vendors or manufacturers of products that meet the requirements of the current "Maine DOT Standard Specifications" may wish to contact Contractors who have been awarded construction projects that will need the particular product. The identities of the Contractor, types and quantities of materials to be used in new construction projects can be found in the "bid tabs" which can be found on the Department's website under Doing Business > Contractors. This website is maintained by the Maine Department of Transportation, Bureau of Project Development, Contract Section, and any questions pertaining to this site should be addressed directly to them at 207-624-3410.

(2) Products prequalified for use by the Committee for which a Standard Specification is not applicable may be designed into a specific project by a Department Project Design Engineer. A Special Provision will be prepared by the design engineer and included in the contract documents to define the requirements for, and quantities of, products to be used.

(3) In addition to constructing new projects, MaineDOT is responsible for maintaining over 8,000 miles of roadway and more than 2,500 bridges, and 18 ferry terminals. Maintenance of these facilities is directed through the Augusta, Maine Main Office and through the Department's five Regional Offices located throughout the state. Vendors or manufacturers may wish to promote these types of products to Regional Managers and Bridge and Structures Maintenance Managers.