

**MassDEP FACT SHEET on Proposed Air Quality  
Permit for  
Massachusetts Department of Correction,  
MCI-Norfolk, 21 Needham St, Norfolk, MA  
(August 2023)**

## **Introduction**

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) conducts enhanced community engagement activities when a proposed air permit decision will be made for a project that is in or near a population that has been designated by the state as an “Environmental Justice Population.” As part of MassDEP’s enhanced community engagement, MassDEP has prepared this Fact Sheet for distribution to stakeholders in the area around MCI-Norfolk.

## **Overview of the Air Quality Permit Application**

The Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) filed an air quality permit application with MassDEP for proposed activity at DOC’s existing medium-security correctional institution known as MCI-Norfolk at 21 Needham Street, Norfolk, Massachusetts (MCI-Norfolk). MCI-Norfolk is located less than one mile from a designated Environmental Justice Population. See the attached map showing the MCI-Norfolk location and the designated Environmental Justice Population area.

DOC currently holds a MassDEP air permit for MCI-Norfolk. The current MCI-Norfolk air permit covers two existing emergency on-site diesel generators. DOC proposes to enroll one of the two existing emergency diesel generators at MCI-Norfolk in an “electricity demand response program.” Enrollment in this program will allow MCI-Norfolk to use this generator for a limited number of hours each year for non-emergency purposes during times when the electrical grid experiences peak demand. This will allow MCI-Norfolk to generate its own electricity rather than drawing from the electrical grid. This DOC proposal is subject to the Massachusetts Air Pollution Control Regulations (310 CMR 7.00), and DOC must apply for and receive an air permit to operate this diesel generator under the demand response program. MassDEP has completed its review of DOC’s permit application according to the applicable regulations. On August 4, 2023, MassDEP issued a proposed decision to approve the permit application. Starting on August 4, 2023, MassDEP is providing a 30-day public comment period on the proposed MCI-Norfolk air permit. Information on how to review DOC’s permit application and how to submit comments on MassDEP’s proposed air permit can be found at the bottom of this Fact Sheet.

## **Summary of MassDEP’s Proposed Air Permit**

The current MassDEP air permit for MCI-Norfolk (Transmittal #W061344, issued November 8, 2005) covers the following existing equipment that generates air emissions: 3 boilers; 1 natural gas-fired engine (595 kilowatt); and 2 diesel emergency generators (1,100 kilowatt and 400 kilowatt). DOC’s proposal is to enroll its 1,100-kilowatt diesel emergency generator in an electricity demand response program. Demand response is a temporary reduction or shift in a facility’s electricity use by switching to on-site emergency generators when the electrical grid experiences peak demand (for example, on unusually hot summer days). By participating in demand response programs, facilities help the electrical grid manage the increased demand for power during critical times and, in return, receive financial compensation for participation. DOC must first obtain an air permit (known as a “Non-Major Comprehensive Plan Approval”) from MassDEP to operate the diesel emergency generator in a demand response program and must meet the applicable federal standards for non-emergency engines.

MassDEP's proposed air permit restricts operation of the diesel generator in non-emergency situations to no more than 100 hours per year. The proposed permit requires the diesel generator to be equipped with an oxidation catalyst, which is a federally required pollution control device that reduces emissions of carbon monoxide. An oxidation catalyst is similar to a catalytic converter on a car that converts carbon monoxide emissions into non-toxic gases. Oxidation catalysts may also reduce emissions of particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, and hazardous air pollutants. MassDEP's proposed air permit also includes new requirements for monitoring, testing, record-keeping, and reporting to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and permit conditions. Record-keeping requirements for MCI-Norfolk's use of the diesel generator for demand response operations include daily hours of operation; daily fuel consumption; monthly and twelve-month rolling hours of operation; and fuel consumption and emissions. The proposed permit also requires MCI-Norfolk to routinely test the oxidation catalyst for carbon monoxide reduction efficiency.

The diesel emergency generator will continue to be used as an emergency generator as needed during power outages, and operation of the generator in emergency situations is not limited in MassDEP's proposed air permit. Emergency diesel generators participating in demand response programs in Massachusetts have historically been called upon very infrequently. The operation of the generator in non-emergency situations will potentially result in a net increase in air pollutant emissions from this facility.

### **MassDEP Air Quality Permitting Process and Public Comment Opportunity**

MassDEP has completed review of DOC's permit application, and on August 4, 2023, MassDEP issued a *proposed* air permit which is now subject to a 30-day public comment period. After the 30-day public comment period ends, MassDEP will consider and address any comments received about MassDEP's proposed air permit. When MassDEP issues the final Approval or denial of DOC's application, a 21-day appeal period will begin. During the appeal period, an adjudicatory hearing may be requested by those individuals or groups that have standing. Standing can be established by submitting comments during the public comment period.

If you need assistance translating any permit-related materials into another language, please contact the MassDEP Regional Air Quality Permit Unit at [Thomas.Hannah@mass.gov](mailto:Thomas.Hannah@mass.gov) or [Randa.Kallin@mass.gov](mailto:Randa.Kallin@mass.gov).

### **Location of Proposed Permit/Approval Decision and Application Materials**

Application materials and MassDEP's proposed air permit can be found online at the MassDEP website: (<https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/EEA/PublicApp/>), click on the orange "Search" button, then search the Site Name/Location Name "MCI Norfolk".

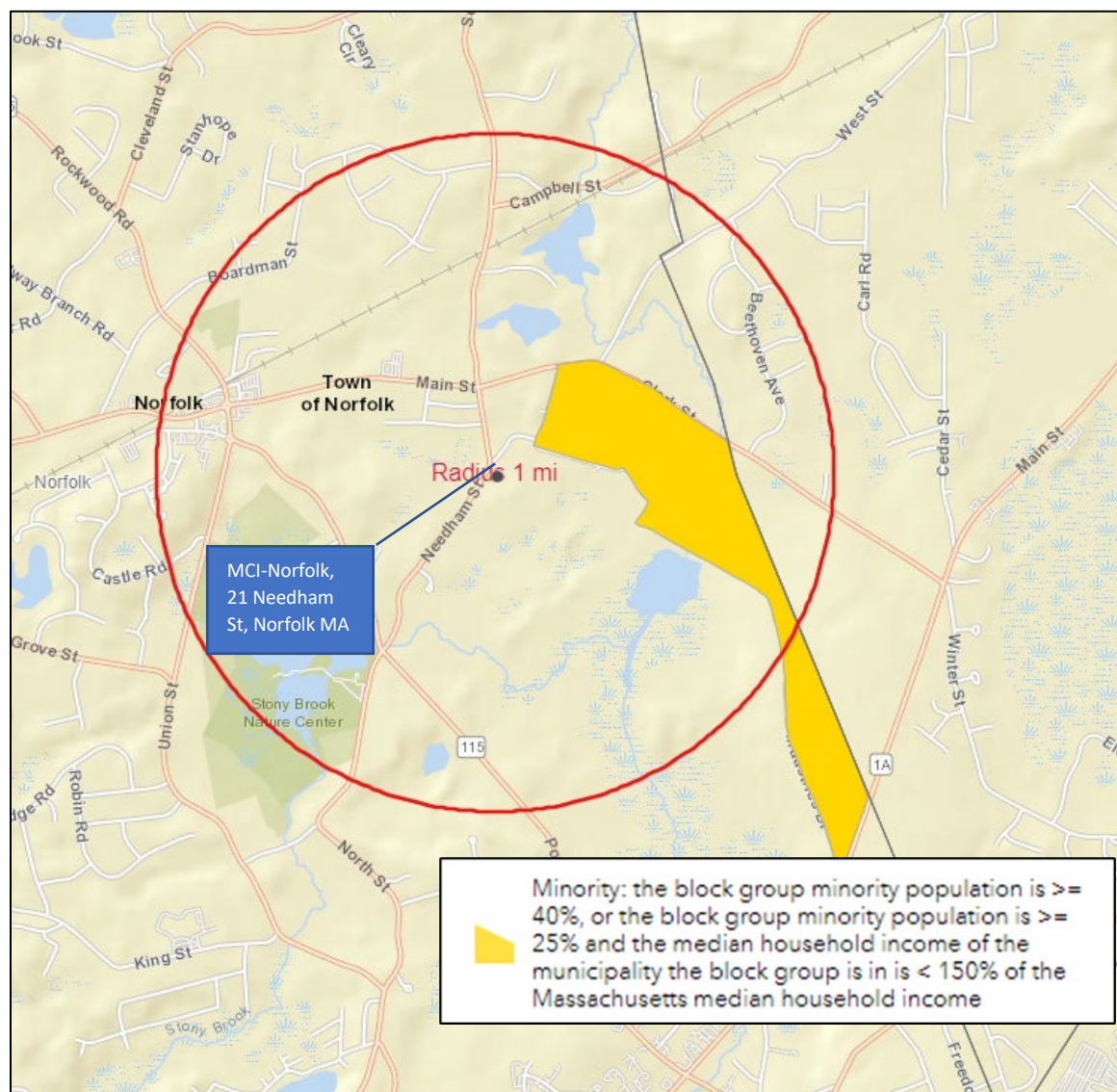
### **DOC Contact Information**

Director, Division of Resource Management: Jeffrey Quick  
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### **MassDEP Contact Information**

Air Quality Permit Chief: Thomas Hannah  
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## MCI-Norfolk location and the designated Environmental Justice Population Area



These data were obtained from <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2020-us-census-environmental-justice-populations>.