



# Department of Environmental Protection

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## MassDEP Stormwater Advisory Committee – Winter/Spring 2020 Charge and Ground Rules

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) is preparing to update the state Wetland Protection Act (WPA) Stormwater Management Standards regulations, MA Stormwater Handbook, and guidance related to wetlands. The MA Stormwater Handbook was last updated in 2008 and the Hydrology Handbook in 2002.

MassDEP is convening an [Advisory Committee](#) (AC) to learn about and gather feedback on proposed changes to the WPA Stormwater Management Standards, primarily related to aligning state regulations with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's MS4 General Permit (municipal) and to updating precipitation projections. After concluding the AC process, MassDEP will update the Stormwater and Hydrology Handbooks and promulgate revised regulations, including providing a public comment period. MassDEP envisions the end result of the stormwater management updates will be greater regulatory consistency and improved climate resilience.

This memo outlines the goals for the AC, roles and expectations, and process management and ground rules. MassDEP appreciates the time and effort individuals commit to this kind of advisory process and thanks them for representing their communities/sectors and for working to enhance the regulations to serve everyone.

### Goals

MassDEP's goals in convening the AC are that the Committee:

- Represent a range of stakeholder interests.
- Provide feedback constructively and work collaboratively.
- Serve as a forum for input to inform potential regulatory changes prior to the formal promulgation process.

### Roles and Expectations

- AC members:
  - The members serve in an advisory capacity. MassDEP values the contributions and opinions of the interest groups, but it retains final decision-making authority regarding the regulations. Members will provide feedback to MassDEP, and they will not be asked to vote or make formal decisions.
  - The group is intentionally limited in size to keep the process manageable.
  - The members should come prepared to the meetings by reviewing information distributed in advance.

This information is available in alternate format. Contact Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Director of Diversity/Civil Rights at 617-292-5751.

TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370

MassDEP Website: [www.mass.gov/dep](http://www.mass.gov/dep)

- Members will learn about the relevant regulatory issues and MassDEP's proposed changes, and disseminate this information to the community/sector, or segment of the communities/sectors, they represent, and convey their views and those of their communities to MassDEP in a timely manner.
  - With a limited number of meetings, members are asked to commit to attending meetings in person to participate more productively. (If a committee member is unable to participate in a meeting, that member is expected to provide MassDEP advance notice and contact information of his/her alternate.)
  - After the AC process concludes there will be additional opportunity for formal public comment on proposed regulatory changes.
- MassDEP:
    - Schedule meetings on a regular basis that will allow the participants to consider information and offer timely comments.
    - Maintain a website for AC members and interested members of the public to view meeting schedule, presentations, handouts, and summaries.
    - Distribute via email meeting notices, agendas, and supporting materials (if any) to the AC one week in advance of the meetings.
    - Give thoughtful consideration to input received during the AC process.
    - Prepare and distribute summaries of AC meeting discussions.

### **Process Management and Ground Rules**

The AC meetings are working meetings for Committee members. MassDEP's neutral, independent facilitator will manage the meeting process.

1. All participants are requested to listen to the opinions of others in an effort to ensure a constructive and productive discussion.
2. Members of the AC are asked to make every possible effort to attend the meetings consistently.
3. Participants are encouraged to stay focused on and limit discussion to issues on the meeting agendas.
4. All participants are asked to silence cell phones and other electronic devices during meetings.
5. The public and other interested stakeholders are welcome to attend as observers. At each meeting, approximately 10-15 minutes will be reserved for public comment after the AC concludes its business. Initial comments and questions will be managed to ensure all public attendees have at least one opportunity to ask a question or make a comment. If more time is available, additional comments will be accepted until adjournment. Interested parties may also provide comments via the AC web page.
6. MassDEP will consider input from AC members, other interested parties, and the public during this advisory process; though, may not provide written responses to all inquiries. The subsequent formal regulatory update process will include additional opportunity for public comment.

### **AC Members**

To assure active participation from affected interests and subject matter experts, MassDEP invited a range of organizations to designate a representative from that entity or sector to serve on the AC. [Click here to see a list of AC members.](#)

### **Meeting Schedule**

Meetings are approximately monthly and will be held at MassDEP's Boston and Central MA offices. [Click here for the AC meeting schedule and topics.](#)