

**DEM10.1 Complaint Records**

The office of Ombudsman of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) was established in 1999 to undertake independent and, in certain cases, confidential, fact-finding in response to external or internal complaints or questions about the Department's performance. The Ombudsman was charged with facilitating resolution of complaints in coordination with Department staff and management, and making recommendations to the Director on matters irresolvable through such coordination. The Ombudsman was also responsible for ensuring that the fact-finding process was perceived and experienced as an independent, impartial, fair, and credible process. All members of the Department's staff bore responsibility for cooperating with the Ombudsman towards this goal. The records consist of complainant correspondence concerning various services performed by the Department as well as documentation from those parts of the agency against which complaints were lodged.

*Retention:* Retain three (3) years.

**DEM10.2 Business and Environmental Roundtable Files**

DEM has met with members of the environmental and business communities to listen to their concerns and to deal with issues raised at these Roundtables. The Ombudsman organized these meetings from 1999 to September 2006. Documents from the meetings include notes, newsletters, agendas, and handouts.

**a) Agendas, minutes of meetings, and newsletters**

*Retention:* Permanent.

**b) All other records**

*Retention:* Retain three (3) years.

**DEM10.3 Task Force Files**

From 2000 to 2002 DEM gathered stakeholders to discuss ways to streamline the permitting programs involving Wetlands, ISDS (Septic Systems), Air Pollution, Construction, and Waste Site Remediation. DEM also coordinated the activities of the Litter Task Force. Material that documents the task force process includes meeting minutes, meeting agendas, and final reports, and information used to develop the charter for the task forces.

**a) Final reports**

*Retention:* Permanent.

**b) Committee, sub-committee, and work group meeting minutes**

*Retention:* Permanent.

**c) All other records**

*Retention:* Retain five years.

**DEM10.4 Project Files**

The Ombudsman is also an assistant to the Director of DEM. As such, the Director assigns projects to the Ombudsman in which DEM has an interest. The Ombudsman may serve as lead or participant on these projects. As project lead, the Ombudsman holds official and unique records relating to projects. Projects include evaluation of topics like land and water-based wind turbines, the Governor's Narragansett Bay Commission, Bay Street Tiverton Area Study, DEM Record Management Policy, Program Assessments jointly performed by federal and DEM Divisions/Offices and other DEM planning efforts. Material may constitute research notes, correspondence, and reports that detail the completion of projects assigned to the Ombudsman.

**a) Ombudsman lead on project**

*Retention:* Permanent.

**b) Ombudsman serves as participant**

*Retention:* Retain five (5) years.

**DEM10.5 Quality Management Files**

Quality Management refers to DEM's initiative to ensure that all environmental data it generates and compiles is of known quality, adequate for its intended use, well documented, and is verifiable and defensible. The Ombudsman is responsible for coordinating DEM's Quality Management program. This series relates to information concerning the development and revision to the DEM Quality Management Plan, Quality Assurance Status Updates, Program Self-Assessments, Standard Operating Procedures, and Quality Assurance Project Plans. Documents include policies, and copies of Divisions/Office material that are used to comply with EPA and state guidance.

**a) Policy and plan documents**

*Retention* Permanent.

**b) Supporting documents**

*Retention* Retain until of no further administrative value.

**c) Reference documents**

*Retention* Retain until of no further administrative value.

*Note: Individual program offices within DEM may prepare quality assurance **project** plans. These documents are permanent, as specified by GRS1.6 Special Plans, Publications, Studies and Reports.*

**DEM10.6 Quality Team Meeting Files.**

Information documenting DEM internal Quality Team meetings including meeting notes, agendas and meeting handouts. The Quality Team is responsible for implementing DEM's Quality Assurance Program.

*Retention:* Retain three (3) years.

**DEM10.7 State EPA Quality Assurance Roundtable Records**

DEM participates with other New England state members and federal Region I EPA personnel in discussions of issues that involve the agency's quality assurance programs. EPA is the coordinator of these meetings. This series contains information documenting DEM, EPA and Region I states meetings, including meeting notes, agendas, and meeting handouts.

*Retention:* Retain three (3) years.

**DEM10.8 Performance Partnership Agreement (PPA) Documentation**

Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs) set out jointly-developed priorities and protection strategies on how EPA and individual states will work together to address priority needs. States can choose to combine federal environmental program grant funds in Performance Partnership Grants (PPGs), which allow states to direct resources where they are needed most or try innovative solutions to environmental problems.

Under the PPA, DEM receives funding from the federal Environmental Protection Agency to fund its federally delegated programs. In July 2005 the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) received a grant from the Environmental Council of States (ECOS) to develop a better way to track and report state PPA activities to the EPA. The PPA agreement requires that DEM develop a mechanism that describes DEM's work plan. DEM has also established an electronic tracking and performance reporting mechanism to fulfill agreement commitments. Information in this series includes correspondence and EPA guidance documents that detail the building of the yearly work plan, end of year reports generated by an electronic tracking system and program joint assessments conducted by DEM/EPA.

**a) Year-end reports**

*Retention:* Permanent.

**b) All other records**

*Retention:* Retain five (5) years.

**c) Electronic data**

*Retention:* Retain until updated.

*Note: Individual offices within DEM may prepare studies and reports with a data quality component. These documents are permanent, as specified by GRS1.6 Special Plans, Publications, Studies and Reports.*

*Note: For retention of yearly Quality Management Plan, see above DEM10.5 Quality Management Files.*

**DEM10.9 Certificates of Records Destruction**

Certification of Records Destruction forms (PRA003) signed by the authorized agency official and submitted to, and signed by, the State Archivist/Public Records Administrator. Certificates authorize the disposal of records listed in his and other applicable schedules. RIGL §§38-1-10, 38-3-6(j), and 42-8.1-10

*Retention:* Permanent.