



**Guidelines for Agreements for Self-Certification of Distribution System Plans by Public Water Systems**

Division: DDAGW  
Number: ENG-16-001  
Category: Engineering – Guidance  
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**I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to the regulated community and staff of the Division of Drinking and Ground Waters (DDAGW) on agreements for self-certification of distribution system plans, requested by public water systems (PWSs) in accordance with provisions of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC).

**II. BACKGROUND:**

Section 6109.07 of the ORC establishes law for requiring plan approval by Ohio EPA prior to construction or installation, or making a substantial change in a PWS. This section of law was originally amended to permit the Director of the Ohio EPA to enter into agreements with PWSs owned by political subdivisions that allow them to review their own plans for water distribution system improvements and to certify to the Director that the plans comply with Ohio EPA rules and standards for approval “without further review by the agency”.

Rule 3745-91-12 of the OAC was initially adopted on December 1, 1993, to implement these provisions. Section 6109.07 of the ORC was further amended to extend this provision to investor-owned PWSs. Rule 3745-91-12 of the OAC was revised effective January 1, 1999, to include investor-owned PWSs. Revisions to rule 3745-91-12 of the OAC became effective on October 26, 2015.

**III. GUIDANCE:**

**Section 1.0: Qualifications Required for Self-Certification**

In order to qualify for the self-certification program, Section 6109.07 of the ORC and rule 3745-91-12 of the OAC require that the PWS meet the following:

- Be owned by a political subdivision (i.e., a city, village, county, sanitary district, etc.) or be an investor-owned public utility. Other private for-profit and not-for-profit systems do not currently qualify under Section 6109.07 of the ORC.
- Have a qualified officer or employee, who is not a consultant, to certify the plans. At minimum, the officer or employee must be a professional engineer (PE) licensed by the state of Ohio. More than one qualified person may be specified in the agreement.
- Confirm that all self-certified plans and specifications comply with Ohio EPA rules, standards, and the latest versions of Recommended Standards for Water Works Standards and the American Water Work Association (AWWA) standards.

## **Section 2.0: Eligible Projects for Self-Certification**

A PWS that holds an effective self-certification agreement can self-certify plans for the following projects, per Section 6109.07 of the ORC and rule 3745-91-12 of the OAC:

- Distribution waterlines and distribution waterline extensions.
- Distribution Storage Facilities.
- Distribution Pump Stations.
- Distribution Pressure Reducing Valves and Air Relief Valves.

(Note: Self-certified plans containing a deviation from the standards or a variance(s) must be discussed with Ohio EPA prior to submission.)

Projects designed to address sanitary survey significant deficiencies, or to satisfy requirements of an enforcement action or Director's Findings and Orders are not eligible to be submitted under a self-certification agreement. In addition, plans for all chemical feed systems are not eligible to be submitted under a self-certification agreement.

## **Section 3.0: Self-Certification Program Requirements**

PWSs must comply with the following criteria established by the DDAGW:

- Be recommended by the appropriate district office.
- Submit an acceptable (five-year) general plan for the purpose of self-certification or a "self-certification general plan" for water distribution system improvements within one year after the effective date of the agreement. See Section 6.0 of this document for guidance.
- Submit an annual report summarizing all plans that were self-certified during the previous year. (Specific report requirements are in rule 3745-91-12 of the OAC.)
- Satisfactorily undergo an annual audit by the appropriate district office.

## **Section 4.0: Self-Certification Program Documents**

The following Ohio EPA forms and procedures will be used for processing plans:

- Letter of Certification and Request for Approval  
This letter is required to be signed, sealed, dated and submitted with each set of self-certified plans by a PE named in the water system's self-certification agreement or accepted by the Director in a letter from DDAGW.
- Water Supply Data Sheet and Plan Approval Worksheet for Self-Certified Detail Distribution System Plans (available from your Ohio EPA District Office)
- Project Summary Sheets

Project summary sheets are available for each of the following: waterlines, storage tanks, pump stations, and pressure reducing stations and air relief valves. If the project being submitted includes any of these improvements, a corresponding project summary sheet must also be submitted. Project summary sheets are available online at <http://epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/pws.aspx> on the "Engineering" tab or from your Ohio EPA District Office).

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(Note: A self-certification agreement may be terminated thirty days after written notification, or upon written notification of cause.)

### **Section 5.0: Self-Certification Plan Submittal Procedures**

The self-certification plan submittal shall include the following:

- Three sets of plans.
- One PE cover letter requesting approval and certifying the plans.
- One completed Water Supply Data Sheet/Plan Approval Worksheet for Self-Certified Detail Distribution System Plans.
- The fixed administrative plan approval processing fee.
- One completed set of appropriate Project Summary Sheets.

Only PEs listed in the water system's self-certification agreement or accepted by the Director in a letter from DDAGW, are authorized to submit self-certified plans for approval.

The PWS can request Ohio EPA review of the plans by submitting the plans without the letter requesting self-certification approval. If a PWS submits plans outside of the self-certification guidelines, then the appropriate review fee and three sets of detail plans must be submitted. The district office will also provide technical assistance for self-review/certification of plans when requested.

### **Section 6.0: Submission of a (Five-Year) General Plan for the purpose of Self-Certification**

An acceptable self-certification general plan of a PWS's proposed changes in their distribution system for at least the same number of years as the agreement must be submitted to the district office within one year of the effective date of the agreement. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that the water system will provide adequate pressures and quantities of water to all customers during the life of the agreement.

Note: a) "Existing" means in existence as of the effective date of the agreement.  
b) "Proposed" means to be in existence within the life of the agreement.  
c) "Future" means to be in existence after the life of the agreement.

The five-year self-certification general plan shall include:

1. Map showing:
  - Existing service area.
  - Existing emergency tie-ins. Indicate the size of the connection, the direction of flow, and the expected capacity from the connection (hydraulic capacity and capacity that can be provided through a contractual agreement).
  - Proposed new service areas.
  - Proposed emergency tie-ins. Please note detail plans for emergency tie-ins are not eligible to be reviewed as part of the self-certification, and must be reviewed by the district office.
  - Existing major distribution system and pressure zones.

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- Proposed major waterlines, pump stations and distribution storage.
  - Pressure zones in the proposed new service areas:
    - Initial phase.
    - Future phases.
  - Proposed major waterline extensions/replacements/reinforcements, pump stations and distribution storage in existing and proposed service areas.
2. Population:
- Current total populations in:
    - Existing service area.
    - Proposed new service areas.
  - Population projections for:
    - Existing service area.
    - Proposed new service areas.
3. Water Demand: Water demand should be broken down by residential, commercial and industrial. A history for the past five years should be included. Projections should be provided for a five-year period at a minimum.
- Proposed actual water demand (average and peak) if all potential customers tied in for:
    - Existing service area.
    - Proposed new service areas.
4. Pressure
- Pressure ranges to be maintained in each area.
  - Fire flows and residual pressures to be provided in each area.
5. Treatment Plant Capacity

Provide confirmation that the water treatment plant capacity will be adequate to meet the existing and projected demands occurring during the term of the agreement.

### **IV. ATTACHMENT:**

Example Annual Report Template

### **V. HISTORY:**

The Division of Drinking and Ground Waters first issued this guidance on January 7, 2016.



Project Title <sup>1</sup>	Summary Sheet Type <sup>2</sup>	Ohio EPA Date of Certification	Actual Construction Costs	Construction Start Installation & End Dates <sup>3</sup>	Date Placed in Service <sup>4</sup>	No. Actual Service Connections	No. Potential Service Connections	Increase in Peak Daily Demand	Increase in Average Daily Demand

1 – Project title is the same as what is listed on the effective agreement.

2 - Summary sheet types include waterline extensions, storage tanks, pressure reducing stations and air relief valves and pump stations.

3 – List both start and end dates.

4 – Actual date in service (after construction completed).

List any attachments to this report:

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Contact Name (for questions about report): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Submitting Report (if different from contact name): \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_