

Hiring an Engineer

A Fact Sheet for Connecticut Dam Owners

Connecticut (CT) Public Act No. 13-197 requires Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to notify dam owners to inspect their dams. To do this the owner must hire a professional engineer who is licensed in CT to conduct a dam safety inspection & prepare a corresponding report. Inspections and reports shall be conducted in accordance with the latest Connecticut dam safety and other applicable statutes and regulations.

This fact sheet provides owners with helpful information on contacting, interviewing, reviewing references and experience, and hiring a consulting engineer to perform a dam safety inspection or prepare other necessary studies/reports. This fact sheet provides advice to dam owners, but should not be construed as requiring certain courses of action be taken with respect to hiring an engineer.

As a dam owner, you will need to hire an engineer who is licensed to practice in the State of Connecticut. This engineer should have experience and be knowledgeable in the field of dam design and dam safety, including inspection of existing dams, and in determining the deficiencies common to the type of dam that you own, and the types of dams in the state. Your engineer should have knowledge of the statutes and regulations governing dams in CT.

The selected engineer will be working for you and will provide a written inspection report for you using a form specified by the DEEP to submit to DEEP, stating recommendations for repair, maintenance, monitoring or reconstruction. Other required documents may include an Operation and Maintenance Plan and an Emergency Action Plan if required for your dam.

Hiring an engineer: While the process of hiring an engineer is similar to hiring other contractors, there are a few key elements that you may wish to pay particular attention to:

1. First, you will need to find an engineer. The Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) has a directory of dam safety resources, which can be found here: [ASDSO 2010 Directory](#). The directory is not all-inclusive and does not in any way represent DEEP's recommendations of the qualifications of a specific engineer or engineering firm. Other sources may be checked for a list of dam safety engineers (e.g. the yellow pages directory). It is highly recommended that you contact at least three engineers to have a representative comparison of your choices.
2. Next Interview the engineer: Once you have contacted an engineer or firm, you should meet and talk with the engineer that will be undertaking the inspection/study prior to hiring. The engineer can and should provide a list of references for work that he or she has done with other dam owners and the types of services (inspection, plan preparation,

construction oversight, etc.) provided to the owners. Please note that DEEP Dam Safety staff will not recommend any particular engineer. See below for typical/sample questions/comments for the engineer.

- a. Are you licensed in the state of CT? You can look up/verify active licenses here: [CT License Lookup](#).
 - b. How many years of experience do you have with dam inspection, design, or repair? Is there a specific area in dam safety that you specialize in?
 - c. Which dams have you inspected and when? Ask them for a list of recent inspections.
 - d. Please provide me with references (owner name and contact information) for the dams that you have worked on that include completion of inspection reports, emergency action plans, or design repairs to a dam. When was this work completed?
 - e. Are you familiar with DEEP's new inspection requirements that are effective as of 2014?
 - f. Have you ever prepared an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) or Operation & Maintenance Plan (O&M) for a dam?
 - g. Are you willing to modify the inspection report or EAP (if applicable), if DEEP does not accept it? Will there be an additional charge for this modification?
3. Check references: This is an important step in the process. Call other dam owners and communities with which the engineer has worked with. Ask if they had any issues working with the individual. Ask if they completed the work on time, within budget and according to the approved plans.
 4. Hire your engineer: After you have contacted an engineer and checked references, the next step is to get a written estimate for the required work. If you are satisfied with this engineer, you may hire him or her; if not, you can of course "seek a second opinion" and discuss your needs with another engineer or firm, check references, and obtain a written estimate. Note: If you have an engineer on staff that has dam inspection or EAP/O&M preparation experience, you may be able to forego the hiring process.

Please visit the DEEP Dam Safety website to become familiar with the applicable requirements: [CT Dam Safety Website](#).

If you have questions about this matter or need further assistance – contact DEEP's Dam Safety Section at 860-424-3706 or DEEP.DamSafety@ct.gov.