

City of Saint Paul
Department of Public Works
American Public Works Association Accreditation

Executive Summary

In July of 2008, the City of Saint Paul Department of Public Works began a journey to become an accredited Public Works agency. Accreditation by the American Public Works Association (APWA) means that Saint Paul Public Works will be nationally recognized for providing appropriate, competent and effective public works services. Even more important than being nationally recognized, will be the confidence and satisfaction Saint Paul residents and business owners will have knowing that Public Works is providing effective and efficient services consistent with best management practices. An agency becomes accredited by conducting a self-assessment of its policies, practices and procedures. These policies, practices and procedures are then reviewed for compliance by an evaluation team made up of members from the APWA and other Public Works organizations. This evaluation team conducts a site visit where they review and assess our practices, facilities and operations for possible accreditation.

A *'Public Works Management Practices Manual'* was developed by an advisory committee of the APWA. This manual contains and describes 546 best management practices related to public works functions and services. These practice statements provide a framework for an agency to systematically conduct an objective review and evaluation of how it does business. In order to attain accreditation, an agency must comply with all applicable practices as described in the manual. Most of the practice statements call for the development of some form of formal, written policy, practice or procedure. Staff in the Department has spent the past three years reviewing and updating existing policies, practices and procedures as well as developing new policies, practices and procedures in order to comply with the applicable practices.

There are 36 chapters in the *'Public Works Management Practices Manual'* (6th Edition). Saint Paul Public Works is responsible for practices in 27 of these 36 chapters. The 9 chapters that Saint Paul Public Works is not responsible for include:

Chapter 18: Parks, Grounds and Forestry
Chapter 19: Solid Waste Management
Chapter 22: Solid Waste Disposal
Chapter 27: Vector Control
Chapter 28: Potable Water
Chapter 30: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal
Chapter 33: Cemeteries
Chapter 34: Airports
Chapter 35: Transit Operations

The practices in the chapters listed above are either the responsibility of another Department of the City or the responsibility of an outside agency. Public Works is required to have the other agencies review the practices in the chapters and to provide a

memorandum acknowledging their agencies responsibility for the practices within these chapters. This step has been completed and all of the necessary documentation from the responsible agencies is on file.

The 27 chapters that Saint Paul Public Works is responsible for, and that we will be evaluated on, include:

- Chapter 1: Organization and Strategic Planning
- Chapter 2: Human Resource Management
- Chapter 3: Occupied Facilities
- Chapter 4: Finance
- Chapter 5: Risk Management and Legal Review
- Chapter 6: Communications
- Chapter 7: Information Technology and Telecommunications
- Chapter 8: Emergency Management
- Chapter 9: Safety
- Chapter 10: Planning and Development
- Chapter 11: Engineering Management
- Chapter 12: Bid Process
- Chapter 13: Project Management
- Chapter 14: Right-of-Way Management
- Chapter 15: Utility Coordination
- Chapter 16: Facilities Management
- Chapter 17: Equipment and Fleet Management
- Chapter 20: Solid Waste Collection
- Chapter 21: Solid Waste Recycling and Reuse
- Chapter 23: Street Maintenance
- Chapter 24: Street Cleaning
- Chapter 25: Snow Removal and Ice Control
- Chapter 26: Stormwater and Flood Management
- Chapter 29: Wastewater Collection and Conveyance
- Chapter 31: Traffic Operations
- Chapter 32: Parking
- Chapter 36: Bridges

There are 400 practices within these 27 chapters that Public Works personnel have spent the past three years reviewing, updating and developing policies and procedures in order to comply with the practice statement. We are about 95% complete with this effort and plan to be 100% complete in time for an accreditation site visit this fall. Our plan is to host an evaluation site visit beginning October 16 and running through October 19, 2011.

Saint Paul Public Works is the first Public Works agency in Minnesota to seek accreditation. This is something the Department and the City can feel very proud about. The Minnesota Chapter of the APWA has written a letter of support to Saint Paul Public Works recognizing the work and commitment we have put toward APWA accreditation. The self assessment accreditation process is not an easy one, but we feel we are a more efficient and better prepared Department for having gone through the process. It caused

us to look at and document what we do, how we do it, when we do it and why we do it. Preparing revised or new policies and procedures helps existing staff to know and understand the services we provide. Documenting our practices, policies and procedures will also be a big help in educating future employees of the Department on the services Public Works provides and the business practice of providing those services.

Our goal in seeking accreditation is to review and document that we are providing appropriate, competent and effective Public Works services to the residents and business owners of Saint Paul. The result of attaining accreditation will be the credibility and confidence the governing officials, residents and business owners of Saint Paul can have in their Department of Public Works.