



Help Your Prospect With Environmental Permitting, and You Both Win

As environmental regulations become more complex, prospects are leaning more and more on local folks to help them navigate the permitting process. Community leaders adept at acquiring state and local permits will be well ahead of the crowd, increasing your chances of landing business. Following are ways to be the kind of helper prospects appreciate:

Understand the Process

Understand the process of acquiring the appropriate environmental permits in your state and/or community. The goal is to become a single point of contact who is easy to deal with and able to provide quick responses with accurate information. A good place to start your education is attending state and regional conferences or visiting with your state environmental regulatory agency.

Develop Relationships with the Agencies

Become familiar with the agencies that have programs relating to environmental permitting, such as the Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Health, Soil and Water Commission, etc. Develop relationships with key personnel in those agencies.

Understand the Needs

Find out up front from the prospect about which permits are likely to be required. Air? Water? Waste? Begin matching to available sites. Arrange for a preapplication meeting between the prospect and the permitting agencies. At this time – and now better than later – the prospect can begin synchronizing construction timelines with permitting schedules, negotiating where necessary.

Communicate Effectively

Public meetings and hearings can be intimidating to industry representatives who are more at home making products than facing public examination. Your job is to alleviate that stress. Prepare your prospect. Find out from the permitting agency in advance the meeting's format and what questions or objectives are likely to come up. Help your prospect be prepared to answer them.

Sell Your Advantages

Many companies have found it easier to get environmental permitting in Arkansas than in many other states. This is an advantage over some of your competitors that should be exploited. If you're trying to persuade a prospect to come to your community, don't forget this selling point.

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