

## Recap of Illinois Pollution Control Board's Digital Initiative Proposed Rules

The Illinois Pollution Control Board proposed for first-notice publication in the *Illinois Register* new procedural rules that will lower costs for participants in Board cases and permit the Board to conduct business more effectively and efficiently. The changes proposed in docket R16-17 will place the Board's proceedings on a digital platform, saving both time and money—not just for the Board itself, but also for companies, citizens, and other government agencies.

The rules will make proceedings more efficient in several ways:

1. IEPA records, OSFM records, local siting records, and petitions for regulatory relief will be filed with the Board electronically, not in hardcopy. This will facilitate on-line access to all documents in the Board's on-line docket system by any interested party or citizen. Significant costs and inconvenience of printing, mailing, and storing physical documents will be avoided. In addition, with limited exceptions, Board orders and hearing officer orders will be served by email—in lieu of paper mailing—upon those parties and participants who have provided their email addresses to the Board.
2. The Board will be able to conduct all hearings by videoconference over the internet. The Board already has successfully conducted some hearings by videoconference and plans to implement them in adjudicatory hearings and rulemakings. Hearing officers will decide whether to use videoconferencing on a case-by-case basis. Videoconference hearings will save the time and expense for Board members and staff to travel for hearings, as well as reducing expenses for IEPA staff and other participants in Board matters. Further, video hearings will expand the public's access to Board hearings on matters of State-wide interest.
3. The rules also include several minor changes that will also provide cost savings: current requirements to purchase several copies of copyrighted materials are modified; the quotation of the lengthy and often-amended statutory definition of "pollution control facility" is eliminated; and the timeframe for appealing Board orders is clarified.

The unifying themes are 1) making it easier, faster, and cheaper to do business with the Board; 2) facilitating access to information about current and completed Board cases; and 3) making it easier for the public to be informed about the Board and to participate in Board cases.

The proposed rules will be published for comment in the *Illinois Register* in early January. The Board encourages public comment on the proposal during the 45-day comment period.