

Fuel Conversion Approval Process

Introduction

This fact sheet explains Alberta Environment's process for approving the conversion of an industrial plant to run on coal or other fuel instead of natural gas.

Alberta Environment regulates a wide range of industrial facilities in the province under Alberta's *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. This is most commonly done through an environmental approval.

Environmental Approvals

Environmental approvals are designed to ensure the environment is protected from a facility's operations. The approval sets out conditions for a facility's operations, including emission limits and the type of monitoring the facility must conduct.

Any proposed major change at a facility requires an amendment to the facility's approval. This includes converting a plant to run on coal or other fuel instead of natural gas.

Amending an Approval

Only Alberta Environment can amend an approval. A plant that wants to amend its approval to use coal or other fuels instead of natural gas must apply to the department for an amendment.

Before deciding whether or not to amend the approval, Alberta Environment must first determine what the potential effect of the change in fuels will be on the environment. This involves an environmental review.

Environmental Review

Alberta Environment's environmental reviews ensure the department has the information and details it needs to determine a conversion's potential effects on the environment. The steps involved in the review process and the length of time it takes are determined by how much information the department needs.

Alberta's environmental reviews are open and they provide for full public participation, including public notification and opportunities to comment.

The review process for a situation where the effects are easy to determine will be simpler than the process for a situation where the effects are more difficult to determine. In cases where the effects are especially difficult to determine, the department may ask the plant for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reports

An EIA is the most comprehensive information-gathering tool Alberta Environment has at its disposal. The report looks at all aspects of potential environmental effects arising from the project and is prepared by the plant asking for the amendment.

The need for an EIA is determined by the Director, Regulatory Assurance Division.

The Director's decision is based on the size and nature of the issues involved in determining the conversion's environmental effects. The Director can request information from the public, industry and other government agencies to help decide whether or not an EIA is necessary.

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Alberta's EIA process, like other environmental reviews, is a process that allows for full public participation. It too includes public notification and opportunities to comment.

The steps in the regulatory process are set out in Appendix I and II of this fact sheet.

Need more information?

Further information about Alberta's environmental assessment process and how it may relate to you can be obtained from the department's website at www.gov.ab.ca/env, or by contacting us at the following:

Regulatory Assurance Division
Alberta Environment
15th Floor, Oxbridge Place
9820 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6

Phone: (780) 427-5828

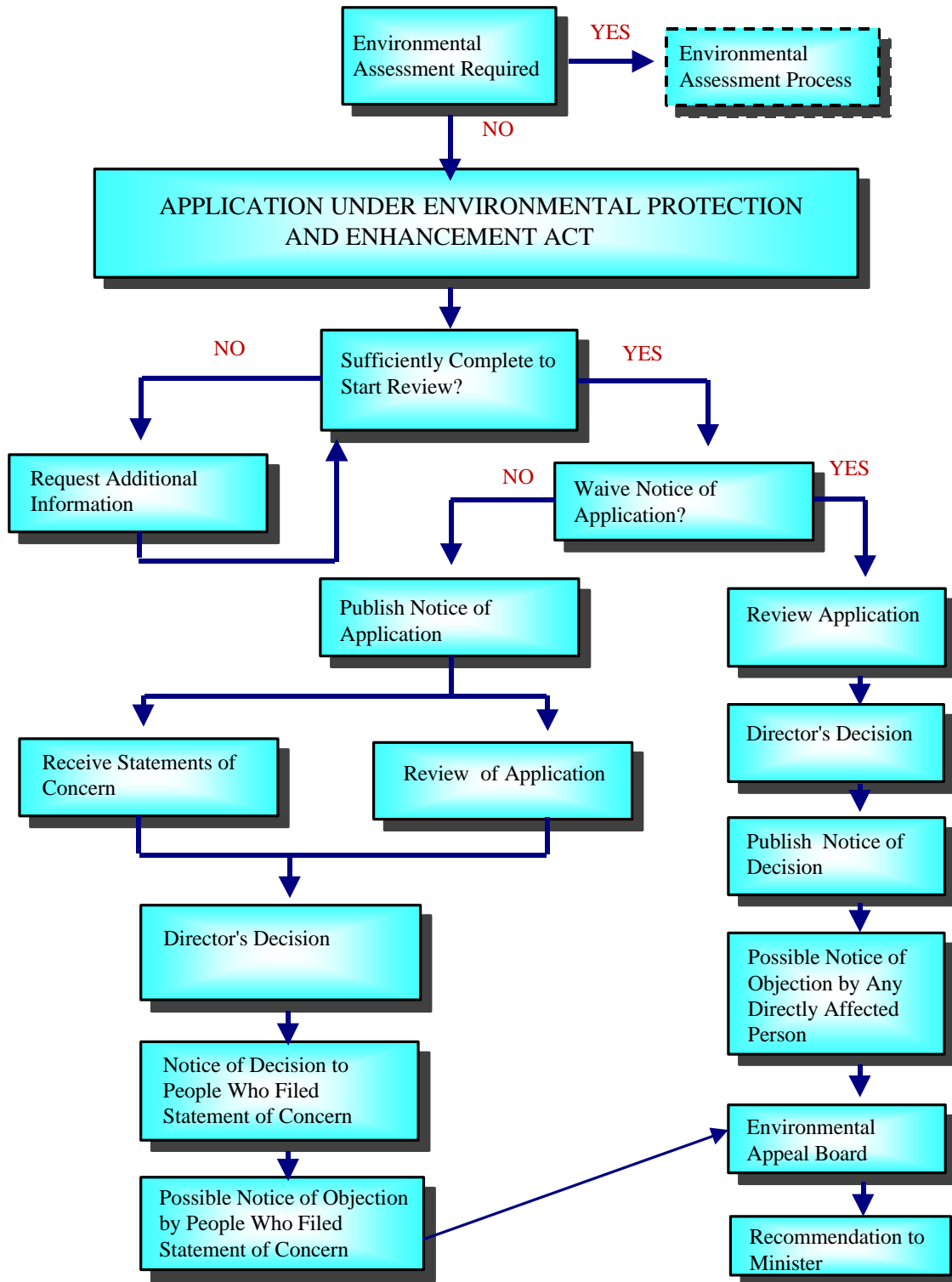
Fax: (780) 427-1594

E-mail: environmental.assessment@gov.ab.ca

Any person may, during normal business hours, examine information contained in the public Register of Environmental Assessment Information and may obtain one copy of any register document, free of charge. The Register contains information on projects that are currently undergoing the environmental assessment process.

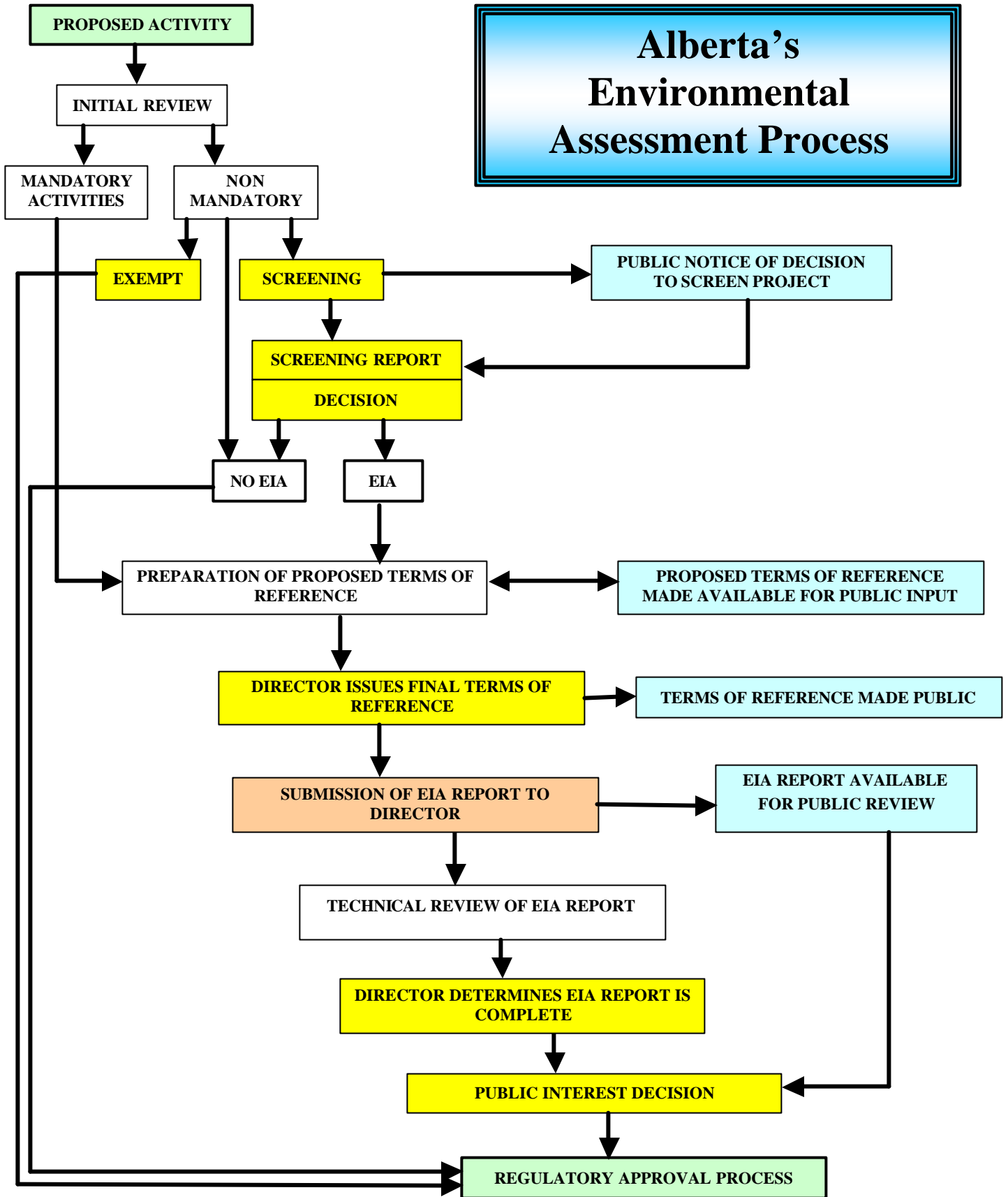
For information about approvals, contact the nearest Alberta Environment regional office (see Appendix III).

APPENDIX I



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT

APPENDIX II



APPENDIX III

Regional Approval Contacts

Alberta Environment

Northwest Boreal Region

Approvals Manager
2nd Floor, Provincial Building
9621 – 96 Avenue
Peace River T8S 1T4
Phone: (780)624-6126

Northern East Slopes Region

Approvals Manager
107 Provincial Building
111 – 54 Avenue
Edson T7E 1T2
Phone: (780)723-8370

Bow Region

Approvals Manager
2nd Floor, Deerfoot Square
2938 – 11 Street NE
Calgary T2E 7L7
Phone: (403)297-7602

Northeast Boreal Region

Approvals Manager
111 Twin Atria
4999 – 98 Avenue
Edmonton T6B 2X3
Phone: (780)427-7617

Parkland Region

Approvals Manager
3rd Floor Provincial Building
4920 – 51 Street
Red Deer T4N 6K8
Phone: (403)340-7052

Prairie Region

Approvals Manager
3rd Floor, Provincial Building
200 – 5 Avenue S
Lethbridge T1J 4L1
Phone: (403)381-5322