

**Title 210 – National Engineering Manual**  
**Part 501 – Authorizations**  
**Subpart A – Review and Approval**

**PIA501.1 Scope**

- A. All employees are expected to work to the limits of their capabilities. Policy stated in this section of the NEM is not intended to limit initiative or the activities of any person. Employees are encouraged to gather basic data and prepare engineering plans beyond their delegated engineering job approval authority (EJAA). However, their work is to be reviewed and approved by an individual with authority for that level of work. Conversely, employees are not required to approve work falling within their delegated EJAA when complexities are encountered that exceed their expertise. Employees with or without the necessary EJAA for a particular project should request technical assistance or review as needed.
- B. Delegation of authority will not be issued to non-NRCS professional engineers in Hawaii, Guam or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). These engineers will certify that their work meets NRCS standards and specifications in accordance with NEM Part 505.

**PIA501.3 Compliance of Engineering Work with Laws and Regulations**

- B. All PIA NRCS engineers are encouraged to become registered in the state or territory where they are stationed.
- C. Policy and procedures for approving and sealing of engineering plans
  - (1) Most NRCS work does not require a professional engineer to seal the plans. When specifically required by state or local law (such as for the granting of permits), engineering plans prepared by an NRCS employee shall be signed and sealed by a registered professional NRCS engineer within their delegated EJAA.
  - (2) It is the responsibility of the employee preparing the design to determine if the engineering plans require signing and sealing. When signing and sealing of the engineering plans is required, the person designing the works of improvement must arrange for the signing and sealing of the plans by a professional engineer registered in the state or territory of the project (Hawaii, Guam or CNMI). The individual expected to seal the drawings should be made a part of the planning process as soon as practical.
    - (i) The cooperator will be responsible for securing all necessary permits and complying with all laws or ordinances. NRCS personnel will advise the cooperator, prior to designing the practice, that there are or may be laws concerning this type of work and to obtain legal assistance as necessary.
    - (ii) NRCS personnel may prepare drawings, designs or plans needed to assist a landowner in completing permit applications within job approval limits, but shall not act as agents for cooperators in securing permits.

**PIA501.4 Engineering Job Approval Authority**

- A. This policy applies to all individuals having planning, design, or installation responsibility. I&E, design, and construction of engineering practices must be approved by a person with appropriate EJAA before alternatives are presented to the landowner, designs are released to the landowner or construction is certified. Review and approval of engineering jobs is to be accomplished in the same manner, regardless of program cost sharing.
- B. State Engineering Job Approval Authority (Classes I – V)
  - (2) Engineering job review and approval should be provided by the person closest to the job with technical responsibility for that location. Where personnel with appropriate EJAA are not available in the field office, the engineer assigned to provide assistance to that field office shall review and approve the job. If higher EJAA is needed, the job shall be submitted to the Area

Engineer for review and approval. Jobs above the Area Engineer's EJAA shall have the SCE's concurrence during the planning stage and prior to commitment of NRCS resources.

- (3) All field personnel working in conservation programs should be assigned engineering job approval authority for the practices applicable to the geographic area they service. Review and approval authority may be changed at any time as the employee gains new knowledge or experience and will not be limited by their grade. Employees or their supervisors will advise the responsible engineer when they feel an employee's job approval limit should be changed between reviews.
- (4) NRCS professional engineers registered in Hawaii, Guam or CNMI will be delegated EJAA Class IV. Job approval above Class IV will be based on the person's training, experience, and demonstrated competence.
- (5) In general, EJAA will be delegated as noted below:

Delegatee	Delegated by
State Office Engineers, Area Engineers All Field Staff	State Conservation Engineer Area Engineer

The employee's supervisor must concur with the delegation of their EJAA. In the case where the delegating engineer is also the supervisor, he or she will sign the PIA-ENG-1 as both the responsible engineer and the employee supervisor. The original EJAA document will be given to the employee and copies will be sent to the responsible engineer, the employee's supervisor and the State Conservation Engineer.

**E. Documentation of Design Review and Engineering Job Approval**

All plans and drawings that have not been given final approval will be watermarked "PRELIMINARY – Not for Construction" when released to cooperators, or other non-NRCS personnel. Technical approval shall be indicated by the following statements located on the first sheet of the design package:

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Practice Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Engineering Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**PIA501.5 Engineering Job Review**

**A. Design Reviews**

(1) Design reviews for Class I – V practices will be determined by the Area Engineer.

**B. Post Reviews**

(1) The following will constitute post reviews:

- (i) Spot checking – The Area Engineer will conduct spot checks in accordance with General Manual 450-407.
- (ii) Field Office Quality Assurance Reviews – The State Conservation Engineer will review a sample of completed engineering projects as part of all field office quality assurance reviews.

**PIA501.7 Engineering Job Approval Authority**

See attached EJAA chart, PIA-ENG-1.