



# ACCREDITATION:

## ENHANCING YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### ▶ What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is the systematic approach to performing an objective assessment for an agency while confirming compliance with the recommended practices as published in the Public Works Management Practices Manual.

### ▶ Objectives:

- Establish voluntary process for any government agency or special use district with responsibility for management of public works infrastructure and services.
- Generate commitment to continuous improvement in the delivery of public operations and services.
- Recognize policies, procedures and practices for meeting national standards.
- Instill pride among agency staff, elected officials and the local community.

### ▶ Benefits:

- Potential for lowering insurance premiums and reduction of infrastructure liability claims.
- Possibility of increased funding approvals for projects from governing body.
- Promotion of better understanding of the public works operation by departments and community.
- Likelihood of improved efficiencies.
- Formation of a succession plan.

## Make it happen **NOW!**



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**Find out who is accredited near you!**

[www.apwa.org/accreditedagencies](http://www.apwa.org/accreditedagencies)



# ACCREDITATION FAQs

## What agencies are eligible for accreditation?

Any governmental agency with responsibilities for public works functions are eligible for accreditation. Divisions and /or departments of a public works agency that operate as a semi-autonomous unit may also be eligible for accreditation. Accreditation is awarded to the agency, department or division within the organization providing the public works service. Eligibility for accreditation is verified by APWA. The director and accreditation manager of the applying agency must be current members of APWA.

## What are the major steps in the accreditation process?

The accreditation process includes five major steps:

- **Self-Assessment:** Using the Public Works Management Practices Manual, an internal review of an agency's practices combined with a comparison of the recommended practices contained in the manual.
- **Application:** Once the decision has been made to commit to the Accreditation Program, the agency submits a formal application with the applicable application fee.
- **Improvement:** After the agency has completed the self-assessment and identified areas needing improvement, the agency will work to bring all practices into an acceptable level of compliance with the recommended practices.
- **Evaluation:** Following the completion of the improvement phase, the agency will request a site visit. The site visit will consist of a review and evaluation of the agency to determine the level of compliance with all applicable practices.
- **Accreditation:** The Accreditation Council will review the site visit results and recommendation from the team, voting to award or deny accreditation. If accreditation is denied or deferred, the agency is provided with an outline of the steps required to gain full compliance with the practices.

## How long does the accreditation last before it must be repeated?

Initial accreditation is for a four-year period. A semi-annual update will be required to demonstrate continuing compliance. A re-accreditation process has been developed which builds on the original accreditation to encourage continuous improvement and compliance with newly identified practices.

## What does accreditation cost?

The program is sensitive of the need to keep costs at an affordable level. The established fee schedule is based on the agency's population and number of functional areas to be reviewed. Accreditation fees are expected to be between \$2,500 and \$25,000.

**What if I have more questions? For additional assistance, contact APWA staff  
(800-848-2792 or [accreditation@apwa.org](mailto:accreditation@apwa.org)).**