

EPER - ELECTRONIC PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT ROLLOUT

John Helgren, P.E. | USDA/Rural Development

The United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development (RD) is announcing that ePER has rolled out and ready to be used by our applicant's consultants. USDA RD is a leader in providing financial assistance for water and waste infrastructure projects in rural America under the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program. In an effort to streamline the application process for water and waste infrastructure funding to small and rural systems, RUS recently implemented RD Apply, an online software tool for completing the application process. RD Apply has been successfully in use in New York for all NY USDA RD applications. RD Apply is available via the link: <https://rdapply.usda.gov>.

The ePER is the latest innovation in the application process under development by USDA, Rural Utilities Service. It enables licensed professional engineers to develop an electronic Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), a technical application document, directly through an interactive web based portal system. The system queries engineers for needed information and steps them through the process of developing a Preliminary Engineering Report for drinking water, wastewater, solid waste, and stormwater infrastructure projects, but the engineer maintains control of the report and their recommendations. The ePER is compatible with the RD Apply application intake system, but is a separate system so that engineers can use the ePER to develop Preliminary Engineering Reports for any funding agency that accepts reports using the interagency format that was developed in collaboration with EPA, HUD, IHS, and state governments. The ePER tool includes automated features such as a built in population projection tool as well as a built in life cycle cost analysis tool.

The following link provides more information on ePER: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/water-environmental-programs/electronic-preliminary-engineering>

BENEFITS OF EPER

- SECURE: Only the consulting engineers or their designees can access the reports
- INTERACTIVE: ePER prompts users for information, minimizing the time and effort involved in completing reports
- FLEXIBLE: Reports are generated in PDF and XML for easy submission to USDA and other Federal/state funding agencies
- COMPATIBLE: The ePER system is compatible with the RD

Apply online application system

WHO CAN USE THE EPER TOOL?

Everyone is welcome to use the tool. However, in order to submit a PER as part of an application for funding a licensed professional engineer must be the lead author of each ePER. After creating an ePER, the lead engineer may authorize other team members with a Level 2 eAuthentication to also work on a designated ePER.

ACCESSING EPER

You will need to obtain a Level 2 eAuthentication to access the ePER system. This is available at the link: <https://eauth.usda.gov>

Once you have a Level 2 eAuthentication you can access ePER at <https://eper.sc.egov.usda.gov>

Need Help? If you are experiencing trouble:

- Accessing the eAuthentication website
- Obtaining a Level 2 eAuthentication using the site;
- Accessing the ePER software tool

Email the Help Desk at RD.HD@STL.USDA.GOV.

Call (800)-457-3642 (Monday through Friday – 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Central Standard Time)

Questions? Contact your New York USDA Rural Development State Engineers:

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Using the RD Apply and ePER systems, the USDA is innovating the application process to improve access to water and waste infrastructure funding to rural communities across the country. 💧💧💧