State of Vermont Natural Resources Board



ISSUED BY: Vermont Natural Resources Board

TITLE: Records Management Policy

POLICY NO. 1

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 9, 2021

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I. PURPOSE

All Natural Resources Board ("NRB") members, NRB employees, and District Commission Members are responsible for creating, maintaining, and disposing of public records in accordance with state and federal law, including Vermont's Access to Public Records law. 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320. All state agencies and departments must adopt a program approved by the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration ("VSARA") for the effective management, preservation, and disposition of public records. 3 V.S.A. § 218. In addition, custodians of public records may not dispose of public records unless specifically authorized by law or under a record schedule that has been approved by the Vermont State Archivist. 1 V.S.A. § 317a. The NRB has adopted this policy to: (1) fulfill its obligations under 3 V.S.A. § 218; and (2) set forth the records schedules pursuant to which NRB employees may dispose of public records pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317a.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Consistent with the policies of the State of Vermont, the NRB recognizes that:

[P]ublic records are essential to the administration of State and local government. Public records contain information that allows government programs to function, provides officials with a basis for making decisions, and ensures continuity with past operations. Public records document the legal responsibilities of government, help protect the rights of citizens, and provide citizens a means of monitoring government programs and measuring the performance of public officials. Public records provide documentation for the functioning of government and for the retrospective analysis of the development of

Vermont government and the impact of programs on citizens. Public records in general and archival records in particular need to be systematically managed to preserve their legal, historic, and informational value, to provide ready access to vital information, and to promote the efficient and economical operation of government.

3 V.S.A. § 218(a). See also 1 V.S.A. § 315(a) (containing substantially similar provisions). As a result, the NRB adopts as its own the following two polices from 1 V.S.A. § 315. First, that NRB employees shall provide for free an open examination of records consistent with Chapter I, Article 6 of the Vermont Constitution and Vermont's Access to Public Records law. 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320. Second, that all people have a right to privacy in their personal and economic pursuits, which ought to be protected unless specific information is needed to review the action of a governmental official. This means that public records that are exempt under Vermont's Access to Public Records law may not be available for public inspection.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all public records in the custody and control of the NRB and its employees. Public records include "any written or records information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, which is produced or acquired in the course of public agency business," 1 V.S.A. § 317(b).

IV. RELEVANT LAWS, REGULATIONS, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES

- 1. Vermont State Constitution, Chapter 1, Article 6
- 2. 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320: Access to Public Records
- 3. 3 V.S.A. § 117: Vermont State Archives and Records Administration
- 4. 3 V.S.A. § 218: Agency/Department Records Management Program
- 5. 04 000 CVR 002: Uniform Schedule of Public Record Charges for State Agencies
- 6. VSARA's Forms & Procedures Resource Page
- 7. 10 V.S.A. Ch. 151: Act 250
- 8. 10 V.S.A. Ch. 201: Administrative Environmental Law Enforcement
- 9. 10 V.S.A. Ch. 220: Consolidated Environmental Appeals

V. RECORD SCHEDULES

The NRB and its employees shall create, maintain, and dispose of its public records in accordance with the following record schedules and with any additional records management manual, which the NRB may in its sole discretion adopt. These schedules set forth the minimum retention requirements for the documents referenced therein. The NRB and its employees may, in their discretion, retain such documents for a longer period. However, it is the NRB's expectation that NRB employees will dispose of Public Records at the earliest time authorized by the NRB's Record Management Policy unless good cause, which does not include administrative convenience, exists to retain it for a longer period of time. Any NRB employee deviating from this expectation must be able to articulate the good cause supporting his or her decision.

General Record Schedules

VSARA has issued several General Record Schedules that the State Archivist has approved. On May 6, 2011, the NRB completed a Notice of Adoption in which it announced its intent to develop and enact a policy to adopt certain General Record Schedules. Through the various versions of this policy, the NRB has adopted several General Records Schedules all of which are enumerated below.

- 1. GRS-1000.1002: Accounting Records
- 2. GRS-1000.1102: Administrative Policy Records
- 3. GRS-1493.1004: Appointment Records
- 4. GRS-1000.1007: Audit Records
- 5. GRS-1000.1012: Budget Records
- 6. GRS-1000.1126: Contract Files
- 7. GRS-1000.1062: Marketing Records
- 8. GRS-1000.1063: Monitoring Records
- 9. GRS-1000.1103: Operational/Managerial Records
- 10. GRS-1009.1103: Payroll Management Records
- 11. <u>GRS-1304.1103: Personnel Files</u>

Specific Records Schedules

In collaboration with VSARA, the NRB has developed the following agency-specific records schedules, which the NRB adopts through this Records Management Policy:

- 1. SRS-1185.1033: Act 250 Enforcement Records
- 2. SRS-1185.1000: Natural Resources Board Transitory Records

Copies of these agency specific records schedules are attached to this policy. The NRB has elected not to adopt a records schedule for land use permit records. As a result, all public records contained in land use permitting files must be retained indefinitely unless they are a duplicate of the official copy of the record or their disposition is governed by another records schedule, such as SRS-1185:1000: Natural Resources Board Transitory Records. The NRB is in the process of developing specific records schedules to address the maintenance and disposition of litigation records related to enforcement, land use permit appeal records, and records related to the NRB's participation in Public Utility Commission cases. Once such schedules are developed and approved by VSARA, the NRB will update this Records Management Policy.

Issued to: Natural Resources Board

Published: 1/29/2020



Vermont State Archives and Records Administration

Vermont Office of the Secretary of State

AGENCY SPECIFIC RECORD SCHEDULE FOR: Natural Resources Board

Authority: A custodian of public records shall not destroy, give away, sell, discard, or damage any record or records in his or her charge, unless specifically

authorized by law or under a record schedule, as defined in 3 V.S.A. § 117(a)(6), that has been approved by the State Archivist. (1 V.S.A. § 317a)

Scope: This agency specific record schedule is applicable only to the records listed on this record schedule that are produced or acquired during the course

of agency business. Records are any written or recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, and includes electronic or

digital records and data. (1 V.S.A. § 317)

Use: This is an agency specific record schedule (SRS). The agency (Natural Resources Board) may develop its own internal policies and procedures to

assure that the requirements outlined in this record schedule are being applied across the agency. For records required to be retained until OBSOLETE, an internal policy that clearly states specific retention requirements that best meet the agency's administrative needs is highly advised.

Specific Record Schedule (SRS) numbers shall be cited in all internal policies to demonstrate compliance with 1 V.S.A. § 317a.

Exemptions: It is the policy of Title 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter 3 of Vermont Statutes Annotated to provide for free and open examination of records consistent with

Chapter 1, Article 6 of the Vermont Constitution. All people, however, have a right to privacy in their personal and economic pursuits, which ought to be protected unless specific information is needed to review the action of a governmental officer. Some records listed on this record schedule may be exempt from public inspection and copying for this reason. Security measures to protect records and information from unauthorized access, use, and disclosure are necessary if the records are exempt pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320. Please see Appendix B for Access Requirements and

Appendix E for related legal references regarding exemptions from public inspection and copying.

Retention: This agency specific record schedule reflects the retention and disposition requirements for the following records regardless of their media, format,

or mode of transmission. Duplicate records within the same agency that are used for specific legal, fiscal, or administrative purposes may be either retained using the retention requirement listed in this schedule or in accordance to an internal policy. Any copies of records made only for

convenience of reference or informational purposes may be discarded when no longer needed unless otherwise directed through an internal policy.

Duplicates or copies of records shall not be retained longer than the original records.

Adopted by:

Diane Srielling, Chair / Natural Resources Board

3.13.2020

Date

SRS-1185.1033: Act 250 Enforcement Records

SRS-1185.1033: This schedule is reserved for recorded evidence of activities and transactions that relate to or affect, in a specific manner, enforcement action pertaining to administrative environmental law pursuant to Act 250 of 1970.

Classification: State land use and development plans (Enforcing)

Retention: Decisions, reports, and substantive correspondence related to Act 250 enforcement actions are permanent (archival) records. Under no

circumstances shall these records be destroyed.

Registers or similar systems that provide for the systematic and regular recording of enforcement activities shall be retained permanently.

Cases are considered completed/closed once a final decision has been issued by the Natural Resources Board, and any amendments or appeals

are final.

Other records shall be retained as specified in this record schedule, with the exception of transitory records. Transitory records created or received as part of an enforcement action may be weeded as appropriate in accordance with SRS-1185.1000 (State Land Use and Development

Plans' Transitory Records).

Public Access: Redact

Record Category/Type:	Applicability/Use:	Appraised Value:	Retention/Disposition
SRS-1185.1033.24	Use for complaints and similar requests for Act 250 enforcement action. Includes written statements of facts submitted to the board for further action.	Temporary (Legal)	RETAIN UNTIL: Completed/Closed
Complaints			PLUS: 6 Year(s)
Public Access: Redact			THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1033.53	Use for correspondence that has significant administrative	Permanent (Archival)	RETAIN UNTIL: Completed/Closed
Correspondence (Substantive)	value and/or supports decisions related to Act 250 enforcement actions. Includes correspondence with respondents and		PLUS: 6 Year(s)
Public Access: Redact	significant supporting materials.		THEN: Archives
SRS-1185.1033.133	Use for written decisions of violation or noncompliance,	Permanent (Archival)	RETAIN UNTIL: Completed/Closed
Decisions	including orders, assurances of discontinuance, and notices of violation, issued by an authoritative body. Includes decisions to dismiss a complaint, civil citations, substantive notes evidencing the Board's final decisions, and significant supporting materials.		PLUS: 6 Year(s)
Public Access: Redact			THEN: Archives

SRS-1185.1033.81 Registers Public Access: Redact	Use for registers, databases, systems, and similar records that provide for the systematic and regular recording of Act 250 enforcement actions. Includes dockets and logs of violations.	Permanent (Archival)	RETAIN UNTIL: Superseded PLUS: 0 Year(s) THEN: Archives
SRS-1185.1033.144 Reports Public Access: Redact	Use for reports and similar narratives issued by or to the Board regarding Act 250 enforcement actions. Includes reports related to corrective actions and supplemental investigations. For substantive notes evidencing the Board's final decision in cases for which no prosecution results retain permanently, use "Decisions."	Permanent (Archival)	RETAIN UNTIL: Completed/Closed PLUS: 6 Year(s) THEN: Archives
SRS-1185.1033.36 Supporting material Public Access: <i>Redact</i>	Use for supporting documentation, not otherwise specified in this schedule, created or received by the Board. Includes reports submitted to the Board by outside agencies.	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Completed/Closed PLUS: 6 Year(s) THEN: Destroy (General)

SRS-1185.1033 was approved by the Vermont State Archivist on 1/8/2020.

SRS-1185.1000: Natural Resources Board Transitory Records

SRS-1185.1000: This schedule is reserved for records that are created and received in the course of business by the Natural Resources Board but transitory in nature meaning that that they are: (1) are only needed for a limited period of time in order to complete a routine action or prepare or update a formal or ongoing record; (2) not subject to any legal recordkeeping requirements, explicit or implied; and (3) administratively obsolete after a specific action or process is complete.

Classification: State land use and development plans (GENERAL)

Retention: Transitory records shall be retained by the Natural Resources Board as specified in this schedule and in accordance with the Natural Resources

Board Records and Information Management Policy.

Public Access: General

Record Category/Type:	Applicability/Use:	Appraised Value:	Retention/Disposition
SRS-1185.1000.187	Use for blank forms or other pre-printed worksheets that have	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Blanks	no markings, are not written or printed on and have not been filled out.		PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General			THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1000.28	Use for any correspondence, produced or received, that is routine in nature and not subject to any specific legal requirements. Includes transmittal letters that do not add information to that contained in the transmitted material and correspondence from other agencies that is received for general information purposes only.	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Correspondence (Routine)			PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General			THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1000.37	Use for preliminary or tentative versions of a document. Drafts	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Drafts	that are acted upon or put into practice must be retained according to their intended record type (i.e. policies) as listed in		PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General	another Natural Resources Board specific record schedule.		THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1000.60	Use for brief statements of a fact or experience, written down	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Notes	for review, or as an aid to memory, or to inform someone else. Includes short, informal notes such as phone messages.		PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General			THEN: Destroy (General)

SRS-1185.1000.74 Publications Public Access: General	Use for reproduced or published material received from other offices which require no action and are not required for documentary purposes. Includes catalogues, trade journals, other publications or papers received which require no action and are not part of a case upon which action is being taken or will be taken.	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete PLUS: 0 Year(s) THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1000.80	Use for sources of information that were intended primarily for consultation and, if used to prepare or update a formal or	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Reference sources	ongoing record, are cited as needed. Includes duplicate,		PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General	informational, extra, unofficial, or informal copies of records that were kept only for convenience or quick reference.		THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1000.139	Use for requests and responses for forms, publications,	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Requests	records, and other agency information that do not require administration review before, or further action after, the form, publication, record, or other Natural Resources Board information is provided.		PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General			THEN: Destroy (General)
SRS-1185.1000.104	Use for forms, checklists and other worksheets used to prepare	Temporary (Administrative)	RETAIN UNTIL: Obsolete
Worksheets	or update a formal or ongoing record or informally track workflow.		PLUS: 0 Year(s)
Public Access: General			THEN: Destroy (General)

SRS-1185.1000 was approved by the Vermont State Archivist on 1/8/2020.

Appendix A: Appraisal Values

An appraisal value establishes the usefulness or importance of a record after its original purpose has passed. The value of a record also dictates how it must be disposed after retention requirements are met (also see "Retention Requirements"). The appraisal values below represent categories of values that may be assigned to records following the record appraisal process. See "Vermont Archival Records" in the Archives and Records Management Handbook for conditions a record must meet to be appraised as "archival."

Appraisal Value	Description	Usage
Conditional Archival	Records may have archival value.	Assigned to records that meet the conditions of a "Vermont Archival Record" under special conditions.
Permanent (Archival)	Records have archival value.	Assigned to records that meet the conditions of a "Vermont Archival Record" and are therefore permanent (archival) records.
Temporary (Administrative)	Records have temporary administrative value.	Assigned to records that do not meet the conditions of a "Vermont Archival Record" but are needed for administrative reasons.
Temporary (Legal)	Records have temporary legal value.	Assigned to records that do not meet the conditions of a "Vermont Archival Record" but have legal requirements governing their retention.
Unappraised	Default value for records that have not been appraised.	Assigned to records that have not been appraised and do not yet have retention or disposition requirements.

Appendix B: Public Access Requirements

A public access requirement is the availability of a record for public use and inspection pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § § 315-320. Unless exempt from public inspection and copying pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317, records are expected to be promptly produced for public inspection upon request. Public agencies shall follow the procedure outlined in 1 V.S.A. § 318. The access requirements below represent actions agencies must take based on specific laws associated with the accessibility of their records. With general record schedules, the default requirement is always REVIEW unless it is clear that certain records or information within a record are exempt from public use and inspection pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317. Agencies using general record schedules should defer to their internal policies for specific access requirements.

Access	Description	Usage
Exempt	Records shall not be provided for free and open examination pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320.	Assigned to records that are wholly exempt from public use and inspection pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317.
General	Records may be provided for free and open examination pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320.	Assigned to records that are not exempt from public inspection and copying pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317.
Redact	Records contain specific information that shall not be provided for free and open examination pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320.	Assigned to records that contain specific information that is exempt from public inspection and copying pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317 and require exempt information to be redacted from the records prior to public use, inspection and/or copying.
Review	Records may be provided for free and open examination pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §§ 315-320 but not always. Default value for general schedules, which require agencies to establish internal policies.	Assigned to records that are generally not exempt from public inspection and copying pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317 but, in limited circumstances, may be exempt. Internal review and/or policy is required.

Appendix C: Retention Requirements

A retention requirement is the length of time a record must be retained by an agency before it may be destroyed or transferred to the State Archives or an agency archives (also see "Disposition Requirements"). The retention requirements below represent events or triggers that cause records to move from an active to inactive state. An "event" is tied to a specific time requirement: i.e. Retain Until "Calendar Year Ends" PLUS 3 Years.

Retention	Description	Usage
Audit Complete	Retain until an audit or verification is complete.	Assigned to records that are actively used or needed until the information contained therein has been audited or verified.
Calendar Year Ends	Retain until the end of the calendar year.	Assigned to records that are actively used or needed until the end of the calendar year.
Completed/Closed	Retain until the activity or process supported by the record is completed.	Assigned to records that are actively used or needed until the activity is formally completed, closed, or finalized (includes appeals).
Expired	Retain until the conditions or requirements supported by the record are satisfied and no further action is needed.	Assigned to records that are actively used or needed until the conditions or requirements are satisfied and complete.
Fiscal Year Ends	Retain until the end of the fiscal year.	Assigned to records that are actively used or needed until the end of the fiscal year.
Life of Asset Ends	Retain for the life of the person, structure, object, organization, etc. that is the subject of the record.	Assigned to records that are actively used or needed for the life of person, structure, object, organization, etc.
Obsolete	Retain until the record is no longer needed and is valueless.	Assigned to records that have limited administrative value and may be purged when they no longer have any administrative value. Agency must develop internal policy that states when records no longer have administrative value.
Superseded	Retain until the record is superseded, updated, or revised.	Assigned to records that will be superseded, updated, or revised.

Appendix D: Disposition Requirements

A disposition requirement is how an agency must dispose of a record from its legal custody once retention requirements have been met. Disposition is based on the record's appraisal value. If the record has been appraised as non-archival it will be destroyed after retention requirements are met. If appraised as archival the record will be transferred to the State Archives or agency archives for permanent preservation and access. The disposition requirements below represent actions that an agency must take once a record has met its retention requirements.

Disposition	Description	Usage
Archives	Retain permanently. These records are eligible for transfer to the State Archives or agency archives.	Assigned to records that have been appraised as having archival value and are therefore permanent records.
Confirm	Confirm disposition with the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration after retention requirement has been met.	Assigned to records that are maintained in a centralized database or information system or are appraised as conditional archival.
Destroy (General)	Destroy by recycling or deleting the record.	Assigned to records that have been appraised as non-archival and are not exempt from public access. Agency discretion advised for general record schedules.
Destroy (Shred)	Destroy by shredding (includes electronic shredding).	Assigned to records that have been appraised as non-archival and are exempt from public access or contain sensitive information.
Unappraised	Default value for records that have not been appraised.	Assigned to records that have not been appraised and do not yet have retention or disposition requirements.
Weed	Separate records that meet the conditions of a "Vermont Archival Record" from those that do not (temporary).	Assigned to records that have been appraised as conditional archival. Upon weeding the temporary records from the archival records, transfer archival records to Archives and destroy temporary records.

Appendix E: Legal References

SRS-1185.1033:	Act 250 Enforcement Records	eview for Exemption?
1 V.S.A. § 317	Definitions; public agency; public records and documents	Yes
10 V.S.A. § 5410	Location confidential [related to protection of endangered species]	Yes
10 V.S.A. § 6027	Powers [related to the natural resources board and district commissions]	No
10 V.S.A. § 6086	Issuance of permit; conditions and criteria [related to state land use and development	plans] No
10 V.S.A. § 8001	Legislative findings [related to administrative environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8004	Enforcement of Act 250	No
10 V.S.A. § 8005	Investigations and inspections [related to environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8007	Assurances of discontinuance [related to administrative environmental law enforceme	nt] No
10 V.S.A. § 8008	Administrative orders [related to environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8009	Emergency administrative orders; request for hearing	No
10 V.S.A. § 8010	Administrative penalties [related to administrative environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8011	Permit stays [related to administrative environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8013	Conduct of hearings; appeal; stay [related to administrative environmental law enforce	ement] No
10 V.S.A. § 8015	Statute of limitations [related to administrative environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8016	Rulemaking [related to administrative environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8019	Civil citations [related to administrative environmental law enforcement]	No
10 V.S.A. § 8020	Public participation in enforcement	No
10 V.S.A. § 8221	Civil enforcement [related to conservation and development]	No
CVR 12-004-060	Act 250 rules	No

SRS-1185.1000:	Natural Resources Board Transitory Records	Review for Exemption?
1 V.S.A. § 311	Declaration of public policy; short title	No
1 V.S.A. § 312	Right to attend meetings of public agencies	Yes
1 V.S.A. § 313	Executive sessions	Yes
1 V.S.A. § 314	Penalty and enforcement [related to public information]	No
1 V.S.A. § 315	Statement of policy; short title [related to access to public records]	Yes
1 V.S.A. § 316	Access to public records and documents	No
1 V.S.A. § 317	Definitions; public agency; public records and documents	Yes
1 V.S.A. § 318	Procedure [related to access to public records]	No
1 V.S.A. § 319	Enforcement [related to access to public records]	No
1 V.S.A. § 320	Penalties [related to access to public records]	No