

# Environmental review

## The State Environmental Quality Review Act

The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) establishes a process to systematically consider environmental factors early in the planning stages of actions that are directly undertaken, funded or approved by local, regional and state agencies. By incorporating environmental review early in the planning stages, projects can be modified as needed to avoid adverse impacts on the environment.

SEQR is both a procedural and a substantive law. In addition to establishing environmental review procedures, the law mandates that agencies act on the substantive information produced by the environmental review. The SEQR process must be applied whenever an action is:

- directly undertaken by an agency
- involves funding by an agency
- requires one or more new or modified discretionary approvals from an agency or agencies.

An important aspect of SEQR is its public participation and agency coordination component. There are opportunities for outreach and public participation throughout the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. These opportunities allow the public and other agencies to provide input into the planning or review process, resulting in a review with a broader perspective. It also increases the likelihood that the project will be consistent with community values.

If a significant adverse impact is likely to occur, an EIS is prepared to explore ways to avoid or reduce adverse environmental impacts or to identify a potentially less damaging alternative. If, on the other hand, the determination is made that the proposed action will not significantly impact the environment, then a Negative Declaration is prepared which ends the SEQR process.



*The Onondaga County War Memorial installed a water reuse system as a part of the "Save the Rain" program.*