



## **AASHTO's NTPEP Audit Program for Geotextiles**

AASHTO's NTPEP Audit Program for Geotextiles began on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. The program was developed by both industry members and state DOT members to provide a uniform program which allows for all manufacturers and private label suppliers to be held to a consistent standard, whether they are located in the United States or in another country. This program provides state DOTs with more valuable information and data than they have received in the past through the NTPEP test evaluation program for geotextiles. Included in this program is the requirement for source manufacturer marking of each product – this will help the state DOT's to confidently identify geotextile products arriving at their job sites, and associate them with a NTPEP evaluated source manufacturer QC/QA program.

For manufacturers, the audit program consists of a desktop review of the manufacturer's Quality Management System (QMS) once every 3 years and a yearly on-site audit of each plant that has products tested through NTPEP. All geotextile products submitted by the source manufacturer are tested on a 3 year cycle, though not all products produced by a manufacturer may be tested in any given year. The testing is conducted as a split sample testing program, in that the NTPEP test results can be directly compared to the manufacturer's QC test results to evaluate consistency of the manufacturer's testing with the NTPEP testing.

For private label product suppliers, the audit program focus is to establish traceability of the private labeled products to a source manufacturer, which includes some limited testing to verify consistency of the products with the source manufacturer's products that have been NTPEP evaluated under this audit program, in addition to desktop and on site audits of the private label supplier's company. The product marking portion of this program is a key component for aiding the verification of product traceability to the source manufacturer.

The Audit Program provides each state DOT with the following information, which is uploaded and password protected on the NTPEP DataMine website:

- Pre-Audit Documentation (results of desktop review)
- Current Quality Manual
- Product Test Results
- Final Audit Report
- Corrective Action Reports (if deficiencies are noted in final report)
- Certificate of Compliance
- Product marking manufacturing plant codes

State DOTs can benefit from using this new NTPEP Audit Program for geotextiles in the following ways:

- The audit report and test results augment the State DOT's quality assurance program

- This information lets each state DOT know which manufacturer(s) have a satisfactory quality control/ quality assurance program
- Since split sample testing is conducted, the NTPEP test results can be compared with the manufacturer's QC testing, increasing the confidence state DOT's can have in the manufacturer's QC testing and the product certifications
- Having this information provided to each state DOT reduces the duplication of having several state DOTs perform the same task
- State DOTs do not have to use their own resources to conduct the audits- timely and cost efficient
- A list of products and the corresponding data are provided in DataMine to allow a state to determine which product(s) are to be used in their state
- The product marking allows states to confidently identify the source and identity of geotextile products shipped to DOT projects

The following are ways states can incorporate the NTPEP Audit program results for geotextiles in state projects:

- Reference the NTPEP list of Products on the NTPEP DataMine website
- Use the list of compliant manufacturers to develop a qualified producer list
- Use the data to supplement DOT quality assurance data
- Use the product marking to verify the identity of the products shipped to DOT projects

If you are interested in utilizing this Program in your state, please contact Katheryn Malusky (AASHTO) with any questions you may have, phone: (202) 624-3695; email: [kmalusky@aaashto.org](mailto:kmalusky@aaashto.org) or contact the GTX/REGEO TC Chair Tony Allen (WSDOT), phone: (360) 709-5450, email: [allent@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:allent@wsdot.wa.gov) .