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# Plant Prequalification Program

**Raising the Bar for Quality Precast Products**

**Written by: Henry Lu, EIT**



The Plant Prequalification Program (PPP) is a reputable, third-party certified program that holds precast concrete manufacturers to a higher standard of production quality. It's the most comprehensive pipe and manhole certification program in North America. There's no added cost associated with PPP certified products so it acts as free quality control. Based on the PPP's applicability and reputation over the years, highway and city groups across Canada are beginning to adopt it into their local specifications. A PPP certified manufacturer gives designers, owners, and the public peace of mind knowing that an unbiased party has audited and tested both the production facility and the finished product.

The PPP originated in Ontario in 1965 and is still included as a requirement in various provincial codes and standards for underground infrastructure. The Plant Prequalification Advisory Committee that oversees the PPP is comprised of representatives from the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA), Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO), Ontario Provincial Standards (OPS), Canadian Precasters Association of Ontario (CPA), and Ontario Concrete Pipe Association (OCPA); the committee also includes a third-party auditor who is a licensed Professional Engineer in the province of Ontario.



Figure 1: All precast concrete products that meet the strict PPP requirements are stamped with the program logo, a black triangle with a "P" inside.

PPP reviews all aspects throughout the production process, from the quality of the raw material used in product manufacturing to durability testing of finished products. All ingredients, production data, and product test results are strictly audited annually with a third-party professional inspector. A prequalification certification is earned or renewed upon sufficient auditing results each year. The prequalification certification can also be cancelled at any time when deficiencies are found during a random audit; a manufacturer is given a limited amount

of time for corrective actions. The Plant Prequalification Program audit is broken down into three categories, as listed below:

Inputs:

1. Conformance of all raw materials must be supported with vendor certificates or the manufacturer's own test data, such as sieve analysis of aggregates and steel mill certificates with lab testing data.

Process:

2. All equipment involved in the production process is requested to be calibrated regularly. Calibration certifications are checked at each audit.
3. Concrete mix recipes are monitored daily and recorded on file as proof to ensure that concrete mix ingredients and water contents are within the correct ratios.
4. Regular concrete compressive strength test results.
5. Steel reinforcement is checked based on issued engineering drawings before pouring concrete.

Output:

6. Each plant is required to submit a six-month interim report between annual inspections to certify that testing and record keeping is being properly maintained. Also, a detailed inspection is conducted every three years.
7. Dimensional checks of finished products. Joint dimensions for 100 percent of pipe and MH sections up to and including 1200mm



Figure 2: A concrete mixer at Inland's Spyhill Plant in Calgary



Figure 3: Three Edge Bearing Tester used to confirm pipe strength

diameter are gauged; this is unique to the concrete pipe industry.

8. Structural test results for all pipe sizes and strength classes in a Three-Edge Bearing Test.
9. Hydrostatic pressure tests of MH and pipe products in various configurations which include pipe in proper alignment, pipe with joints deflected, and pipe joints under differential load.
10. Concrete durability tests such as air void or salt scaling.
11. Markings on concrete drainage products must include the Prequalification Stamp.



Figure 4: RCP undergoing a Hydrostatic Test



Contact us for all your precast needs:

**Derek Light, P. Eng.**

Technical Marketing Manager, Canada Region

Cell: (403) 999-1246

Phone: (403) 720-9324

Derek.Light@lehighhanson.com

www.oceanpipe.com

**Tyson Dyck, EIT**

Technical Marketing Engineer in Training

Cell: (587) 990-8903

Phone: (780) 448-1351

Tyson.Dyck@lehighcement.com

www.oceanpipe.com

**Tannis Karklin, EIT**

Technical Marketing Engineer in Training

Cell: (204)-250-5270

Phone: (204)-336-5013

Tannis.Karklin@lehighhanson.com

www.oceanpipe.com



**British Columbia**

OCEAN PIPE

9265 Oak St.

Vancouver, BC V6P 4B8

Toll free tel: 1888 788 2211

Office tel: 604 269 6700

Fax: 604 261 6751

**Southern Alberta**

INLAND PIPE

7336 112<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW

Calgary, AB T3R 1R8

Toll free tel: 1 800 268 078

Office tel: 403 279 5531

Fax: 403 279 7648

**Northern Alberta**

INLAND PIPE

12250 170 Street

Edmonton, AB T5V 1L7

Tel: 780 448 1351

Fax: 780 448 1354

**Saskatchewan**

INLAND PIPE

300 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Regina, SK, S4N 6G7

Toll Free tel: 1877 974 7473

Office tel: 204 334 4300

Fax: 204 334 7957

**Manitoba**

INLAND PIPE

2494 Ferrier St.

Winnipeg, MB, R2V 4P6

Toll Free tel: 1 877 974 7473

Office tel: 204 334 4300

Fax: 204 334 7957