



Specifications Section
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Requirements for Preparing and Submitting Special Provisions

Special Provisions (SP) are defined in the Standard Specifications as **“additions and modifications to the standard and supplemental specifications covering conditions peculiar to an individual project.”** Special Provisions are required whenever the work intended cannot be covered by the Standard or Supplemental Specifications. Sometimes the work is generally covered by the existing specifications, but the bid items are not exactly as needed. In these situations, all that are needed is a Method of Measurement and Basis of Payment; however it must be clear to the bidder what specifications cover the type of work being anticipated. This white paper describes the expectations of Special Provisions. In the event there are any questions please contact the Specifications Section.


All Projects

All information for a particular SP shall be in one file with consistent formatting and Arial font, size 10 (use <Ctrl> A to select all the text before changing to Arial 10 font).

Each SP shall include only one area of work.

All SPs shall be reviewed for contradictions to and duplication of the Standard Specifications prior to submittal. The SP shall support the plans and shall be consistent and accurate. It shall meet all of the requirements and areas of concentration in this document. Drawings, figures, pictures, etc. shall be placed in the plans and not in the SP. If there are less than 1 1/2 pages of typed text, the information could be added to the plans and not placed in an SP.

Each SP shall begin with the following information, with the information highlighted completed for each specific project. Use the following template: [SP Cover Format.doc](#), a Word document with minimal information completed. Highlighted information in sample below shall be typed in by the designer.

| |
|---|
| SP- 15XXXX (New) |
|  |
| SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR [Insert Title] |
| [Insert County Name] County [Insert Project Number] |
| Effective Date [Insert Effective Date] |
| THE STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS, SERIES 2015, ARE AMENDED BY THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS AND ADDITIONS. THESE ARE SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND THEY SHALL PREVAIL OVER THOSE PUBLISHED IN THE STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS. |

Projects with State Route Project Numbers - additional requirements

SPs for projects shall be entered into the Project Scheduling System (PSS). The SP titles shall be selected from the Title Table in PSS. If the desired title does not exist, the Iowa DOT employee working on the project may contact the Specification Section or type in a new title. If a title exists on the Title Table that is close to the desired title, the title from the Title Table should be selected and used on the SP. City names, street addresses, and measurements should not be included in the titles of SP's. That information is in the project number and elsewhere in the contract documents.

On or before "Plan Turn-in" day, a Word document (.doc) file of the SP(s) shall be placed in the W:\Highway\Specifications\Special Provisions\SP_Turn-In folder. The file name shall be as follows:

ccrrppp.doc

cc: two digit county number

rrr: three digit route number

ppp: three digit paren number

NOTE: if more than one SP is submitted for a project, a short but clear title of the SP shall be added after the ppp number and before the period.

The Specification Section will number the SPs, add the header information on each sheet, and develop an Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) file for printing. On or around the advertisement date, SP's will be posted to the webpage <http://www.iowadot.gov/specifications/specialprovisions2015.html> for future reference by the designers.

Local Systems Projects - additional requirements

SPs for projects shall be entered into the Bid Items Application (BIA). The SP titles shall be selected from the Title Table in BIA. If the desired title does not exist, the designer may contact the Specification Section or type in a new title. If a title exists on the Title Table that is close to the desired title, the title from the Title Table should be selected and used on the SP. City names, street addresses, and measurements should not be included in the titles of SP's. That information is in the project number and elsewhere in the contract documents. The BIA will automatically assign an SP number based on the project location. If an SP applies to multiple projects, contact Eric Johnsen (eric.johnsen@iowadot.us or 515-239-1662) for assistance in getting the SP applied with the correct number on each project.

Bid Items Application instructions can be found at the following web location:
https://secure.iowadot.gov/BidItem/help/Bid_Item_Instruction.pdf

SPs for Local Projects shall be submitted to the District Local Systems Office for review. The cover page of the document shall include the assigned SP number, proposed SP title, project number, and effective date.

Also, a header shall be placed on each page, except the first page, with the SP number and Page X of Y.

If a project moves to another letting without changes to the SP, no action is needed. If a project moves to another letting with changes to the SP, the following steps shall be followed:

1. The changes should be made using gray shading (for new language) and gray shading and strikethrough (for deleted language).
2. The SP should be re-entered in BIA to receive a new SP number. If it is after turn-in, contact Eric Johnsen (eric.johnsen@iowadot.us or 515-239-1662) to get a new number assigned.
3. The "(New)" under the SP Number shall be changed to "(Replaces SP-15DXXX)".
4. Effective Date changed to the new letting date.

On or before "Plan Turn-in" day, a Word document (.doc) file of the SP(s) shall be placed in the [W:\Highway\Specifications\Special Provisions\SP Turn-In](#) folder. The file name shall be the same as the SP number.

The SP number will be as follows:

SP-15Dxxx

- SP:** abbreviation for Special Provisions
- 15:** last two digits of the year of the current Standard Specifications
- D:** your single digit District number.
- xxx:** a sequential numbering system used in your District, starting with the first SP being 001 each time a new Standard Specification Book is issued.

On or around the advertisement date, SP's will be posted to the webpage <http://www.iowadot.gov/specifications/specialprovisions2015.html> for future reference by the designers.

Systems Planning Projects - additional requirements

SPs for Systems Planning Projects will be handled similarly to SPs for Local Projects, except that the Office of Systems Planning will handle review, preparation, and submittal of the SP. The single digit District number for Systems Planning SP numbers will be 7.

Areas of concentration for SP review:

1. Non-Standard Bid Items

- Bid Items not covered by the Standard Specifications, but the work description, materials, and construction details are already covered; only need a Method of Measurement and Basis of Payment and a reference to the Standard Specifications.
- Work not similar to existing specification language requires that a Special Provision be written to cover the work requirements; refer to Item 2, Five-Part Specification Format, for proper format.

2. The Five-Part Specification Format should be used as a general practice.

A three-part format is often used which is usually General, Procedure, and Measurement and Payment. It is crucial that the five areas listed below be addressed no matter what the format is.

- Description
- Material
- Construction
- Method of Measurement
- Basis of Payment

3. Acceptable entities and references.

These are crucial because they are defined in the Standard Specifications and are consistently used.

- Contracting Authority* – not Owner
 - Engineer* – not Owner, Architect, or Inspector
 - Contractor* - not Prime or subcontractor.
 - Professional Engineer licensed in the State of Iowa* - when referencing a licensed engineer.
 - plans – not drawings unless referring to shop drawings
 - contract documents – not plans and specifications
- * always capitalize as shown.

4. Never use gender references. Self-explanatory.

- never use his or he - Use they, their, the Contractor, etc., or reword the sentence.
- quality - not workmanship
- flaggers - not flagmen

5. Correct Specification designations.

These shall be used for consistency. Also, every reference should be checked to verify their existence and accuracy.

Section 2601
Article 2601.05
Article 2601.05, A
Article 2601.05, A, 4
Article 2601.05, A, 4, b

All designations shall be followed by “of the Standard Specifications”.

6. Numbers

- Numerals are always used if designating a technical measurement (i.e. 5 feet, 20 pounds).
- Write out the number if designating a quantity (i.e. five containers, four copies of the manual) unless the number is greater than ten.
- Do not use hyphens between a whole number and a fraction (i.e. 8 3/4 inches).
- Do use hyphens between a quantity number and the number for the unit (i.e. 16-1 inch valves).
- Use only English units, unless a test or situation requires referencing the metric system.
- Symbols are not used (i.e. feet, not ' ; 2 inches by 4 inches, not 2"x4") unless in a table because of problems with electronic file conversions and should be checked in the pdf file that is to be submitted to the Office of Contracts.

7. Index and Titles (if applicable).

- The index entry and the titles of the sections must be identical.
- Always write out "and" - never use "&" as it is considered unprofessional and may not convert accurately.

8. Abbreviations

The first time an abbreviation is used for the title of a book, agency, organization, etc., the full title or name should be used with the abbreviation in parentheses following unless included in Article 1101.02 of the Standard Specifications then the abbreviation is all that is required.

9. Manufacturers/Products.

End result specifications are most desirable, but if a product or manufacturer must be used, a minimum of three products shall be listed. Proprietary products may only be specified in certain cases. Such cases typically include:

- A particular product is required to match an existing system. For example, when expanding or upgrading an existing traffic signalization system, a particular product may be necessary for the system to function effectively.
- No suitable alternative products are available. Only one product will adequately satisfy the needs of the project.
- A new product that is part of a research and evaluation program sponsored by the Iowa DOT. If part of such a program, new and innovative products may be tested by use in highway construction projects.

Approval of the use of proprietary products on federal oversight projects require a Public Interest Finding (PIF) to be submitted to the Office of Contracts who will forward it onto the FHWA for approval. All other projects a letter of justification shall be submitted to the Office of Contracts.

10. Referencing.

- When referencing work the Contractor is responsible for always use the verb "shall".
- When referencing work the Engineer (Contracting Authority) is responsible for always use the verb "will".
- Do not use a number when referencing a SP in the plans. Use the exact title as listed in the PSS. If an appropriate title is not found in the PSS, contact the Specifications Section.
- All references shall be included in the documentation, or be to known publications.
- ASTM references should be in this format: ASTM C 103.
- SUDAS is not an acceptable reference document.