

3.4 SINGLE SOURCE SPECIFICATIONS

3.4.1 GENERAL

The Department reviews specifications by consultants and prepares others as part of its in-house design work. In many cases, a client Agency will ask for a specific product because of favorable previous experience or for the sake of uniformity of appearance or service. Consultants too, will occasionally state that a given product is the only one worth specifying for several different and compelling reasons. There are, of course, many exceptions and variations to the above. And there are good reasons why the Department should consider the exclusive use of a given product.

3.4.2 ADJUDICATING SINGLE SOURCE SPECIFICATIONS

Below is a review of an existing procedure for adjudicating single source specifications and what exceptions may or may not apply.

1. An Agency may ask the A/E Consultant to specify a particular product for the reasons given above. The A/E, however, is obligated by departmental procedure to either specify a minimum of three, reasonably equal products or use a performance specification that does not include a manufacturer's name. If the Agency insists on a restricted specification, it may (or shall) make written request to the Chairman Single Source Committee, Department of Public Works, Room 463, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT. 06106. The Chairman is part of a three-person committee and the sole entity that can give permission for a sole source specification. The DPW Chief Architect and Chief Engineer or their delegate is also on the committee. It is the DPW team representative's responsibility to be sure that the request to the Single Source Committee is fully supported by the reason for it and its cost, but not his responsibility to create or prepare the document. A poorly supported request will fail and waste time and money.
2. Of course, exceptions exist. Permission has been granted for single source for several products. A request for one of these products or a similar one may be granted in the interests of time or convenience. But it cannot be assumed that permission is automatically granted. While various industries have established acceptable standards, they should be reviewed and studied by the Single Source Committee.
3. In smaller, add-on projects, it is accepted practice to use the same brand of builders hardware and keying system as the existing. In large, add-on projects this practice is, however, cloudy. Locking mechanisms (cylinders) are interchangeable within practically all brands of lock assemblies. This suggests that lock assemblies for a large add-on project could be competitively bid while the cylinders would be restricted to the same brand as the existing. The simple logic of this scheme is thwarted by the industry practice of one manufacturer honoring another's installation and not offering a bid where the other manufacturer's product is already in use. This practice, as far as can be determined, is not formalized in writing.
4. Another exception to multi-source bidding is found in smaller, add-on or renovation projects where only a few items such as doors, windows, furniture and casework are needed. In these cases, there is usually a close relationship between new and old and simple logic demands uniformity of appearance among other things. It is recommended that if any item in a project of the subject type does not cost more than \$10,000.00, it be permitted on a proprietary basis.

3.4.3 SPECIFYING SPECIFIC OR PROPRIETARY PRODUCTS

1. Products of the three part Technical Specifications, name not less than three (3) manufacturers for each product. Do not use " or approved equal".