
Preface

Quality control (QC) and quality assurance (QA) are two of the most important elements of a construction project. Although a good design with properly prepared drawings and specifications is essential for a quality end product, the QC and QA efforts are also essential to assure that the construction complies with the drawings and specifications. The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance, procedures, checklists, worksheets, and references to aid in performing quality assurance inspection. It is not intended to be a guide for construction supervision or quality control; construction supervision and quality control are the responsibility of the contractor.

Most construction is performed under some form of contract. It may be a verbal agreement between a landowner and a contractor, a Federal contract between the NRCS and a contractor, or a local contract between a project sponsor and a contractor. The QA methods in this handbook are not dependent on contract size or type; they are applicable to construction performed under all levels of contracting.

This handbook was prepared by the NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). The first construction inspection handbook prepared by the SCS was published in the 1960s. It was designated SCS National Engineering Handbook Section 19—Construction Inspection (NEH 19). Most of the content of NEH 19 was incorporated into this handbook. Additional subject matter has been added to address current construction materials, practices, and measures that have evolved or otherwise developed since NEH 19 was last revised in 1985.

This handbook was written for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) construction QA personnel. It should be readily available as a reference at the jobsite and in all NRCS offices where construction work is being administered.