


# **Avoiding the 4 Most Common MEP-Related Delays on Job Sites**

MEP issues are among the top drivers of construction delays—and many of them are preventable. This comprehensive guide breaks down the four most frequent causes of MEP-related jobsite slowdowns and provides actionable solutions for general contractors.

 **Did you know?** More than 60% of jobsite delays trace back to MEP coordination issues that could have been prevented with proper planning.

By Marissa E. Powers, MEP Expert at Rennell Capital Group



# MEP Delays Are More Common Than You Think

## The Reality Check

More than 60% of jobsite delays trace back to MEP coordination issues. These aren't just minor hiccups—they're major disruptions that can derail entire project schedules.

## Prevention is Key

The good news? Most MEP delays are completely preventable with the right planning and proactive approach. Here's what to watch out for—and how to stop problems before they start.

Ready to learn the four most common MEP delays and how to avoid them?

# ⚠️ Delay #1: Trade Stacking in Tight Spaces

## The Problem

HVAC, electrical, and plumbing crews showing up at the same time equals instant gridlock. When multiple trades compete for the same workspace, productivity plummets and tensions rise.

## The Solution

01

### Create Trade-Specific Phasing Plans

Map out when each trade needs access to specific areas

02

### Build Buffer Zones

Schedule gaps between critical path installations

03

### Coordinate Daily

Hold brief morning meetings to prevent conflicts

#### ⚠️ Quick Tip

Use color-coded schedules to visualize trade overlap and identify potential conflicts before they happen.





# Delay #2: Long Lead Time Materials MIA

**1**

## **Week 1-4: Estimating Phase**

Identify all long lead items during initial planning. Switchgear, chillers, and specialized fixtures often require 20+ weeks.

**2**

## **Week 5-8: Early Procurement**

Push submittals early and get approvals fast. Don't wait for construction to start.

**3**

## **Week 9+: Schedule Integration**

Flag long lead items prominently in your master schedule with clear delivery dates.

"The key is verification during estimating—not hoping everything works out during construction."

# 🚧 Delay #3: Field Conditions Don't Match Drawings



## Common Mismatches

- In-wall clashes between systems
- Lower ceiling heights than expected
- Structural elements not shown on MEP drawings
- Access limitations for equipment



### Walk the Site Early

Physical verification beats paper every time



### Use MEP Coordination Drawings

3D coordination catches 90% of conflicts



### Don't Rely on Paper Alone

Field verify critical dimensions and clearances

Pro tip: A 30-minute site walk can prevent weeks of delays and costly rework.





# Delay #4: Late or Incomplete Submittals

## The Submittal Bottleneck

When mechanical and electrical shop drawings aren't finalized, nobody can build. This single issue can bring entire projects to a standstill.



### Set Clear Deadlines

Establish submittal schedules during contract negotiations, not after work begins.



### Track Weekly

Use submittal logs and hold regular review meetings to maintain momentum.



### Tie to Payments

Link submittal approval to milestone payments when necessary to ensure compliance.



**Warning:** Late submittals create a domino effect that impacts procurement, fabrication, and installation schedules.

# ✓ Run Smoother Jobs with Less Drama

## Your Action Plan

Most MEP delays are completely avoidable with better planning and early detection. The key is shifting from reactive problem-solving to proactive prevention.

### ■ Plan Trade Sequencing Early

Prevent workspace conflicts before they happen

### ■ Identify Long Lead Items During Estimating

Get procurement started before construction begins

### ■ Verify Field Conditions

Walk the site and use 3D coordination

### ■ Manage Submittals Aggressively

Set deadlines and track progress weekly

Ready to eliminate MEP delays on your next project? Start with these four strategies.

### ✓ Share This Guide

Forward this to your superintendent or project engineer to keep things moving smoothly on your next job.

