

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
Fact Sheet For  
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

General Permit for Small Discharges of  
Sanitary Wastewater (25,000 Gallons per Day or Less)

I. Background

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act [also referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA)], the Ohio Water Pollution Control Act and the Ohio Revised Code (ORC Chapter 6111) provide that the discharge of pollutants to waters of the state from any point source is unlawful unless the discharge is in compliance with an effective NPDES permit.

The purpose of issuing NPDES permits to existing sewage treatment facilities designed to discharge 25,000 gallons per day or less is to ensure that wastewater discharges from these facilities are in compliance with all applicable state and federal water pollution control laws.

Ohio EPA has elected to issue a statewide general permit to cover existing wastewater discharges from those sewage treatment facilities designed to treat a flow of 25,000 gallons per day (GPD) or less. Part I of the general permit provides a definition of those facilities eligible for coverage under the general permit. This draft permit is a renewal of NPDES permit OHS000003, which expired on December 31, 2014.

The limits included in this general permit are representative of the best available demonstrated control technology. The general permit is intended to cover any existing small sanitary dischargers that were designed to meet these limits and that would consequently have a minimal impact on the environment.

The conditions under the heading "eligibility" are very important because eligibility determining factors such as co-mingling of discharge streams, controlled discharge lagoon system discharges, single and multi-family dwellings and discharges from industrial facilities are addressed here.

**Proposed changes from the current permit are summarized at the end of this fact sheet.**

II. Description of General Permit Coverage and Type of Discharge

The permit covers existing point source discharges to waters of the state from sewage treatment facilities designed to treat a flow of 25,000 GPD or less. The permit does not cover any discharges that the Director of the Ohio EPA has determined to be contributing to a violation of a Water Quality Standard (WQS) as determined in Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3745-01.

For the purpose of this permit, an existing point source discharge is one that was in existence prior to July 1, 1993, or any discharge that has previously been covered by an NPDES permit issued after July 1, 1993.

New sources of sanitary wastewater can receive coverage under an individual permit issued according to the Antidegradation Rule (OAC 3745-1-05).

III. Obtaining Coverage and Description of Permit Conditions

Existing facilities must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for coverage under the general permit. The USEPA's regulations at 40 CFR 122.21 (a) exclude facilities covered by general permits from requirements to submit an application for an individual permit.

NOI requirements are intended to be a mechanism that can be used to establish a clear accounting of the number of facilities covered by the general permit, their identities, locations, mailing addresses, and nature of discharge.

To apply for general permit coverage, all applicants are required to complete and submit an NOI form that is available from Ohio EPA along with an application fee of \$200. The NOI form and appropriate fees shall be submitted to the following address:

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Fiscal Administration  
P.O. Box 1049  
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049

A copy of the NOI should also be sent to the appropriate Ohio EPA district office.

Facilities who intend to obtain coverage under the general permit shall submit an NOI form within 45 days of the effective date of the permit. Dischargers who fail to obtain coverage under the general permit and are not otherwise covered by an NPDES permit are in violation of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 6111.

Those facilities with an average daily discharge flow of 5,000 GPD or more will be required to also pay an annual discharger fee as specified in Chapter 3745.11(L) of the Ohio Revised Code.

Federal regulations require that anyone discharging to a municipal storm sewer system (MS4) must get permission of the MS4 operator before coverage can be granted under this permit. As a result, this draft permit would require anyone discharging to any MS4 to obtain permission before coverage can be granted.

Any semi-public facility that is granted coverage under this general permit may be required to connect to a publicly owned treatment works during the time this permit is effective if a sewage system of a publicly owned treatment works becomes available and accessible.

#### IV. Eligibility Determining Factors

A. Except for discharges identified in paragraph B, this permit may cover existing discharges to waters of the state of wastewater that are associated with sewage treatment systems designed to treat an average flow of 25,000 gallons per day or less.

B. The following wastewater discharges associated with sewage treatment systems designed to treat an average flow of 25,000 gallons per day or less are not eligible for coverage under this permit:

1. Any discharge from a sewage treatment facility that was constructed or that began discharging, after July 1, 1993, unless that facility is covered by an existing NPDES permit,

2. Any discharge that is mixed with another discharge, not covered by this permit, prior to reaching the receiving water. If it is possible to sample the wastewater discharge separately before it mixes with the other waste stream, then the wastewater discharge may be covered by this permit. The other waste stream(s) must be authorized by an NPDES permit.

3. Any discharges that are subject to an existing NPDES permit with an effluent limitation, monitoring requirement and/or other requirement that is not addressed by this permit or is more stringent than contained in this permit,

4. Any discharge that includes process wastewater or storm water from an industrial facility, unless the process or storm water discharges are monitored separately from the wastewater discharge and are authorized by a different NPDES permit,
5. Any discharges from controlled discharge lagoon systems,
6. Any discharges from sewage treatment systems serving a single-family, two-family, or three-family dwelling,
7. Any discharges from a sewage treatment system that would be required to connect into a publicly owned treatment works,
8. Any discharge or source that would conflict with an areawide waste treatment management plan adopted in accordance with section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act,
9. Any discharge from a sewage treatment facility to superior high quality waters, outstanding state waters, outstanding national resource waters, or category 3 wetlands as defined by rule 3745-1-05 of the Ohio Administrative Code,
10. Any lagoon system that was designed to meet limits more stringent than those included in effluent table III, B. of the permit,
11. Any facility that, in the judgment of the Director, is not likely to comply with the terms and conditions of this permit, and
12. Any discharge from a facility where the Director decides to use other legal means to address compliance with chapter 6111 of the Ohio Revised Code.

#### V. Effluent Limitations and Monitoring Requirements

For all facilities except continuous discharge lagoon systems, effluent limits for CBOD<sub>5</sub>, total suspended solids, ammonia-nitrogen and dissolved oxygen are based on best available demonstrated control technology (BADCT; OAC 3745-1-05).

For continuous discharge lagoon systems, the limits for CBOD<sub>5</sub>, suspended solids and dissolved oxygen are considered to be best available control technology for these facilities.

Limits for pH are based on Ohio water quality standards (OAC 3745-1-07).

Limits for *Escherichia coli* are based on Class B Primary Contact water quality standards applied at the end of the discharge pipe (OAC 3745-1-07). Fecal coliform limits are based on Ohio water quality standards for the Ohio River applied at the end of the discharge pipe (OAC 3745-1-32).

Total residual chlorine limits are based on Warmwater Habitat water quality standards applied at the end of the discharge pipe (OAC 3745-1-07). These limits are protective of the most restrictive effluent/receiving water flow combination that could be covered under this permit.

The permit assigns outfall designations to the different tables, so that the eDMR reporting system can accept Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) data for discharges under this permit. Ohio EPA encourages permittees to submit data electronically using the eDMR system.

Each facility covered by a given table is required to use that outfall designation for their effluent. For example, a small mechanical plant with a 3000 gallons per day design flow that discharges to a water other than the Ohio River would be covered under Table III. A. 3., and would report their monitoring

results under outfall 003. The outfall number on the DMR form would be the facility ID followed by the outfall number (for example, 5GS000004003). All sludge data would be reported under station 588 (for example, 5GS000004588).

#### VI. Notice of Termination

Each individual facility covered by the general permit must submit a Notice of Termination (NOT) form to terminate coverage under this permit. Permittees are to request permit coverage termination once the wastewater discharges are eliminated. Failure to submit an NOT form constitutes a violation of the permit and is a violation of ORC 6111.

#### VII. Pollution Prevention

Ohio EPA strongly encourages pollution prevention as the preferred approach for waste management. The first priority of pollution prevention is to eliminate the generation of wastes and pollutants at the source (source reduction). For those wastes or pollutants that are generated, the second priority is to recycle or reuse them in an environmentally sound manner.

Businesses can benefit economically, help preserve the environment, and improve your public image by implementing pollution prevention programs. For more information about pollution prevention, including fact sheets and the **Ohio Pollution Prevention and Waste Minimization Planning Guidance Manual**, please contact the Ohio EPA, Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention at (614) 644-3469.

#### VIII. Changes from Current General Permit

Ohio EPA is proposing a number of changes to this permit:

- Part II.B.2 requires submittal of a description of the treatment system as part of a complete NOI.
- Monitoring and effluent limits for pH have been added for all facilities.
- Monitoring for color and odor has been deleted.
- Total phosphorus monitoring has been added for facilities with a design flow of 5,000 gallons per day or more.
- For discharges that are not direct to the Ohio River, *E. coli* limits have replaced fecal coliform limits.
- The minimum monitoring frequency for facilities with design flows less than 5,000 gallons per day has increased from once per year to quarterly.
- The list of acceptable methods for determining flow has been updated.
- Part IV, Item D has been revised to provide instructions to a permittee that would have to dispose of sludge at a landfill or by land application instead of hauling it to another NPDES permit holder.
- Part IV, Item I includes a new operator certification/minimum staffing option for systems with a design capacity less than or equal to 1,500 gallons per day.
- Part IV, Item K is new and provides information on data substitution codes.
- Wording in the permit has been updated and revised for clarity and brevity.