

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)
That Can Not Meet Best Available Demonstrated Control
Technology (BADCT) Treatment Standards

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. This permit provides a schedule of compliance to those sewage treatment facilities, built before July 1, 1993, that can not currently comply with best available demonstrated control technology (BADCT) standards.

Compliance with BADCT is sufficiently stringent that compliance with applicable Ohio Water Quality Standards (WQS) is also expected. There currently are a large number of unpermitted existing small sanitary facilities across the state. Many of these facilities are unable to comply with BADCT or water quality- based limits, and most were built before July 1, 1993. Issuance of a general permit to cover these facilities will provide a streamlined procedure to impose a compliance schedule to upgrade these facilities.

Unpermitted facilities built after July 1, 1993 will require an individual permit which considers the Antidegradation Rule requirements. Facilities built after July 1, 1993 and currently under an NPDES permit will be required to have any non-compliance dealt with in their existing permit or other appropriate action of the Director.

The permit includes monitoring requirements for these discharges, an 18-month compliance schedule to meet BADCT, and treatment design criteria that are representative of the best available demonstrated control technology for small sanitary dischargers. The general permit is intended to cover any existing small sanitary dischargers that need to be upgraded to meet these limits and that would consequently be an improvement for 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 that need a compliance schedule to meet BADCT limits.

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.

Coverage under this general permit, OHV000003, cannot be renewed. Existing dischargers under this permit wishing to reapply for coverage must apply for coverage under permit OHS000004. If your 18-month compliance schedule is not yet complete, you will be covered under existing permit OHV000003 until the 18-month period is finished. Your new coverage under OHS000004 will be issued when your compliance schedule is finished.

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 prior to reaching the receiving water. If the wastewater discharge does combine with another waste stream prior to reaching the receiving water, and it is possible to sample each waste stream separately, the wastewater discharge may be covered by this permit. The other waste stream(s) must be authorized by a different NPDES permit,
3. 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,
4. any discharges from controlled discharge lagoon systems,
5. wastewater discharges from sewage treatment systems serving a single-family, two-family, or three-family dwelling,
6. wastewater discharges from a sewage treatment system that would be required to connect into a publicly owned treatment works,
7. 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,
8. 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,
9. 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

Effluent monitoring is required for pollutant parameters that are characteristic of treated sewage effluents: CBOD₅, total suspended solids, ammonia-nitrogen, dissolved oxygen, fecal coliform, *Escherichia coli* and total residual chlorine.

The permit requires treatment plant upgrades that are designed to meet best available demonstrated control technology (BADCT) for small sanitary dischargers. BADCT standards apply to CBOD₅, total suspended solids, ammonia-nitrogen and dissolved oxygen.

Design limits for *E. coli* are based on Class B Primary Contact water quality standards applied at the end of the discharge pipe. Fecal coliform design limits are based on Ohio water quality standards for the Ohio River applied at the end of the discharge pipe.

Design limits for total residual chlorine are based on Warmwater Habitat water quality standards applied at the end of the discharge pipe.

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 this permit will report its effluent monitoring results under outfall 001. The outfall number on the DMR form would be the facility ID followed by the outfall number (for example, 5GV000003001). All sludge data will be reported under station 588 (for example, 5GV000003588).

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:

- Monitoring for color and odor has been deleted.
- For discharges that are not direct to the Ohio River, *E. coli* monitoring has replaced fecal coliform monitoring.
- The minimum monitoring frequency has increased from once per year to quarterly.
- The list of acceptable methods for determining flow has been updated.
- For discharges that are not direct to the Ohio River, *E. coli* design limits have replaced fecal coliform design limits.

- The compliance schedule for completing the plant upgrade has been reduced from 36 months to 18 months.
- The compliance schedule requires permittees to submit an NOI for coverage under general permit OHS00004 within 60 days of the plant upgrade attaining operational level.
- The compliance schedule addresses the continuation of coverage for permittees who obtained coverage under the permit later in the permit cycle.
- 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.