

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Fact Sheet For

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

General Permit for
Temporary Discharges

I. Background

The federal Water Pollution Control Act [also referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA)], which was enacted in 1972, provides that the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States from any point source is unlawful, unless the discharge is in compliance with a NPDES permit. Occasionally, entities or facilities in Ohio have the need to discharge wastewater for a very limited duration. These projects, characterized as temporary discharges, may be associated with some type of facility or site cleanup, or one-time emergency discharge due to unusual or short-term circumstances, or associated with a pilot project or test facility. The type of pollutants found in temporary discharges may be quite variable due to the differences in projects. Also, flow rates could be quite different depending on the size of the project.

Ohio EPA has elected to issue a statewide general permit to authorize temporary discharges to waters of the State. "Temporary discharges" are defined as facilities or projects that discharge for a time period not to exceed 60 days.

The conditions under the heading "eligibility" are very important because they provide an explanation of what types of discharges are and are not covered by this general permit. The general permit also includes a table listing potential pollutants, some of which the permittee will be required to monitor. Limits, if necessary, will be communicated to the permittee when notified of general permit coverage.

This permit would be a new general permit, and will be subject to the requirements of Ohio's anti-degradation rule (Ohio Administrative Code 3745-1-05). The general permit is proposed for a duration of five years.

II. Description of General Permit Coverage

The permit covers new, point source discharges which will continue no more than 60 days. In addition, an entity would not be eligible for more than one period of coverage for sixty days during the five-year duration of the general permit. The discharges must be related to environmental cleanup activity, restoration of aquatic life, or protection of human health or safety, or due to the operation of a pilot project or test facility. Also, the concentration of the discharges must be *de minimus*, defined as less than 65 mg/l for total suspended solids, less than 10 mg/l for oil and grease, and less than ten percent of the waste load allocation for all other applicable pollutants (except for discharges to limited quality waters which are exempt from this third requirement).

The permit does not cover discharges:

- that the Director of the Ohio EPA has determined to be contributing to a violation of a water quality standard;
- associated with storm water;
- associated with petroleum corrective actions
- associated with hydrostatic testing wastewater;
- containing pollutants classified as bioaccumulative chemicals of concern such as mercury; and
- that are commingled with hazardous wastes or hazardous substances.

III. Treatment, Monitoring Requirements, and Permit Limits

In many cases, treatment is not provided for temporary discharges. In situations where treatment is included, the type of treatment is very dependent upon the chemical characteristics of the wastewater to be discharged.

Parameters to be monitored under this permit will be selected from the table in Part III of the general permit and will be determined based upon information submitted by the applicant with the notice of intent (NOI). Monitoring frequencies and any permit limits will then be developed based upon the flow rate of the temporary discharge, the flow rate of the receiving stream, and the background water quality of the receiving stream. Permit limits will be established to ensure that the discharge meets instream Ohio water quality standards.

Copies of the draft permit are available on the Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water website:

<http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/permits/gpfact.html>