

Wastewater COVID-19 Update

Webinar
May 4, 2020

Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance
Division of Surface Water



Overview

- DEFA – Wastewater Compliance Assistance
- DEFA - State Revolving Fund Programs
- Regulatory Issues
- Personal Protection/Supplies
- Contacts



Wastewater Compliance Assistance Unit

- Three staff located in Central Office, Southeast District Office and Northwest District Office
 - Not conducting WWTP site visits but available by email or phone
 - Troubleshoot complex plant problems
 - Teach operators more effective methods of process control
- For assistance, please contact Ryan Laake at ryan.laake@epa.ohio.gov or visit <https://epa.ohio.gov/defa/CAU>

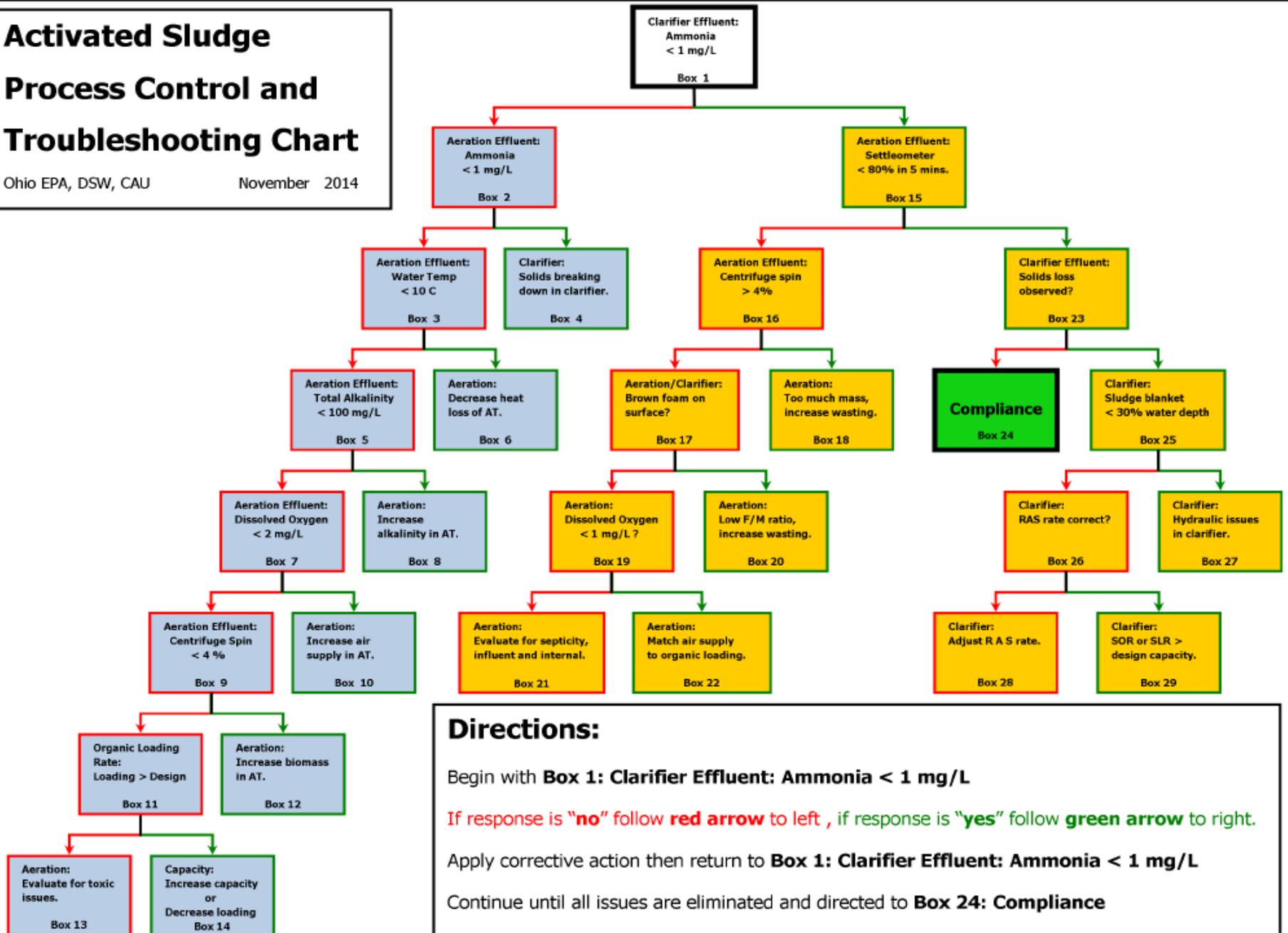
Wastewater Compliance Assistance Unit

- Confidential assistance
- Voluntary – need buy-in from operators
- Can help to head off enforcement
- Activated sludge process control

Activated Sludge Process Control and Troubleshooting Chart

Ohio EPA, DSW, CAU

November 2014



Directions:

Begin with **Box 1: Clarifier Effluent: Ammonia < 1 mg/L**

If response is "no" follow **red arrow** to left, if response is "yes" follow **green arrow** to right.

Apply corrective action then return to **Box 1: Clarifier Effluent: Ammonia < 1 mg/L**

Continue until all issues are eliminated and directed to **Box 24: Compliance**

Wastewater Compliance Assistance Unit

- Recent example:
 - Catastrophic failure of a WWTP
 - WWTP is being replaced but still months out from operation
 - Helped assist community in diagnosing and repairing plant prior to travel restrictions
 - Continuing to provide guidance from home; proper testing, advice, etc.
 - Plant in or near compliance

Ohio EPA

Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Office of Financial Assistance (OFA)

- ✓ Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF)
- ✓ Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA)
- ✓ Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (WRRSP)
- ✓ Wastewater Compliance Assistance Unit (CAU)

Office of Compliance Assistance & Pollution Prevention (OCAPP)

- ✓ Small Business Compliance Assistance
- ✓ Ohio Materials Marketplace
- ✓ Recycling & Litter Prevention Grant Program
- ✓ Encouraging Environmental Excellence (E3) Program

Water Pollution Control Loan Fund and Water Supply Revolving Loan Account

Primer

- State Revolving Loan Programs
- Eligible projects include most infrastructure
- Offer below-market rate interest rate loans
- Additional discounts available
- Limited “principal forgiveness” also available
- Money in the funds comes from
 - Federal Capitalization Grants (annual)
 - Repayments from previous loans
 - Leveraged bond issues and state match notes
 - No general revenue funds

State Revolving Funds

	WPCLF	WSRLA
First Loan	Sept. 1989	Feb. 1999
Total Loans	Over 2,700 Projects	Over 800 Projects
Total Investment In Ohio	Over \$ 10.0 Billion	Over \$ 1.7 Billion
Program Year	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	July 1 – June 30
Nomination Period	August 1 – 31	Feb 1 – March 1
Sustainable Annual Capacity	Over \$600 Million/Year	\$175 Million/Year

State Revolving Funds

...Where are things right now?

Water Pollution Control Loan Fund

- 4 months into the program year
- \$272 M awarded to 95 projects
- **Actively working on projects**
- \$1.8 B in projects on the list
- \$35 M in Principal Forgiveness
 - Regionalization
 - Other municipal WW projects
 - HSTS
- Anticipate full-funding for PY 2021
- Nominations in August 2020 for PY 2021

Water Supply Revolving Loan Account

- 10 months into the program year
- \$119 M awarded to 48 projects
- **Actively working on projects**
- Full-funding for PY 2021
- Draft PY 2021 Plan – mid-May
- Record \$700 M in Nominations
- \$13 M in Principal Forgiveness
- PF for disadvantaged communities
- PF for lead service line replacements

SRF Outlook and Prospects for Federal Funding Bills

- SRFs are designed to be managed in perpetuity
- SRF funding can continue, even without additional appropriations (“capitalization grants”)
- Principal Forgiveness cannot continue without additional appropriations
- SRF programs have historically strong support from Congress
- DWSRF federal funding is authorized through FY 2021
- CWSRF federal funding *proposed* authorizations (2022-2024)

SRF Outlook and Prospects for Federal Funding Bills

- In recent years, there have been two main forces impacting the SRF programs:
 - Annual appropriations language (in the federal budget bill)
 - Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)
 - 2014 – Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA)
 - 2016 – Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN)
 - 2018 – America’s Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA)
 - 2020 – *Being Developed by Congress*
- Potential for federal “stimulus” type bill for infrastructure
- Potential for federal utility revenue loss spending bill

SRF Programs - The “Take Home” Message

- SRF Programs are financially healthy
- All current-year loan awards and principal forgiveness are secure
- Continue to work with staff on program requirements
- Next year funding looks secure/stable
- Continue with project development; get your projects in the “project pipeline”
- If there is a federal “stimulus” program for infrastructure, projects that are “ready to proceed” will be well positioned

Regulatory Issues

- No Change in Current Status
 - Maintain adequate treatment
 - Maintain minimum staffing
 - Ohio EPA using regulatory flexibility and enforcement discretion associated with COVID-19 noncompliance
 - Regulatory flexibility request
<http://epa.ohio.gov/covid19>

Regulatory Issues

- Operator Testing and Renewals
 - May 6, 2020 in-person exam postponed
 - All approved applicants have been emailed
 - Automatically scheduled for the new date once determined
 - Option to take the next available exam or November exam
 - Currently there are no plans to extend the licensing renewals certifications past the end of the year

Regulatory Issues

- Outdated Kegs of Beer
 - Ohio EPA Disposal Fact Sheet
- Ohio EPA developing a virtual inspection workgroup
- Questions from last webinar
 - Wastewater essential employees receiving hazard pay while other city employees get paid working from home

Regulatory Issues

- **2020 DMR-QA (Study 40) Schedule Extended**
 - US EPA has extended the schedule
 - Study 40 to ends October 2, 2020 (was July 2)
 - Deadline for data report forms to State Coordinators now December 4, 2020 (was August 28)
 - USEPA mailing out letter about extension

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Supplies

- Current PPE priorities continue to focus on Tier 1 essential staff (health care and first responders)
 - Wastewater employees are considered Tier 2 Essential workforce
 - U.S. EPA coordinating with DHS in getting water sector PPE prioritization
- Reports of chemical shortages continue (O₂ bid)
- All PPE and supplies issues should be coordinated with your county EMA
 - If experiencing issues, also notify your district office

Staying in Touch

- Bi-Weekly calls with OWEA small group
- Email blasts
- Frequent updates to website (OWEA webinars posted to DSW COVID site)
- Regulatory Flexibility Portal
- Direct communication with DSW staff and management

We are all in this together.

<http://coronavirus.ohio.gov>

<https://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/covid19>

