



Background the NPDES Program Regulating Point Source Discharges to Surface Waters

All point source discharges to surface waters are required to have an NPDES permit (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System). The NPDES permit program was established under the Clean Water Act to prevent water pollution by regulating discharges from point sources, such as pipes, ditches, or other discrete conveyances, into waters of the United States.

Typical regulated point source discharges are:

- Discharges from wastewater treatment systems owned by municipalities, industries, private utilities, State and Federal government, etc.;
- Discharges such as cooling water, boiler blow down, etc.;
- Stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s);
- Stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity; and
- Stormwater dischargers from Construction Sites.

To ensure protection of water quality, NPDES permits contain:

- Effluent limitations on Pollutants of concern;
- Pollutant monitoring frequencies;
- Reporting requirements;
- Schedules of compliance, when appropriate;
- Operating conditions;
- Best management practices; and
- Administrative requirements

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