

Request for Comments

Proposed Renewal of the NPDES Water Quality Permit for Grants Pass Wastewater Plant

The purpose of this notice is to invite you to provide written comments on this proposed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit renewal.

DEQ's Role:

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is responsible for protecting and enhancing Oregon's water and air quality, for cleaning up spills and releases of hazardous materials, and for managing the proper disposal of hazardous and solid wastes. One way DEQ does this is by requiring permits for certain activities. DEQ issues permits to regulate the type and amount of wastewater discharge produced at a regulated facility.

Comments due:

Written comments due: 5 p.m., October 14, 2010

Where can I send my comments?

Carrie Everett, Permit Coordinator
(503) 378-5055 or (800) 349-7677
DEQ - Salem Office
Attn: Carrie Everett
750 Front Street NE, Suite 120
Salem, OR 97301-1039
FAX: (503) 373-7944
Email: everett.carrie@deq.state.or.us

Where can I get technical information?

April Graybill, Water Quality Specialist
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Where can I get background information?

Information about this project is viewable online by clicking the following link(s):

- [Permit](#)
- [Evaluation Report](#)
- [Biosolid Management Plan](#)

You can review hard copies of the draft permit and related documents at the Medford DEQ office, the Salem DEQ Office, or the Josephine Community Library in Grants Pass. For a review appointment in Salem, call Carrie Everett at (503) 378-5055.

The Salem office is located at 750 Front Street NE, Suite 120, Salem, OR 97301.

For a review appointment in Medford, call Andy Ullrich at (541) 776-6189. The Medford office is located at 221 W Stewart Ave, Ste 201, Medford, OR 97501.

The Josephine Community Library is located at 200 NW C Street, Grants Pass, OR. The permit documents are located at the information desk.

What is proposed?

DEQ proposes to renew a NPDES Water Quality permit for the Grants Pass Wastewater Plant and is inviting public comment on the proposed permitting action. During the comment period the public is invited to make comments related to specific conditions within the proposed permit.

The Department is proposing more stringent discharge limits in the renewal permit.

Permit expiration

Oregon law requires facilities with a NPDES Water Quality permit to renew that permit at least every 5 years. Upon issuance, this permit will be effective for 4 years, expiring on September 30, 2014 so that DEQ can renew all the permits in the Rogue Basin during 2014.

Who is the applicant?

City of Grants Pass
101 Northwest A Street
Grants Pass, OR 97526

Where is the facility located?

Grants Pass Water Restoration Facility
1200 SW Greenwood Avenue
Grants Pass, OR

Who might have an interest?

People who work, live, and recreate in the area.

What does the City of Grants Pass Wastewater Treatment Plant do that affects water quality?

Including near at the point of discharge, the Rogue River is water quality limited for temperature and bacteria.

The Rogue River Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) that addresses these parameters was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Western Region Water Quality

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If you received a hard copy of this notice in the mail, please consider receiving updates via e-mail instead. Send your request to:
subscriptions@deq.state.or.us

Please include your full name, e-mail address and mailing address so that we can purge you from our print mailing list, thus saving trees and taxpayer dollars.

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By: Carrie Everett

in December 2008. The proposed permit includes limits for these parameters, including Waste Load Allocations (WLAs) for thermal loading. Permit limits for ammonia were also added to the proposed permit.

What legal requirements apply?

The NPDES permit is required in accordance with Oregon Revised Statute 468B.050 for discharge of wastewater to waters of the state and the federal Clean Water Act in order to discharge treated wastewater to public waters.

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 468B and Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) Chapter 340 Division 45 give DEQ the authority to issue permits.

How does DEQ determine what requirements go in the permit?

Various federal and state regulations apply to a facility depending on the type of industry, the type and amount of wastewater discharged and the location of the facility. All applicable regulations must be contained in the permit, including the appropriate recordkeeping, monitoring, and reporting requirements to ensure compliance with these rules.

The Department used the appropriate Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) and standard language for the permit. A reasonable potential analysis and permit limit calculations were performed using statistical methods. The Department uses EPA guidance and best professional judgment in choosing model inputs, critical case scenarios and statistical factors.

An antidegradation review was conducted in order to determine whether the Department could allow a renewed permit for discharge to waters of the state. All evaluations showed that the discharge meets the requirements and exceptions of the applicable regulations except as otherwise noted in the permit and evaluation report.

What are the known health effects or environmental impacts of the permitted discharge by the City of Grants Pass?

When operated in accordance with the NPDES permit, the facility discharge is not expected to have any significant health effects or environmental impacts.

Bacteria and other human pathogens may be present and could impact public health. However, treatment processes including disinfection are performed prior to discharge.

Several metals at low concentrations are often found in domestic sewage. A portion of the metals are removed in the treatment process and may accumulate in the biosolids. The metals remaining are required to meet instream water quality standards at the edge of the mixing zone.

How are the permitted substances measured?

Schedule B of the permit requires monitoring of various effluent parameters at specified minimum frequencies. Monitoring must be performed in accordance with federal regulations (40 CFR Part 136) unless otherwise specified in the permit.

Compliance history:

The facility was last inspected on August 22, 2007, and was found to be operating in compliance with the terms of the current wastewater permit. DEQ staff also toured the facility in 2008. The facility has received two Warning Letters (WLs) for exceeding *E. coli* limits, one WL for submitting an incomplete Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR), and one WL for exceeding silver water quality standards as part of the pretreatment program since the permit was last renewed in 2000.

What are the special conditions of this permit?

Thermal loading WLAs and ammonia limits are included in the proposed permit.

What other DEQ permits are required?

None.

What similar activities take place in the vicinity of the facility?

Most cities in the area operate wastewater treatment facilities. The nearest facility of similar size and type (activated sludge) is the City of Medford's Regional Water Reclamation Facility.

What other information about this company is related to this permit?

The City also holds a NPDES General 200-J permit for the discharge of filter backwash water from their water treatment plant.

What happens next?

DEQ will schedule a public hearing if one is requested by ten or more people, or by an authorized person representing an organization of at least ten people. An additional public notice will be published to advertise the public hearing.

If a public hearing is not requested, DEQ will consider and provide responses to all comments received at the close of the comment period. DEQ may modify provisions in the proposed permit, but the permit writers can only modify conditions of the permit in accordance with the rules and statutes under the authority of DEQ.

Participation in the rulemaking or the legislative process is the only way to change the rules or statutes. Ultimately, if a facility meets all legal requirements, DEQ will issue the facility's NPDES Water Quality permit following EPA review.

Accessibility information

DEQ is committed to accommodating people with disabilities. Please notify DEQ of any special physical or language accommodations or if you need information in large print, Braille or another format. To make these arrangements, contact DEQ Communications & Outreach (503) 229-5696 or toll free in Oregon at (800) 452-4011; fax to 503-229-6762; or e-mail to deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.

People with hearing impairments may call DEQ's TTY number, (503) 378-3684 for Salem area or (541) 687-5603 for Eugene area.