



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Environmental Conservation

DIVISION OF WATER
Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program

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January 11, 2024

Subject: **Early notification** of wastewater discharge general permit for wastewater discharges from drinking water treatment facilities

Dear Local and Tribal Government Leaders:

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) proposes to reissue an Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) general permit (AK380000) for wastewater discharges from drinking water treatment facilities. This permit would regulate wastewater discharges into fresh or marine surface waters of the United States located in the State of Alaska.

Background information

This general permit applies to backwash water or reject water disposal from drinking water treatment facilities that discharge to surface waters of the United States located in the State of Alaska. Potable water treatment and conditioning operations eligible for coverage under the general permit include conventional/direct treatment systems (i.e., coagulation/filtration), ion exchange, and systems using membrane filters (i.e., microfiltration, nanofiltration, ultrafiltration, and reverse osmosis). Discharges from other treatment systems not specifically listed in the general permit that can meet the requirements of the general permit may also be eligible for coverage under the general permit upon DEC's approval.

Description of discharge

Pollutants of concern that may be generated from drinking water treatment facilities include dissolved solids such as sulfates and chlorides, residual chlorine, and metals such as manganese and iron. Effluent limitations and monitoring requirements for pollutants of concern will be established in this general permit in order to protect public health and the environment. Permittees will also be required to develop and implement a Best Management Practices Plan to prevent or minimize the generation and potential for the release of pollutants from their drinking water treatment facility to receiving waters through normal and ancillary activities.

Applicants may request modified effluent limits and facility specific mixing zones for water-quality based effluent limits. DEC will authorize a mixing zone if it is consistent with the Clean Water Act and the mixing zone criteria at 18 AAC 70.240 through 18 AAC 70.270.

General Permit additional information

Any operator that meets the eligibility requirements of the general permit will be authorized to discharge after filing a Notice of Intent (NOI) with DEC so long as all conditions of the permit are met. The public has an opportunity to comment and provide information for this general

permit; however, public notice will not be issued for individual NOIs submitted by qualified facilities. The general permit will expire five years after the effective date.

Opportunities for tribal and local government participation in this permitting decision

DEC recognizes rural Alaska has unique needs and considerations with regard to wastewater discharges and strives to issue permits that reflect a full understanding of local conditions. This letter is intended as an **early notice** to assist you in determining whether your community may be affected and inform you of the opportunity to provide traditional, cultural, or other local information that DEC should consider as part of this permit reissuance. DEC would like to know how your area and resources may be affected by this permitting action.

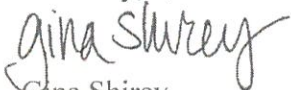
Next steps

After the permit is drafted, there may be a **10 day applicant review period** of the preliminary draft permit. Following the applicant review period, there will be a minimum of a **30 day public review and comment period**. I will provide a copy of the public notice for the permit by mail or e-mail at the start of the public comment period. After the public review and comment period, there may be a **5 day applicant review period** of the final draft permit before the permit is issued.

If requested, I can also provide notice of the preliminary draft and proposed final applicant review periods. Due to the short timeframes for those reviews, notices are sent by email or fax. Please provide an e-mail address or fax number if you would like to receive notices for the preliminary draft and proposed final applicant review periods.

If you would like more information or would like to provide DEC with information about this permit, please do not hesitate to contact me at (907) 465-5272 or at gina.shirey@alaska.gov. For technical questions about the permit, you may also directly contact the permit writer, Amber Bennett, at (907) 451-2190 or at amber.bennett@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Gina Shirey

Local and Tribal Government Coordinator

cc: Potentially Affected Local Governments
Potentially Affected Federally-recognized Indian Tribes