



Fact Sheet #3

Watershed-Based Permitting Case Study: Final Permit

Michigan General NPDES Storm Water Permit

General Wastewater Discharge Permit Storm Water Discharges from Separate Storm Water Drainage Systems NPDES General Permit No. MIG610000

Watershed

All watersheds within the State of Michigan

Permitting Authority

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)

Point of Contact

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Permit Information

www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-swq-stormwater-G610000.pdf

Date Issued

July 31, 1997

Revoked and Reissued

September 18, 1998

Background

- ◆ Initially developed to address water quality problems within the Rouge River watershed, including regular exceedances of dissolved oxygen (DO) and bacteria standards.
- ◆ Federal District Court overseeing the cleanup of the Rouge River promoted idea of an independent institutional structure to fund and manage water quality for the entire watershed (*United States, et al. v. City of Detroit, et al.*).
- ◆ The communities proposed a watershed-based NPDES general storm water permit as an alternative to Court's idea. Application for the permit was voluntary.
- ◆ Endorsed for use under the Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Stormwater Program by an Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) agreement.

Permit Type

- ◆ Voluntary general permit for MS4 discharges within a watershed that do not have Phase I MS4 permit coverage.

Permitting Strategy

- ◆ MDEQ conducted multiple workshops in the Rouge River watershed to educate the communities on the permit and compliance options.
- ◆ The Rouge Project Steering Committee formed to address the issues that cross subwatershed boundaries.
- ◆ Information obtained through this process is used by the state for the TMDL program, the Clean Michigan Initiative and a water quality trading program.
- ◆ MDEQ made the permit available beyond the Rouge River watershed to watersheds throughout the State of Michigan. Currently 50 MS4s have coverage under this permit, six of which are located outside of the Rouge River watershed.
- ◆ This permit is available as an alternative to the traditional six minimum measures permitting option under the Phase II MS4 Storm Water Program.
- ◆ Once reissued, this permit will also be available to MS4s currently covered under a Phase I MS4 Storm Water permit.

- ◆ Under Phase II, this permit will require storm water pollution control throughout the watershed, both inside and outside of urbanized areas.

Permit Overview

- ◆ Voluntary coverage for public agencies that own, operate or control storm water within the watershed that have not previously been required to obtain a Phase I MS4 NPDES permit.
- ◆ Dischargers within a subwatershed are encouraged to join together and submit applications as watershed partners, with a single Watershed Management Plan.
- ◆ Each permittee must also submit a Public Participation Process, Illicit Discharge Elimination Plan, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Initiative, and a Monitoring and Reporting Plan.
- ◆ Watershed partners establish the appropriate subwatershed size during the application process.

Permit Limits

- The permit has prescriptive requirements for illicit discharge elimination and public education.
- Permittees must develop and implement a watershed plan that includes short- and long-term goals with a method for assessing progress.
- During watershed plan development and goal setting, permittees must involve the public through a defined public participation process.
- This permit does not contain effluent limits.

Monitoring Requirements

- Dischargers must submit and implement a Monitoring and Reporting Plan for their subwatershed.

Special Conditions

- None.

Measures of Success

- ◆ Through the Rouge River Project, this permit has demonstrated the following successes:
 - Over 95 percent of the watershed is now covered under this voluntary permit.
 - Twenty-five different communities throughout the watershed are implementing more than 100 pilot projects.
 - The percent of DO readings that have indicated non-attainment has dropped from 61 percent to 4 percent.
 - Frog and toad surveys have demonstrated ecological improvements.
 - ◆ A reissued watershed permit has demonstrated the following successes for 2003:
 - Coverage is provided watershed-wide, including many non-urbanized areas. Genesee County has applied for coverage county-wide, approximately doubling the coverage of the Flint urbanized area.
 - Waters of the State which are designated county drains received added attention for illicit discharge inspections.
 - Approximately three-quarters of Michigan's communities are expected to take the watershed permit option.
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