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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Water Resource Management

Solicitation of Water Quality Data to Support the Development of the 2016 List of Water Quality Limited Waters under Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and Subchapter 6 of the New Jersey Water Quality Management Planning Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:15-6)

Take notice that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (Department) is soliciting water quality data to be considered in the development of the 2016 List of Water Quality Limited Waters (303(d) List). The 2016 303(d) List will identify waters of the State that exceed surface water quality standards, do not support applicable designated uses, and require development of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) pursuant to Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1313(d)), the Federal Water Quality Planning and Management Regulations at 40 CFR 130, and the New Jersey Water Quality Management Planning rules at N.J.A.C. 7:15-6. The Department plans to submit the draft 2016 303(d) List to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Region 2 by April 1, 2016. Additional information about the 303(d) listing process is available on the Department's Web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bears/assessment.htm>.

The 2016 303(d) List will be developed using all appropriate and readily available data collected before July 1, 2015. Data must meet the following data quality requirements and be publicly available and uploaded into one of the specified data repositories **by October 1, 2015** to be considered "readily available" for the 2016 303(d) List:

- The Department's Water Quality Data Exchange (WQDE) at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/wms/wqde>;
- The USEPA STORET/WQX data repository at <http://www.epa.gov/storet/> (see guidance at http://www.epa.gov/storet/wqx/wqxweb_downloads.html);
- The United States Geological Survey (USGS) National Water Information System (NWIS) at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis>;
- EPA's central data exchange (CDX) (www.epa.gov/cdx).

The Department is aware that certain data, such as continuous data, are not readily acceptable in the above data repositories. Under these circumstances, data may be provided in an alternate format upon approval by the Department. This data will be identified as locally stored and information to access the datasets will be provided upon request. Data collected after July 1, 2015 should also be entered into WQDE, STORET/WQX, NWIS, or CDX as soon as it is validated, so it may be considered for off-year and/or subsequent 303(d) Lists or other water quality assessments conducted by the Department.

The following data requirements must be met for the data to be considered as "readily available" for use by the Department in developing the 2016 303(d) List:

- Accurate locational data must be provided to ensure comparison to appropriate surface water quality standards (SWQS), as well as confirming that sampling stations are located outside of regulatory mixing zones.
- Data collection activities must comply with and be accompanied by an approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). QAPPs describe the procedures used to collect and analyze samples, along with the procedures used to review and verify the results to assure high quality data. QAPPs must be approved by the Department, Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), USEPA, or USGS prior to data collection. The USEPA's QAPP guidance document is available at http://www.epa.gov/region02/qa/qa_documents/air_h20_qapp04.pdf. The Department also provides guidance for developing QAPPs for volunteer monitoring data which is available at http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bwqsa/vm/quality_assurance.html. Additional information about the Department's QAPP process is available on the Department's Web site at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/oqa/>. Entities responsible for generating data are responsible for compiling the data, completing a detailed quality assurance review, and addressing questions regarding the data set.
- The sampling protocol for data used in developing the 2016 303(d) List must also comply with the procedures in the Department's Field Sampling Procedures Manual (NJDEP, 2005) or follow equivalent field procedures, as determined by the Department's Office of Quality Assurance. The Department's Manual includes approved procedures for sample collection, field quality assurance, sample holding times, and other data considerations, and is available for download from the Department's Web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/srp/guidance/fspm/>. Samples must be analyzed at a laboratory certified by the Department's Office of Quality Assurance, or a Federal laboratory (e.g., the USGS National Water Quality Laboratory in Denver) using analytical methods or their equivalents, as certified by the Department pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:18, USEPA, or USGS.
- All data submitters must ensure that an electronic copy of the approved QAPP, including the completed signature page (scanned), has been uploaded into the data repository with the corresponding data. For additional information or assistance regarding data submittal, including guidance on submittal of continuous datasets, data generators should contact Jack Pflaumer, Research Scientist 1, at the Bureau of Environmental Analysis, Restoration and Standards at (609) 633-1441 or at Jack.Pflaumer@dep.nj.gov.