

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

AMENDMENT TO THE AREAWIDE WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Public Notice

SEP 09 1997

Take notice that on _____, pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 58:11A-1 et seq., and the Statewide Water Quality Management Planning rules (N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4), an amendment to the following Water Quality Management Plans (WQMPs) was adopted by the Department of Environmental Protection (Department): Atlantic, Cape / May, Lower Delaware, Lower Raritan/Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth, Northeast, Ocean, Sussex, Tri-County, Upper Delaware and Upper Raritan. Wherever these WQMPs contain language identifying areas for on-site ground water discharge, or identify specific New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NJPDES) regulated wastewater treatment facilities discharging to ground water whose wastewater planning flows are projected to be less than 20,000 gallons per day (gpd), those areas will now be identified as "Service Area for Wastewater Facilities with Planning Flows of Less Than 20,000 GPD Which Discharge to Ground Water." ~~This change does not apply to areas presently identified to be served by Individual Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems, Septic Systems, Wastewater Facilities with Planning Flows of Less Than 2,000 GPD Which Discharge to Ground Water, or similar language.~~

Additionally, this change does not apply to facilities in the following areas of environmental concern: Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA) areas designated as Limited Growth Regions, Pinelands Waters, Category One and Fresh Water One watersheds. Facilities located in any of these excluded areas will remain as presently identified.

The intent of this amendment is to provide uniformity in the identification of areas designated to be served by wastewater treatment facilities discharging to ground water. Presently, the WQMPs contain numerous variations in identification and terminology for such areas and facilities due to the varying times and regulations at which amendments were made to the WQMPs. By uniformly identifying the areas in the WQMPs the facilities can then likewise be reviewed similarly. Identifying these sites as "Service Area for Wastewater Facilities with Planning Flows of Less Than 20,000 GPD Which Discharge to Ground Water" provides the ability for smaller existing NJPDES regulated facilities to propose expansions up to a total wastewater planning flow of 19,999 gpd without the need for additional WQMP amendments or revisions. It also allows for new wastewater facilities utilizing discharge to ground water up to the 19,999 gpd planning flow in these areas. The proposed facilities and expansions must still meet all other applicable regulations, such as NJPDES permit requirements. Facilities located in the excluded areas cannot expand above the flows specifically identified in the applicable WQMP without approval through the amendment or revision process, as appropriate.

As part of any revision to identify previously unidentified existing wastewater facilities having design capacities greater than 2,000 gpd but less than 20,000 gpd utilizing ground water discharge, the property presently served by the existing facility will be identified as a "Service Area for Wastewater Facilities with Planning Flows of Less Than 20,000 GPD Which Discharge to Ground Water".

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This amendment proposal was noticed in the New Jersey Register on May 19, 1997. Comments on this amendment were received during the public comment period and are summarized below with the Department's responses.

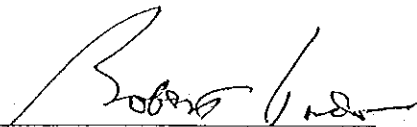
COMMENT: Commenter congratulates the Department on taking a step towards making the plans more uniform and to allow the possibility of expansions to occur within limits without the need to amend the WQMPs.

RESPONSE: The Department thanks the commenter for support of the amendment.

COMMENT: Commenter expressed the concern of the Policy Advisory Committee to the Sussex County Water Quality Management Agency that the revised language could possibly be interpreted so as to preclude the use of the Sussex County ground water recharge pre-screening methodology.

RESPONSE: The Department does not interpret the amendment to preclude the Sussex County pre-screening methodology. The primary purpose of the amendment is to adopt uniform designations identifying areas to be served by wastewater treatment facilities discharging to ground water within the WQMPs.

~~This amendment represents only one part of the permit process and other issues will be~~
addressed prior to final permit issuance. Additional issues which were not reviewed in conjunction with this amendment but which may need to be addressed may include, but are not limited to, the following: antidegradation; effluent limitations; water quality analysis; exact locations and designs of future treatment works (pump stations, interceptors, sewers, outfalls, wastewater treatment plants); and development in wetlands, flood prone areas, designated Wild and Scenic River areas, or other environmentally sensitive areas which are subject to regulation under Federal or State statutes or rules.


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Protection

9/22/97
Date

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