

WAC 173-201A-510 Means of implementation. (1) **Permitting.** The primary means to be used for controlling municipal, commercial, and industrial waste discharges shall be through the issuance of waste discharge permits, as provided for in RCW 90.48.160, 90.48.162, and 90.48.260. Waste discharge permits, whether issued pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System or otherwise, must be conditioned so the discharges authorized will meet the water quality standards. No waste discharge permit can be issued that causes or contributes to a violation of water quality criteria, except as provided for in this chapter.

(a) Persons discharging wastes in compliance with the terms and conditions of permits are not subject to civil and criminal penalties on the basis that the discharge violates water quality standards.

(b) Permits must be modified by the department when it is determined that the discharge causes or contributes to a violation of water quality standards. Major modification of permits is subject to review in the same manner as the originally issued permits.

(2) **Miscellaneous waste discharge or water quality effect sources.** The director shall, through the issuance of regulatory permits, directives, and orders, as are appropriate, control miscellaneous waste discharges and water quality effect sources not covered by subsection (1) of this section.

(3) **Nonpoint source and stormwater pollution.**

(a) Activities which generate nonpoint source pollution shall be conducted so as to comply with the water quality standards. The primary means to be used for requiring compliance with the standards shall be through best management practices required in waste discharge permits, rules, orders, and directives issued by the department for activities which generate nonpoint source pollution.

(b) Best management practices shall be applied so that when all appropriate combinations of individual best management practices are utilized, violation of water quality criteria shall be prevented. If a discharger is applying all best management practices appropriate or required by the department and a violation of water quality criteria occurs, the discharger shall modify existing practices or apply further water pollution control measures, selected or approved by the department, to achieve compliance with water quality criteria. Best management practices established in permits, orders, rules, or directives of the department shall be reviewed and modified, as appropriate, so as to achieve compliance with water quality criteria.

(c) Activities which contribute to nonpoint source pollution shall be conducted utilizing best management practices to prevent violation of water quality criteria. When applicable best management practices are not being implemented, the department may conclude individual activities are causing pollution in violation of RCW 90.48.080. In these situations, the department may pursue orders, directives, permits, or civil or criminal sanctions to gain compliance with the standards.

(d) Activities which cause pollution of stormwater shall be conducted so as to comply with the water quality standards. The primary means to be used for requiring compliance with the standards shall be through best management practices required in waste discharge permits, rules, orders, and directives issued by the department for activities which generate stormwater pollution. The consideration and control procedures in (b) and (c) of this subsection apply to the control of pollutants in stormwater.

(4) **General allowance for compliance schedules.**

(a) Permits and orders issued by the department for existing discharges may include a schedule for achieving compliance with effluent limits and water quality standards that apply to:

- (i) Aquatic life uses; and
- (ii) Uses other than aquatic life.

(b) Schedules of compliance shall be developed to ensure final compliance with all water quality-based effluent limits and the water quality standards as soon as possible. The department will decide whether to issue schedules of compliance on a case-by-case basis. Schedules of compliance may not be issued for new discharges. Examples of schedules of compliance that may be issued include:

- (i) Construction of necessary treatment capability;
- (ii) Implementation of necessary best management practices;
- (iii) Implementation of additional stormwater best management practices for discharges determined not to meet water quality standards following implementation of an initial set of best management practices; and
- (iv) Completion of necessary water quality studies related to implementation of permit requirements to meet effluent limits.

(c) For the period of time during which compliance with water quality standards is deferred, interim effluent limits shall be formally established, based on the best professional judgment of the department. Interim effluent limits may be numeric or nonnumeric (e.g., construction of necessary facilities by a specified date as contained in an order or permit), or both.

(d) Prior to establishing a schedule of compliance, the department shall require the discharger to evaluate the possibility of achieving water quality standards via nonconstruction changes (e.g., facility operation, pollution prevention). Schedules of compliance shall require compliance with the specified requirements as soon as possible. Compliance schedules shall generally not exceed the term of any permit unless the department determines that a longer time period is needed to come into compliance with the applicable water quality standards.

(e) When an approved total maximum daily load has established waste load allocations for permitted dischargers, the department may authorize a compliance schedule longer than ten years if:

- (i) The permittee is not able to meet its waste load allocation in the TMDL solely by controlling and treating its own effluent;
- (ii) The permittee has made significant progress to reduce pollutant loading during the term of the permit;
- (iii) The permittee is meeting all of its requirements under the TMDL as soon as possible; and
- (iv) Actions specified in the compliance schedule are sufficient to achieve water quality standards as soon as possible.

(5) Compliance schedules for dams:

(a) All dams in the state of Washington must comply with the provisions of this chapter.

(b) For dams that cause or contribute to a violation of the water quality standards, the dam owner must develop a water quality attainment plan that provides a detailed strategy for achieving compliance. The plan must include:

- (i) A compliance schedule that does not exceed ten years;
- (ii) Identification of all reasonable and feasible improvements that could be used to meet standards, or if meeting the standards is not attainable, then to achieve the highest attainable level of improvement;

(iii) Any department-approved gas abatement plan as described in WAC 173-201A-200 (1)(f)(ii);

(iv) Analytical methods that will be used to evaluate all reasonable and feasible improvements;

(v) Water quality monitoring, which will be used by the department to track the progress in achieving compliance with the state water quality standards; and

(vi) Benchmarks and reporting sufficient for the department to track the applicant's progress toward implementing the plan within the designated time period.

(c) The plan must ensure compliance with all applicable water quality criteria, as well as any other requirements established by the department (such as through a total maximum daily load, or TMDL, analysis).

(d) If the department is acting on an application for a water quality certification, the approved water quality attainment plan may be used by the department in its determination that there is reasonable assurance that the dam will not cause or contribute to a violation of the water quality standards.

(e) When evaluating compliance with the plan, the department will allow the use of models and engineering estimates to approximate design success in meeting the standards.

(f) If reasonable progress toward implementing the plan is not occurring in accordance with the designated time frame, the department may declare the project in violation of the water quality standards and any associated water quality certification.

(g) If an applicable water quality standard is not met by the end of the time provided in the attainment plan, or after completion of all reasonable and feasible improvements, the owner must take the following steps:

(i) Evaluate any new reasonable and feasible technologies that have been developed (such as new operational or structural modifications) to achieve compliance with the standards, and develop a new compliance schedule to evaluate and incorporate the new technology;

(ii) After this evaluation, if no new reasonable and feasible improvements have been identified, then propose an alternative to achieve compliance with the standards, such as site specific criteria (WAC 173-201A-430), a use attainability analysis (WAC 173-201A-440), or a water quality offset (WAC 173-201A-450).

(h) New dams, and any modifications to existing facilities that do not comply with a gas abatement or other pollution control plan established to meet criteria for the water body, must comply with the water quality standards at the time of project completion.

(i) Structural changes made as a part of a department approved gas abatement plan to aid fish passage, described in WAC 173-201A-200 (1)(f)(ii), may result in system performance limitations in meeting water quality criteria for that parameter at other times of the year.

(6) **Combined sewer overflow treatment plant.** The influent to these facilities is highly variable in frequency, volume, duration, and pollutant concentration. The primary means to be used for requiring compliance with the human health criteria shall be through the application of narrative limitations which include, but are not limited to, best management practices required in waste discharge permits, rules, orders and directives issued by the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.48.035, 90.48.605 and section 303(c) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act), C.F.R. 40,

C.F.R. 131. WSR 16-16-095 (Order 12-03), § 173-201A-510, filed 8/1/16, effective 9/1/16. Statutory Authority: Chapters 90.48 and 90.54 RCW. WSR 03-14-129 (Order 02-14), amended and recodified as § 173-201A-510, filed 7/1/03, effective 8/1/03. Statutory Authority: Chapter 90.48 RCW and 40 C.F.R. 131. WSR 97-23-064 (Order 94-19), § 173-201A-160, filed 11/18/97, effective 12/19/97. Statutory Authority: Chapter 90.48 RCW. WSR 92-24-037 (Order 92-29), § 173-201A-160, filed 11/25/92, effective 12/26/92.]