

WSR 21-12-086

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

[Filed June 1, 2021, 12:54 p.m.]

PUBLIC NOTICE

**Announcing the Draft Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit
and Fact Sheet for Review and Comment**

The Washington state department of ecology (ecology) proposes to issue the **Puget Sound Nutrient** National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and State Waste Discharge General Permit (permit). The draft permit, fact sheet explaining the legal and technical basis for the permit, supporting materials, and SEPA documents are available for review and public comment from **June 16 through August 2, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.** Ecology will host informational workshops and public hearings on the draft permit.

Purpose of the Permit: The permit provides regional coverage for municipal wastewater treatment plants that discharge total inorganic nitrogen into Washington waters of the Salish Sea. The purpose of the permit is to control the discharge of pollutants from domestic wastewater treatment plants into waters of the state that cumulatively contribute to existing dissolved oxygen impairments. Under Federal and State Water Quality Laws (Federal Clean Water Act and State Water Pollution Control Act), a permit is required for the discharge of these wastewaters. When the permitted activities conducted by a specific class of industries are similar, ecology issues a general permit to cover all of them, rather than issuing a series of individual permits. This permit does not cover federal or tribal treatment plants.

Applying for Coverage under the Permit: This is a new general permit. New permittees may obtain coverage under the permit by submitting a complete permit application to ecology and satisfying State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements (WAC 173-226-200). Access to the application is available online at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Nutrient-Permit>.

Copies of the Draft Permit and Fact Sheet: The draft permit, fact sheet, and SEPA documents are available online at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Nutrient-Permit> by end of day on June 16, 2021. You may also request copies from water quality reception at 360-407-6600.

Submitting Written Comments: Ecology will accept written comments on the draft permit and fact sheet from **June 16 through August 2, 2021, by 11:59 p.m.** Ecology prefers online comment submission via the eComment form (link below) on the permit webpage. Written comments by mail must be postmarked by August 2, 2021. Comments should reference specific permit text when possible.

Online via the eComment form: <https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=QFkVE> (preferred).

By mail: Send to Eleanor Ott (See ecology contact).

Ecology Contact: Eleanor Ott, Washington State Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47696, Olympia, WA 98504-7696, phone 360-280-5624, email eleanor.ott@ecy.wa.gov.

Assistance for Persons with Disabilities: To request ADA accommodation for disabilities, call ecology at 360-407-7285 or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may call Washington relay service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

Public Workshop(s) and Hearing(s): The purpose of the workshop is to explain the general permit and to answer questions prior to the formal public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to provide an opportunity for people to give formal oral testimony and written comments on the proposed draft permit. Oral testimony will receive the same consideration as written comments.

The public hearing will begin immediately following the public workshop and will conclude when public testimony is complete.

The Puget Sound nutrient general permit workshops and hearings will occur at the dates and times following: July 20, 2021, **9:30 a.m.**, Webinar*, join the webinar at <https://watech.webex.com/watech/onstage/g.php?MTID=e8eac5891993f6c06ee701b3dbf290f49>.

July 21, 2021, **5:30 p.m.**, Webinar*, join the webinar at <https://watech.webex.com/watech/onstage/g.php?MTID=e52cb968b9cc7ab3e15aa9f4f269e1ba2>.

*Workshops and hearings offered via webinar allow individuals to view the presentation and provide testimony via computer or mobile device. *Ecology is not currently offering in-person hearings due to COVID-19 safety concerns.*

Issuing the Permit: After ecology receives and considers all public comments, we will make a final decision on permit issuance. Ecology expects to make a decision on the general permit in **November 2021**.