

WSR 23-02-067

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

[Filed January 4, 2023, 9:17 a.m.]

PUBLIC NOTICE

Announcing the Draft Irrigation System Aquatic Weed Control General Permit and Fact Sheet for Review and Comment

The Washington state department of ecology (ecology) proposes to reissue the **irrigation system aquatic weed control** national pollutant discharge elimination system and state waste discharge general permit (permit). The current permit was last issued in **May 2012** and expired in **June 2017**. The revised draft permit and fact sheet, which explains the legal and technical basis for the permit, are available with any associated documents for review and public comment from **January 18 through March 6, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.** Ecology will host informational workshops and public hearings on the draft permit.

Purpose of the Permit: The permit provides coverage for the conditional use of pesticides, marker dyes, and other chemicals to manage and eradicate aquatic plants and algae in irrigation canals that flow into surface waters of the state of Washington. 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. Irrigation districts, reclamation districts, water companies, and similar entities that discharge wastewater either directly or indirectly to waters of the state must obtain permit authorization for their discharge.

Applying for Coverage under the Permit: Facilities that have already applied for coverage by December 17, 2016, and are covered under the existing permit, are covered under the new permit. New or unpermitted facilities may obtain coverage under the permit by submitting a complete permit application to ecology and satisfying all applicable public notice and 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/Aquatic-pesticide-permits/Irrigation-system-aquatic-weed-control>.

Copies of the Draft Permit and Fact Sheet: The draft permit and fact sheet are available online at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Aquatic-pesticide-permits/Irrigation-system-aquatic-weed-control> by end of day on January 18, 2023. You may also request copies from Jackie Lince at 360-407-6600 or by email at jackie.lince@ecy.wa.gov.

Submitting Written Comments: Ecology will accept written comments on the draft permit from **January 18 through March 6, 2023, by 11:59 p.m.** Ecology prefers online comment submission via the eComment form (link below) on the permit web page. Written comments by mail must be postmarked by March 6, 2023. Comments should reference specific permit text when possible.

Online via the eComment form: <https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=4GdZb> (preferred).

By mail: Send to Danielle Edelman, Washington State Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47696, Olympia, WA 98504-7696, phone 360-763-2597, email danielle.edelman@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 **irrigation system aquatic weed control general permit** workshops and hearings will occur on February 21, 2023, at **10:00 a.m.**, webinar*. Join the webinar at <https://waecy-wa-gov.zoom.us/j/88283129761>. Join by phone at +1-253-205-0468, Meeting ID 882 8312 9761; and on February 22, 2023, at **5:30 p.m.**, webinar*. Join the webinar at <https://waecy-wa-gov.zoom.us/j/87628350186>. Join by phone at +1-253-205-0468, Meeting ID 876 2835 0186.

*Workshops and hearings offered via webinar allow individuals to view the presentation and provide testimony via computer or mobile device.

Issuing the Permit: After ecology receives and considers all public comments, a final decision on permit issuance will be made. Ecology expects to make a decision on the general permit in **May 2023**.