

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), under authority granted by the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, M.G.L. c. 21, §§ 26–53, is proposing to issue a federal Clean Water Act (CWA) section 401 certification for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed 2022 Draft NPDES Construction General Permit (CGP). This permit will provide coverage to any Operator authorized by EPA under the 2022 CGP for construction activity on sites greater than 1 acre which will result in a discharge to waters of the United States. The proposed section 401 certification is available at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massdep-public-hearings-comment-opportunities>. Alternatively, a copy of the document can be obtained by contacting Laura Schifman, MassDEP Stormwater Program, at laura.schifman@mass.gov. The draft NPDES permit is available at <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/proposed-2022-construction-general-permit-cgp-and-related-documents>. Written comments on the section 401 certification will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2022. MassDEP strongly encourages written comments to be submitted by emailing DEP.stormwater@mass.gov; subject line: Certification for Construction General Permit. If not possible, please send by mail to Laura Schifman, MassDEP, 1 Winter Street, Floor 5, Boston, MA 02108.

Following the close of the comment period, MassDEP will issue a final CWA section 401 certification and forward copies to each person who has submitted written comments or requested notice.

For special accommodations, please call the MassDEP Diversity Office at 617-292-5751. TTY# MassRelay Service 1-800-439-2370. This information is available in alternate format upon request.

By Order of the Department

Martin Suuberg, Commissioner

DRAFT

Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification
For the Proposed 2022 Federal NPDES Construction General Permit

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), having reviewed the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) draft 2022 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit issued 5/12/2021, and considered the public comments received on MassDEP's proposed Clean Water Section 401 Certification for the draft 2022 Federal NPDES Construction General Permit, and in consideration of the relevant water quality considerations, hereby certifies:

1. that the following conditions, together with the terms and conditions contained in the proposed 2022 Federal NPDES Construction General Permit, are necessary to assure compliance with the applicable provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act Sections 208(e), 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307 and with appropriate requirements of State law, including, without limitation, the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, M.G.L. c. 21, §§ 26-53 and the Massachusetts Water Quality Standards published at 314 CMR 4.00:
 - a. All discharges covered by the Construction General Permit shall comply with the provisions pursuant to 314 CMR 3.00, 314 CMR 4.00, 314 CMR 9.00, including applicable construction stormwater standards and 310 CMR 10.00.
 - b. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a)6., and in accordance with MassDEP's obligation under 314 CMR 4.05(5)(e) to maintain surface waters free from pollutants in concentrations or combinations that are toxic to humans, aquatic life, or wildlife, permittees are prohibited from discharging dewatering water under the CGP from sites that are designated as Superfund/CERCLA or RCRA, and must make accommodations to dispose of the dewatering discharges appropriately, such as coverage under the Remediation General Permit (RGP).
 - c. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a), and in accordance with MassDEP's obligation to protect Outstanding Resource Waters under 314 CMR 4.04(3), applicants seeking coverage under the 2022 CGP that propose to carry out construction activities near Outstanding Resource Waters as identified in 314 CMR 4.06, shall submit to MassDEP for review:
 - i. a copy of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP),
 - ii. a copy of the EPA NOI, and
 - iii. MassDEP's Stormwater BMP Checklist.For purposes of this review, the permittee shall submit these documents to MassDEP at the same time they are submitted to EPA. Instructions on how to submit these documents to MassDEP and where to find the MassDEP Stormwater BMP Checklist and obtain authorization to discharge can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/wm-15-npdes-general-permit-notice-of-intent>.
 - d. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a)6., and in accordance with MassDEP's obligation under 314 CMR 4.05(5)(e) to maintain surface waters free from pollutants in concentrations or combinations that are toxic to humans, aquatic life, or wildlife, applicants that propose to dewater under the 2022 CGP and plan to discharge to

certain waters as described below, shall determine that any dewatering discharges are not contaminated by testing the proposed discharge as described below as part of the application for WM15 authorization. Unless otherwise specified, testing described in this section should be conducted using the methods in 40 CFR 136.

- i. Applicants for sites that plan to discharge to Outstanding Resource Waters as identified in 314 CMR 4.06 shall test one sample of the proposed dewatering discharge water for pH, E. Coli (for discharges to freshwater), fecal coliform (for discharges to salt water), Enterococci (for discharges to salt water), total suspended solids, oil and grease, total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and all parameters with numeric criteria listed in the Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards at 314 CMR 4.05(e). Results shall be reported to MassDEP as part of the WM15 application. To determine if the dewatering discharge could be covered under the 2022 CGP, the effluent at zero dilution must meet numeric water quality criteria. If the effluent does not meet numeric water quality criteria, the applicant shall contact EPA Region 1 to discuss coverage under the Remediation General Permit.
- ii. Applicants for sites that propose to discharge to Public Water Supplies (314 CMR 4.06(1)(d)1) shall also test one sample of the proposed dewatering discharge water for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), as outlined in the table below. Results shall be reported to MassDEP as part of the WM15 application. If any PFAS compounds are detected, the applicant shall apply for coverage under the NPDES Remediation General Permit for Massachusetts if required.

| PFAS Testing Parameters for Discharges to Public Drinking Water Supplies¹ | |
|---|-------------|
| Perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS), grab | Report ng/L |
| Perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA), grab | Report ng/L |
| Perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), grab | Report ng/L |
| Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), grab | Report ng/L |
| Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), grab | Report ng/L |
| Perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA), grab | Report ng/L |

- iii. Applicants for sites that propose to discharge to an impaired water as identified in the most recent final Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters, shall test one sample of the proposed dewatering discharge water for the parameter(s) for which the waterbody is impaired. To determine if the dewatering discharge could be covered under the 2022 CGP, the effluent at zero dilution must meet numeric water quality criteria. If the effluent does not meet numeric water quality criteria, the applicant shall

¹ PFAS testing shall follow the established drinking water EPA methods 537 or 537.1 and be sent to a MassDEP certified laboratory for analysis (<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-certified-laboratory-for-water-testing>).

contact EPA Region 1 to discuss coverage under the Remediation General Permit, and shall apply for RGP coverage if required.

- iv. For dewatering discharges to all other waters, if any pollutants are known or believed present in the proposed dewatering discharge water, the applicant shall apply for coverage under the NPDES Remediation General Permit for Massachusetts if required. For the purposes of this condition, a pollutant is “known present” if measured above the analytical detection limit using a sufficiently sensitive test method in an environmental sample, and “believed present” if a pollutant has not been measured in an environmental sample but will be added or generated prior to discharge, such as through a treatment process. Consequently, a pollutant is “known absent” if measured as non-detect relative to the analytical detection limit using a sufficiently sensitive test method in an environmental sample, and “believed absent” if a pollutant has not been measured in an environmental sample but will not be added or generated prior to discharge and is not a parameter that applies to the applicable activity category for a site. If any pollutants are known or believed present in the proposed dewatering discharge water, the applicant shall test one sample of the proposed dewatering discharge water for the pollutants known or believed to be present. To determine if the dewatering discharge could be covered under the 2022 CGP, the effluent at zero dilution must meet numeric water quality criteria. If the effluent does not meet numeric water quality criteria, the applicant shall contact EPA Region 1 to discuss coverage under the Remediation General Permit.
- e. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a), and in accordance with MassDEP’s obligation to protect Outstanding Resource Waters under 314 CMR 4.04(3), applicants that propose to dewater under the 2022 CGP and discharge to Outstanding Resource Waters as identified in 314 CMR 4.06, shall submit the SWPPP and associated documents to MassDEP to review. MassDEP shall complete review within 30 days of receipt.
- f. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a)6., and in accordance with MassDEP’s obligation under 314 CMR 4.05 to maintain surface waters free from color and turbidity in concentrations or combinations that are aesthetically objectionable or would impair any use assigned to the waterbody, permittees that have been authorized to dewater under the 2022 CGP and that discharge to Outstanding Resource Waters as identified in 314 CMR 4.06 shall carry out daily benchmark monitoring for turbidity² for the duration of dewatering. Permittees shall compare the weekly average of the turbidity monitoring results with the established benchmark turbidity value of 25 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU). If a permittee’s weekly average turbidity results exceed the benchmark, the operator shall conduct follow-up corrective action to determine the source of the problem and to make any necessary repairs or upgrades to the dewatering controls to lower the turbidity levels. The permittee shall document any corrective action taken in its corrective action log. Furthermore, permittees at

² Applicants shall follow EPA Method 180.1 to monitor for turbidity.

these sites shall carry out inspections at higher frequency, specifically, daily inspections of the dewatering discharge treatment for the duration of the discharge. The permittee shall inspect the site for sediment plume or whether a hydrocarbon sheen is visible at the point of discharge, estimate the flow rate at the point of discharge, and inspect the site downstream to assess whether sedimentation is attributable to the dewatering discharges.

- g. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a)6., and in accordance with MassDEP's obligation under 314 CMR 4.05 to maintain surface waters free from color and turbidity in concentrations or combinations that are aesthetically objectionable or would impair any use assigned to the waterbody, permittees shall store materials outside the Base Flood Elevation³ when feasible to prevent displacing runoff and erosion.
- h. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a), and in accordance with MassDEP's obligation to maintain surface waters free from nutrients in concentrations that would cause or contribute to impairment of existing or designated uses under 314 CMR 4.05(5)(c), all applicants who apply for coverage under the 2022 CGP shall follow guidelines on fertilizer application, including use of fertilizer containing no phosphorus, in accordance with 330 CMR 31.00 Plant Nutrient Application Requirements for Agricultural Land and Non-Agricultural Turf and Lawns. Further, fertilizer shall never be applied to a site when a rain event greater than 0.5 inches is forecast in the next 48 hours.
- i. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a), all applicants who apply for coverage under the 2022 CGP and elect to carry out site inspections every 14 days shall also inspect sites within 24 hours of 0.25 inches of precipitation events or greater over 24 hours, or within 24 hours of a discharge that occurred due to snowmelt from 3.25 inches or greater of snow accumulation⁴. During the high flow periods in spring (i.e., months of April to June), inspection frequency shall be increased to once per week for all sites.
 - i. To determine whether 3.25 inches or greater of snow accumulation has occurred at a site, snowfall measurements can be taken at the site,⁵ or the operator can rely on similar information from a local weather forecasting provider.
- j. Implementing structural improvements, enhanced/resilient pollution prevention measures, and other mitigation measures can help to minimize impacts from stormwater discharges from major storm events such as hurricanes, storm surge,

³ Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is the elevation of surface water resulting from a flood that has a 1% chance of equaling or exceeding that level in any given year. The BFE is shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for zones AE, AH, A1-A30, AR, AR/A, AR/AE, AR/A1-A30, AR/AH, AR/AO, V1-V30 and VE. (Source: <https://www.fema.gov/node/404233>).

⁴ This is the amount of snow that is equivalent to 0.25 inches of rain, based on information from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) indicating that 13 inches of snow is, on average, equivalent to 1 inch of rain. See <https://www.nssl.noaa.gov/education/svrwx101/winter/faq/>.

⁵ NOAA's National Weather Service has guidelines on snowfall measurements at https://www.weather.gov/jkl/snow_measurement. These guidelines recommend use of a "snowboard" (a piece of wood about 16 inches by 16 inches) that is placed in an unobstructed part of the site on a hard surface.

extreme/heavy precipitation⁶, and flood events. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a), if such stormwater control measures are already in place due to existing requirements mandated by other state, local or federal agencies, the SWPPP shall include a brief description of the controls and a reference to the existing requirement(s). If the site may be exposed to or has previously experienced such major storm events,⁷ additional stormwater control measures that may be considered, and implemented as necessary, include, but are not limited to:

- i. Reinforce materials storage structures to withstand flooding and additional exertion of force;
 - ii. Prevent floating of semi-stationary structures by elevating to the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) level or securing with non-corrosive device;
 - iii. When a delivery of exposed materials is expected, and a storm is anticipated within 48 hours, delay delivery until after the storm or store materials as appropriate (refer to emergency procedures);
 - iv. Temporarily store materials and waste above the Base Flood Elevation³ level;
 - v. Temporarily reduce or eliminate outdoor storage;
 - vi. Temporarily relocate any mobile vehicles and equipment to higher ground;
 - vii. Develop scenario-based emergency procedures for major storms that are complementary to regular stormwater pollution prevention planning and identify emergency contacts for staff and contractors; and
 - viii. Conduct staff training for implementing your emergency procedures at regular intervals.
- k. Pursuant to 314 CMR 3.11 (2)(a)6., and in accordance with MassDEP's obligation under 314 CMR 4.05(5)(e) to maintain surface waters free from pollutants in concentrations or combinations that are toxic to humans, aquatic life, or wildlife, permittees who seek coverage under the 2022 CGP and anticipate to carry out dust control shall limit their dust control methodology to using water only and specifically avoid using other techniques, such as solutions containing calcium chloride.
 - l. If MassDEP requests a copy of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for any construction site at any time, the permittee shall submit the SWPPP to MassDEP within 14 days of such a request. MassDEP may conduct an inspection of any site covered by this permit to ensure compliance with state law requirements, including state water quality standards.
2. that there is a reasonable assurance that the activity will be conducted in a manner which will not violate applicable state water quality standards.

⁶ Heavy precipitation refers to instances during which the amount of rain or snow experienced in a location substantially exceeds what is normal. What constitutes a period of heavy precipitation varies according to location and season. Heavy precipitation does not necessarily mean the total amount of precipitation at a location has increased—just that precipitation is occurring in more intense or more frequent events.

⁷ To determine if your facility is susceptible to an increased frequency of major storm events that could impact the discharge of pollutants in stormwater, you may reference FEMA, NOAA, or USGS flood map products at https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/where-can-i-find-flood-maps?qt-news_science_products=0#qt-news_science_products.

To meet the requirements of Massachusetts laws, each of the conditions cited in the draft permit and this certification shall not be made less stringent unless new data or other information is presented and MassDEP determines modification of this certification is appropriate in consideration of the relevant water quality considerations.

If any condition in the draft 2022 Federal NPDES Construction General Permit is changed during EPA's review in any manner inconsistent with this certification, the Department reserves the right to modify this certification in consideration of the relevant water quality considerations. In addition, the Department reserves the right to modify this certification if there is a change in Massachusetts law or regulation upon which this certification is based, or if a court of competent jurisdiction or MassDEP Office of Appeals and Dispute Resolution stays, vacates or remands this certification, as provided by 40 C.F.R. § 124.55.

Signed this ____ day of _____, 2021

Lealdon Langley, Director
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Water Resources
Division of Watershed Management