

For proposed Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) General Permit No. TXR150000 to authorize the discharge of stormwater runoff and certain non-stormwater discharges from construction activities into surface water in the state.

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Permit Action: Renewal of a Stormwater General Permit for Construction Activities

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Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities - TXR150000**

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I. Summary

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ or Commission) is proposing a renewal with amendments of TPDES Construction General Permit (CGP), Permit No. TXR150000, issued on February 8, 2018, effective on March 5, 2018, and amended on January 28, 2022, which authorizes stormwater discharges from construction activities into surface water in the state. The general permit specifies which construction activities must obtain permit coverage, which are eligible for waivers, and which may be required to obtain individual permit coverage. The general permit specifies that where discharges will reach Waters of the United States, a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWP3) must be developed and implemented unless certain conditions are met. The general permit provides authorization for discharges from large and small construction sites, according to federal Phase I and Phase II stormwater regulations finalized in the *Federal Register* of November 16, 1990, and December 8, 1999, respectively.

The principal changes to the existing CGP include:

- A.** Revised the definition of Commencement of Construction in Part I.B. to clarify and describe construction support activities consistent with the 2022 United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) CGP.
- B.** Modified the definition of Dewatering in Part I.B. for clarification and for consistency with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- C.** Added the definition of High-Level Radioactive Waste in Part I.B. and added Part II.C.12 to prohibit authorization of discharges from construction activities associated with the construction or operation of a facility that is licensed for the storage of high-level radioactive waste by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission under 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 72.
- D.** Changed provisional coverage from seven days to 48 hours for paper applications to be consistent with other water quality general permits and the time necessary to review paper applications with the implementation of electronic reporting requirements.
- E.** Clarified in Part II.E. that applications must be submitted electronically using TCEQ's online State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System (STEERS), unless the applicant requests and obtains a waiver from electronic reporting.
- F.** Added in Part II.E. and III.F. that Delegation of Signatories forms for large construction site operators must be submitted electronically using TCEQ's online STEERS. Delegation of Signatories forms for small construction site operators must continue to be submitted by paper.
- G.** Revised Part II.E. to move *Contents of the Notice of Intent* (NOI) before the *Notice of Change* section and added items required on the NOI to comply with federal electronic reporting requirements in 40 CFR Part 127.
- H.** Clarified in Part II.E. that compliance with the conditions and requirements of the permit is required until a Notice of Termination (NOT) is submitted and approved by TCEQ.
- I.** Clarified in Part III.D. that the SWP3 may be prepared and kept electronically.
- J.** Clarified in Part III.F. items required on the detailed site map.
- K.** Added in Part III.F. that inspections may be suspended during adverse conditions with requirements to document the adverse conditions at the site.

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- L. Moved Part III.G. regarding Erosion and Sediment Controls to new Part IV to clarify that these requirements are federal effluent limitations. Changes were made to references throughout the permit as a result of this change to address the new Part.
- M. Clarified in Part IV.C. that dewatering must be managed by controls to prevent sedimentation and erosion and added a requirement for evaluation of the controls during dewatering to be consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- N. Added in Part IV.D. requirements for good housekeeping measures related to wastes.
- O. Added in Part IV.F. requirements to document when it is infeasible to utilize outlet structures that withdraw water from the surface of basins and impoundments.

II. Executive Director's Recommendation

The executive director has made a preliminary decision that this general permit, if issued, meets all statutory and regulatory requirements. It is proposed that the general permit be issued to expire five years from the effective date, following the requirements of 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 205.5(a).

III. Permit Applicability and Coverage

- A. This general permit authorizes the discharge of stormwater and certain allowable non-stormwater associated with regulated small and large construction activities into or adjacent to surface water in the state. This general permit specifies which construction activities may be authorized under this general permit, which are eligible for waivers, and which must be authorized by an individual permit.
- B. This general permit authorizes the discharge of stormwater associated with other industrial activities at construction sites, in compliance with permit requirements, as follows: discharges of stormwater runoff from construction support activities, including concrete batch plants, asphalt batch plants, equipment staging areas, material storage yards, material borrow areas, and excavated material disposal areas that are located at, adjacent to, or in close proximity to the permitted construction site and directly support the construction activity. The above supporting activities must not operate beyond the completion date of the construction activity, must not be a commercial operation, nor serve other unrelated construction projects.
- C. The general permit does not authorize the discharge of process wastewater. In addition, the general permit does not authorize other non-stormwater discharges, except for the following:
 - 1. discharges from emergency fire-fighting activities (emergency fire-fighting activities do not include washing of trucks, run-off water from training activities, test water from fire suppression systems, and similar activities);
 - 2. uncontaminated fire hydrant flushings (excluding discharges of hyperchlorinated water, unless the water is first dechlorinated and discharges are not expected to adversely affect aquatic life), which include flushings from systems that utilize potable water, surface water, or groundwater that does not contain additional pollutants (uncontaminated fire hydrant flushings do not include systems utilizing reclaimed wastewater as a source water);
 - 3. water from the routine washing of vehicles, the external portion of buildings or structures, and pavement where solvents, detergents, and soaps are not used and where spills or leaks of toxic or hazardous materials have not occurred (unless spilled materials have been removed; and if local, state, or federal regulations are

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applicable, the materials are removed according to those regulations), and where the purpose is to remove mud, dirt, or dust;

4. uncontaminated water used to control dust;
5. potable water sources, including waterline flushings (excluding discharges of hyperchlorinated water, unless the water is first dechlorinated and discharges are not expected to adversely affect aquatic life);
6. uncontaminated air conditioning condensate;
7. uncontaminated groundwater or spring water, including foundation or footing drains where flows are not contaminated with industrial materials such as solvents; and
8. lawn watering and similar irrigation drainage.

The purpose of providing this list in the general permit is to clarify that certain non-stormwater discharges that may occur during normal activities at a construction site do not require additional permit coverage. Discharges from emergency firefighting that occur during normal activities at the construction site is allowed, but following the emergency event, operators must clean up contaminated water and prevent discharges, including where aqueous film forming foams (AFFF) were used. The intention of including the above list of non-stormwater discharges in the general permit is not meant to prohibit these discharges in non-regulated construction activity.

The non-stormwater discharges listed above are not authorized in small construction activities with automatic authorization under the general permit, where there is a low potential for erosion.

- D.** The on-site disposal of water resulting from the wash out of concrete trucks may be conducted at regulated construction sites, provided that certain requirements of the general permit are met. Operators may also find recommendations for addressing concrete wash out from the EPA at the following website:
<https://www3.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/concretewashout.pdf>
- E.** The following discharges are not eligible for coverage under the general permit and must be authorized under an individual permit or an alternative general permit, if one is available:
1. Discharges that would cause or contribute to a violation of water quality standards or that would fail to protect and maintain existing designated uses of receiving waters;
 2. New sources or new discharges of the constituents of concern to impaired waters, unless otherwise allowable under Commission rules, applicable state law, and any Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) that exists for the applicable receiving water; or
 3. Discharges otherwise prohibited under existing state rules.
- F.** The following stormwater discharges are not eligible for coverage under the general permit and may require individual or alternative general permit coverage:
- Discharges that occur after construction activities have been completed and after the construction site and any supporting activity at the site have undergone final stabilization.
- G.** Construction activities that would disturb less than one acre, and not part of a larger common plan of development, are not required to obtain permit coverage under the general permit nor an individual permit unless required by the executive director.

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- H.** Primary and secondary operators of small construction activities receive automatic authorization when they have complied with the requirements for the applicable type of small construction in Part II.E.1 and 2 of the permit.
- I.** Primary operators for small construction activities that are not part of a larger common plan of development for large construction are not required to submit an NOI and therefore do not receive a permit authorization number.
- J.** The requirements for the transfer of day-to-day operational control, as described in Part II.F.4, apply to operators with automatic authorization for small construction activities described in Part II.E.1 and E.2 and operators with authorization for large construction activities described in Part II.E.3 of the general permit.
- K.** The following stormwater discharges are not under the authority of the Commission, are not eligible for coverage under the general permit, and may require authorization from the EPA under a separate NPDES permit:

Stormwater runoff from construction activities occurring on Indian Country lands.

- Information on the location and contact information for Indian Country Lands in Texas may be accessed at the following EPA website:
<https://www.epa.gov/tribal/region-6-tribal-program>.
- Contact information for federally recognized tribes may be found at:
<http://www.indians.org/Resource/FedTribes99/fedtribes99.html>.

IV. Permit Conditions

A. Notice of Intent (NOI) and Site Notice

Primary operators of large construction sites must submit an NOI that indicates the operator will comply with the conditions of the general permit, including development of a SWP3. An NOI is not required for secondary operators.

All primary and secondary operators must post a site notice in plain view at the construction site entrance prior to the commencement of construction activities and maintain the notice until either final stabilization occurs or control of the site is turned over to a separate operator. A copy of the NOI must also be supplied to the operator of any municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) to which the operator discharges, so that the MS4 operator can conduct its own inspection and enforcement activities according to its NPDES or TPDES permit or local ordinances. This includes MS4s that are not regulated by an NPDES or TPDES permit.

The general permit includes notification to secondary operators of large construction activities that they are regulated under the general permit and are not required to submit an NOI. This statement is consistent with federal rules at 40 CFR § 122.28(b)(2)(vi) and as adopted by reference in 30 TAC Chapter 281, which states that the director may notify a discharger that it is covered by a general permit, even if the discharger has not submitted an NOI for permit coverage.

An NOI is not required for the authorization of certain discharges, as allowed by 40 CFR § 122.28(b)(2)(v) and as adopted by reference in 30 TAC Chapter 281, where the executive director determines that an NOI is inappropriate. The proposed general permit incorporates this alternative as an option and automatically authorizes certain small construction activities if specific conditions are met. In making the determination that an NOI is inappropriate for small construction activities, the executive director considered the short-term nature of small construction activities, the number of construction sites that will be authorized, and the administrative burden on both the Commission and the regulated community. The executive

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director also considered the nature and type of proposed discharges authorized under the general permit, the expected potential for toxic and conventional pollutants, and the expected volumes. The requirements and conditions of the general permit are appropriate to control the discharges from small construction sites authorized under the general permit and to protect water quality. The administrative burden on the permittee to submit an NOI and on the commission to respond to the NOI would be excessive and not directly necessary to control these discharges.

Operators of small construction sites are not required to submit an NOI, but are automatically authorized after developing an SWP3 (with the exception of those sites described in Part IV.D. below) and posting a site notice containing information regarding the operator's authorization under the general permit. Operators of small construction sites may alternatively apply for a waiver from permit requirements if activities are shown to occur in certain regions and during certain seasons where the potential for erosion are below an established threshold or erosivity factor. Operators applying for these waivers are also required to provide a copy of the waiver form to the operator of any MS4 that will receive the discharges from the construction site. This includes MS4s that are not regulated by an NPDES or TPDES permit.

B. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWP3)

1. All large construction site activities as well as all small construction site activities not specifically described in Part IV.D. below, with discharges that reach Waters of the United States, must develop an SWP3 according to the provisions of the proposed general permit prior to requesting authorization. Operators must implement that SWP3 prior to commencing construction activities.

Waters of the United States are defined in the general permit by reference to 40 CFR §122.2.

2. The required contents of the SWP3 are based on federal Phase II rules (December 8, 1999 *Federal Register*) related to stormwater permitting, as well as the current TPDES general permit for large construction sites based on federal Phase I rules (November 16, 1990 *Federal Register*). The purpose of the SWP3 is to identify and address potential sources of pollution that are reasonably expected to affect the quality of stormwater discharges from the construction site, including off-site material storage areas, overburden and stockpiles of dirt, and borrow areas. Separate SWP3s may be developed for each construction site operator where multiple operators exist. However, the general permit also allows a shared SWP3 to promote a more efficient and coordinated effort between multiple operators at a single site. The SWP3 may provide that one operator is responsible for the preparation of an SWP3 in compliance with the CGP, and another operator is responsible for implementation of the SWP3 at the project site. Under this alternative, each individual operator would be required to submit an NOI for coverage, and each would be individually responsible for compliance with the terms of the general permit in the areas of the site where the person is the responsible operator.
3. The specific requirements of the SWP3 include the following minimum provisions:
 - (a) A detailed project description, including a site map that indicates the site location, property boundaries, the construction site details, and information on receiving waters.
 - (b) A description of the structural and the non-structural controls (best management practices, or BMPs) that will be used to minimize pollution in

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- runoff during construction, as well as stabilization practices during and at the completion of the activity.
- (c) Demonstration of compliance with other state and local plans, such as the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program.
 - (d) A description of how BMPs will be maintained and how controls may be revised upon a finding that the control measures are either not working properly or adequately.
 - (e) A description of how observation and evaluation of dewatering controls will be conducted. An observation and evaluation is required on each day that dewatering occurs.
 - (f) A description of how inspections of BMPs will be conducted. Inspections are required at a minimum frequency of at least once every fourteen (14) calendar days and within 24 hours of the end of a storm event of 0.5 inches or greater during active construction activities. Where there are multi-day storm events, inspection is required within 24 hours of the first day of the storm and within 24 hours after the last day of the storm that produces 0.5 inches or greater. An alternative inspection schedule of at least once every seven (7) calendar days is also available. If this alternative schedule is developed, then the inspection must occur regardless of whether or not there has been a rainfall event since the previous inspection. Where sites have been temporarily stabilized, inspections must be conducted at least once every month. Special provisions allowing for representative inspections are provided for long, linear projects where access along the site is limited and travel along the site may damage stabilized areas or cause potential for erosion.
 - (g) Identification and description of the implementation of appropriate pollution prevention measures for all eligible non-stormwater components of the discharge.
4. The SWP3 may be prepared and kept electronically rather than in paper form if the records can be read, are legally valid, and immediately accessible to the same extent as a paper copy would be. Although the SWP3 may be prepared and kept electronically, all reports requested by this permit and other information requested by the executive director to be submitted must be signed in "wet ink" in accordance with 30 TAC §§ 305.128 and 305.44. Any CGP applications and Delegation of Signatories forms submitted online in the STEERS/ePermits system provided by TCEQ do not require "wet ink" signatures as this system is approved and Cross-Media Electronic Reporting Rule (CROMERR) compliant which ensures the same enforceability and legal sufficiency of information collected electronically as the corresponding paper submittal.
5. The TCEQ emphasizes that while the requirement to develop an SWP3, to keep it updated, and to include in it all of the required minimum contents consistent with Part III of the general permit are enforceable permit requirements, any other site-specific details of these SWP3s do not establish separately enforceable limits of the permit. The SWP3 is intended to serve as a road map for how the construction operator will comply with the effluent limits and other conditions of this permit. Additional portions of the effluent limits are established in Part IV of the permit. The fact that the SWP3 is an external tool and not considered to include effluent limits enables the operator to be able to modify and retool its approach during the course of the permit term in order to continually improve how it complies with the permit.

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C. Terminating Coverage

The general permit includes information on when and how an operator may terminate coverage under the general permit. Primary operators of large construction sites must submit a Notice of Termination (NOT) form. Operators of small construction sites and secondary operators of large construction sites must remove the applicable site notice once final stabilization of the site has been achieved. The specific requirements are included in the general permit.

An operator may terminate coverage when certain conditions are met. In establishing vegetation to achieve final stabilization, an operator is not required to utilize the same vegetation that was previously utilized at the site, provided that the stabilized area contains at least 70% coverage of the original percentage of coverage of land for the disturbed area, and provided that the operator utilizes vegetation appropriate for the area that provides acceptable coverage. The general permit also allows construction operators located in arid, semi-arid, or drought-stricken areas the flexibility to implement non-vegetative erosion control measures if vegetative controls are not feasible.

D. Alternative Permit Requirements for Small Construction Activities Occurring During Conditions of Low Potential Erosion

Stormwater runoff from certain small construction activities may be authorized under the general permit without being required to develop an SWP3 if construction occurs when there is a low potential for erosion. This option is consistent with the existing general permit, and is not available for large construction sites, including smaller construction sites that are part of a larger common development that will disturb five (5) or more acres. This option is available for stormwater discharges, and would not include authorization for non-stormwater discharges that are otherwise required to be permitted. These mechanisms for alternative authorization are included to encourage construction to occur during times when the potential for erosion is limited. The alternative requirements apply to small construction sites where the rainfall erosivity factor, or R-factor, is less than five (5) for the duration of the activity.

The R-factor is defined as the total annual erosive potential that is due to climatic effects, and is part of the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE). An R-factor is calculated based on information available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and EPA. Annual R-factors are provided in the USDA Handbook No. 703. The following authorization options require determination of an R-factor for a portion of the year.

1. Automatic Authorization Option: A mechanism for automatic authorization is provided to include a very efficient authorization process for certain activities occurring during periods of low erosion potential. Appendix A of the general permit includes a list of time periods within certain counties when the potential for erosion is very low and where small construction activities may be automatically authorized. Not all counties in Texas are included in Appendix A, and those that are included only demonstrate an R-factor less than five (5) for the specific time period(s) shown.

Small site construction activities that commence on or after the start date for one of the listed time periods and conclude by the end date of the same listed time period are not required to submit an NOI nor to develop an SWP3. Instead, the general permit requires the operator of such a site to complete and post a specific site notice for the duration of the activity and to provide a copy of the site notice

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to the operator of any MS4 that would receive a discharge from the site. This includes MS4s that are not regulated by an NPDES or TPDES permit. The site notice must be maintained at the site until final stabilization has been achieved.

This automatic authorization permit option is based on construction site conditions that might otherwise qualify for a permit waiver using an R-factor calculation. Instead of requiring the construction site operator to calculate the R-factor for every possible discharge, the executive director calculated time periods within the year where the R-factor is known to be less than five (5). An application for a permit waiver requires the operator to calculate the R-factor, complete and submit a Low Rainfall Erosivity Waiver (LREW) form electronically using TCEQ's online STEERS/ePermits system, unless the applicant requests and obtains a waiver from electronic reporting. The LREW option is described in Part IV.D.2. of this fact sheet.

In developing Appendix A, the executive director used the most conservative assumptions for each county in the state. The annual R-factor values included in the USDA handbooks are annual factors, and the lowest annual R-factor in Texas is ten (10), which occurs only in El Paso County. While no county in Texas would automatically qualify for this automatic authorization option for the entire year, R-factors for specific time periods within the year can be identified by multiplying the annual R-factor by the percentage of the total annual isoerodent factor that occurs during the period in question.

In Texas, there are ten (10) isoerodent zones that cross state lines, and those are listed in the table below. The map of zones is located in Chapter 2 of USDA Handbook 703: "Predicting Soil Erosion by Water," https://www.ars.usda.gov/arsuserfiles/64080530/rusle/ah_703.pdf, referenced in EPA Fact Sheet 3.1: "Stormwater Phase II Final Rule – Construction Rainfall Erosivity Waiver" (<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-10/documents/fact3-1.pdf>), and is included as Appendix B of the permit.

To identify partial year R-factors less than five (5), the executive director first identified the potential start dates and end dates of construction projects, and then added the correlating total percentages for the time period. In the Erosivity Index (EI) Table developed in the USDA Handbook 703, the first period is always listed as zero (0), and with each period, a portion of the annual percentage is added until the final number for the last period equals or approaches 100 for each isoerodent zone. For the purposes of establishing Appendix A, the TCEQ did not add each period so that the values were larger for each time period; but rather included only the portion of the annual percentage that was attributable to the period in question. The end result was that each EI zone resulted in a value near 100 when all of the periods were added. Where the results were less than 100, the TCEQ included the difference for the first period beginning January 1. This resulted in an increase for several of the EI zones in the first period from zero (0), which results in a more conservative calculation.

Each county is located within one or more EI zones and contains within it a range of annual isoerodent values. For the automatic R-factor permitting option, the executive director determined isoerodent zones by identifying the highest isoerodent line that crosses through the county and assigning a value of the next highest isoerodent line, since some value greater than the highest line crossing through the county would be present within the county. Generally, the value of the line located outside of and east of the county was assigned as the value for the county, as the isoerodent values generally increase to the east. The EI zones may be found in the EPA Fact Sheet 3.1 (Figure 2) or in USDA Handbook 703 (Figure 2-1) and in Appendix B of the permit. The Isoerodent Map is provided at

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Appendix C of the permit, and is also included in the USDA Handbook 703 and referenced in the EPA Fact Sheet.

The R-factor for each time period was determined by calculating the percentage of the isoerodent value that is necessary to achieve an R-factor of less than five (5). For a small construction activity to be authorized under this provision, construction must commence no earlier than the start date for a specific date range and county listed in Appendix A of the general permit, and final stabilization must occur no later than the end date of that same date range. If a construction project begins during one date range and ends past that same date range (even if it is within another date range for the same county), then the resulting R-factor will be over 5, and the automatic authorization is not available. If construction activities last longer than expected so that final stabilization will occur outside of an approved date range, then the operator must either 1) apply for and obtain an LREW, if appropriate, or 2) obtain authorization under Part II.E.2. of the general permit, related to all other small construction activities, and develop and implement an SWP3 and post the required site notice.

Two example calculations are shown below:

Example No. 1: In El Paso County, the highest annual isoerodent value is ten (10), and El Paso County is located in EI Zone No. 92.

In order to determine the portion of the isoerodent value (referred to below as "x") that would result in an R factor less than 5, the executive director divided the maximum allowable R-factor, five (5), by the annual isoerodent value. Then the result was multiplied by 100 to correct for percentage.

$$x < (5 / 10) * 100$$

$$x < 50$$

To achieve an R-factor less than five (5) in El Paso County, the EI from Zone 92 (see table below) must be less than 50 when subtracting the value for the start date from the value for the end date, for any period of construction. This is possible for several ranges of dates in the county, and those date ranges are listed in Appendix A.

Example No. 2: In Dallas County, the highest annual isoerodent value for the county is 350, and Dallas County is located in zone 97.

$$x < (5 / 350) * 100$$

$$x < 1.43$$

To achieve an R-factor less than five (5) in Dallas County, the EI from Zone 97 (see table below) must be less than 1.43 when subtracting the value for the start date from the value for the end date, for any period of construction. There are no ranges of dates in the county that meet these criteria, and therefore construction sites in Dallas County would not qualify for this automatic authorization.

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Table of Erosivity Indices (EI) for EI Zones in Texas:

EI #	1/1	1/16	1/31	2/15	3/1	3/16	3/31	4/15	4/30	5/15	5/30	6/14	6/29	7/14	7/29	8/13	8/28	9/12	9/27	10/12	10/27	11/11	11/26	12/11	12/31
89	0	1	1	2	3	4	7	2	8	27	38	48	55	62	69	76	83	90	94	97	98	99	100	100	100
90	0	1	2	3	4	6	8	13	21	29	37	46	54	60	65	69	74	81	87	92	95	97	98	99	100
91	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	6	16	29	39	46	53	60	67	74	81	88	95	99	99	100	100	100
92	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	6	16	29	39	46	53	60	67	74	81	88	95	99	99	100	100	100
93	0	1	1	2	3	4	6	8	13	25	40	49	56	62	67	72	76	80	85	91	97	98	99	99	100
94	0	1	2	4	6	8	10	15	21	29	38	47	53	57	61	65	70	76	83	88	91	94	96	98	100
95	0	1	3	5	7	9	11	14	18	27	35	41	46	51	57	62	68	73	79	84	89	93	96	98	100
96	0	2	4	6	9	12	17	23	30	37	43	49	54	58	62	66	70	74	78	82	86	90	94	97	100
97	0	1	3	5	7	10	14	20	28	37	48	56	61	64	68	72	77	81	86	89	92	95	98	99	100
106	0	3	6	9	13	17	21	27	33	38	44	49	55	61	67	71	75	78	81	84	86	90	94	97	100

If an operator cannot meet the automatic authorization option, then an LRWE calculation may be performed to determine if the site-specific R-factor is less than five (5) for a small construction site. The LREW option is described below.

2. **Low Rainfall Erosivity Waiver (LREW) Option:** A small construction site operator may calculate a site-specific R-factor and apply to the TCEQ for a permit waiver (LREW). The R-factor would be calculated using site-specific location information to determine the specific isoerodent line to be used in the calculation. The operator may utilize the table in the previous section of this fact sheet to calculate the isoerodent values for the specific zone where the site is located. Alternatively, the operator may reference EPA Fact Sheet 3.1 or USDA Handbook 703. The map of isoerodent lines is also provided as Appendix C of the general permit. An operator can identify the specific isoerodent line that relates to the site’s location, rather than utilizing the most conservative line that was used to develop Appendix A of the general permit.

This waiver may be an important option for shorter duration projects in counties that are located in high isoerodent areas, and may also be important for longer duration projects located in portions of counties that have a lower isoerodent value than the conservative protocol that was utilized to develop Appendix A of the general permit.

The operator may calculate a site-specific R-factor using the steps outlined in EPA Fact Sheet 3.1: “Stormwater Phase II Final Rule – Construction Rainfall Erosivity Waiver” (<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-10/documents/fact3-1.pdf>), by using the online calculator developed by EPA: <https://lew.epa.gov>, <https://lew.epa.gov> using an alternative mechanism that follows appropriate methodology, or by using the following steps:

- (a) Estimate the construction start date and the construction end date. The construction end date is the date that final stabilization will be achieved.
- (b) Find the EI zone from Appendix B of the general permit.
- (c) Find the EI percentage for the project period by subtracting the EI for the start date of the project from the EI of the end date using the table above. Alternatively, use the table provided in EPA Fact Sheet 2.1 or USDA Handbook 703 in a similar manner, by subtracting the start value from the end value on the table. If the project goes past January 1, add 100 to the end date EI to obtain the appropriate value.

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- (d) Refer to the Isoerodent Map (Appendix C of the general permit) and interpolate the annual isoerodent value for the construction site location.
- (e) Multiply the percent value obtained in Step 3 by the annual isoerodent value obtained in Step 4. This is the R factor for the project. If the value is less than five (5), then a waiver may be obtained.

Under the waiver option, the operator must submit to the executive director an LREW form electronically using TCEQ's online STEERS/ePermits system, unless the applicant requests and obtains a waiver from electronic reporting, and must provide a copy of the waiver form to the operator of any MS4 that receives the discharge. This includes MS4s that are not regulated by an NPDES or TPDES permit. The operator is not required to develop an SWP3 nor to post the waiver certification form at the entrance to the small construction site. This LREW does not authorize discharges of non-stormwater that would otherwise be required to be permitted.

E. Qualifying Local Programs

This general permit does not include by reference any qualifying local programs (see federal rules at 40 CFR § 122.44(s)); however, the permit may be amended in the future to include appropriate programs that are currently being implemented or that will be implemented in the future by regulated MS4s.

V. Changes from Existing General Permit

- A.** Updated the hyperlink to the Edwards Aquifer Map Viewer in Part I. for the definitions for Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone and Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone.
- B.** Modified the definition of Commencement of Construction in Part I.B. to clarify and describe construction support activities consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- C.** Modified the definition of Dewatering in Part I.B. for clarification and consistency with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- D.** Removed the regulatory language in the definition of Waters of the United States in Part I.B., and instead cited 40 CFR § 122.2 because the definition in the CGP was outdated.
- E.** Revised Part II.A.3.(a) to clarify that only discharges from emergency fire-fighting activities are considered an allowable non-stormwater discharge and not just firefighting
- F.** Added the definition of High-Level Radioactive Waste in Part I.B. and added Part II.C.12 to prohibit authorization of discharges from construction activities associated with the construction or operation of a facility that is licensed for the storage of high-level radioactive waste by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission under 10 CFR, Part 72 based on Texas Health Code Section 401.0525.
- G.** Revised Part II.C.7 to remove an out-of-date reference to local government code §401.002.
- H.** Clarified in Part II.E.1. that small construction site operators must meet conditions (a)-(h) prior to commencing construction activities.
- I.** Revised Part II.E.1.(e) to clarify that Small Construction Site Notices for low potential for erosion must be maintained until final stabilization is achieved.
- J.** Added Part II.E.2.(e) to continue to require Delegation of Signatories forms for small construction site operators be submitted via mail consistent with other water quality general permits.

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- K.** Revised Part II.E.3. and Part II.F.1. to clarify that applications must be submitted electronically unless applicants request and obtain a waiver from electronic reporting to comply with federal electronic reporting requirements in 40 CFR Part 127.
- L.** Changed provisional coverage from seven (7) days to 48-hours in Part II.E.3.(b), Part II.E.5.(b)., and Part II.F.3.
- M.** Added Part II.E.3.(e) to require Delegation of Signatories form for large construction site operator be submitted electronically using the TCEQ STEERS consistent with other water quality general permits.
- N.** Clarified in Part II.E.3.(c) that large construction site notices must be maintained until final stabilization has been achieved.
- O.** Added language in Part II.E.6.(c) to clarify when electronic reporting waivers expire and that operators are automatically authorized immediately after confirmation of receipt of a Notice of Change (NOC) by the TCEQ.
- P.** Moved the *Contents of the NOI* from Part II.E.8 to Part II.E.6. and revised the contents to require that the NOI include estimated construction project start date and end date to comply with federal electronic reporting requirements in 40 CFR Part 127.
- Q.** Added language in Part II.E.8.(h) to require that the NOI include confirmation that the construction activities are not associated with a facility licensed to store high - level radioactive waste by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
- R.** Clarified in Part II.F.1. that compliance with the conditions of the permit is required until the NOT is submitted and approved by TCEQ.
- S.** Updated the hyperlink to the R factor calculator in Part II.F.2.
- T.** Clarified in Part II.F.3. that construction site notices must be maintained until final stabilization has been achieved.
- U.** Clarified in Part II.G.1. that Low Rainfall Erosivity Waiver applications must be submitted electronically unless applicants obtain an electronic reporting waiver.
- V.** Revised Part II.H. to indicate that any discharge authorized under this general permit may also be authorized under an alternative general permit if applicable. This change removes duplicate information and makes language consistent with the 2021 Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP, TXR050000).
- W.** Clarified in Part III. that the SWP₃ is used to comply with effluent limits and other permit conditions and that Part IV of the permit establishes additional effluent limits.
- X.** Clarified in Part III.B.1. that the SWP₃ must identify portions of the project where each operator has control.
- Y.** Clarified in Part III.D.1 that the SWP₃ may be prepared and kept electronically rather than in paper form if the records can be read, are legally valid, and immediately accessible to the same extent as a paper copy would be consistent with the EPA NPDES CGP.
- Z.** Clarified in Part III.E. that revisions and updates to the SWP₃ include changes to the site map.
- AA.** Added requirements for the detailed site map in Part III.F.1.(g) to include property boundaries, drainage patterns and approximate slopes anticipated before and after major grading activities, and areas where soil disturbance will occur (note any phasing), including any demolition activities consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- BB.** Added a note to Part III.F.1.(g)(vii) to clarify that surface waters adjacent to or in close proximity to the site means any receiving waters within the site and all receiving waters within one mile downstream of the site's discharge point(s) consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- CC.** Added language in Part III.F.1.(j) that an electronic copy of the TPDES CGP or a link to the TPDES CGP on the TCEQ webpage is acceptable.
- DD.** Added in Part III.F.1.(l) a requirement to maintain a copy of the Delegation of Signatories form submitted to TCEQ.

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- EE.** Added language in Part III.F.2.(a) and Part III.F.2.(c) for consistency with federal effluent limitations for BMPs used to minimize pollution in runoff.
- FF.** Clarified in Part III.F.4.(e) that the controls identified in the SWP3 to minimize offsite transport of suspended sediments and other pollutants must be consistent with Part IV.
- GG.** Added in Part III.F.2.(c).i.(A)(1) that sedimentation basins must be designed for and appropriate for runoff at the site and that existing detention or retention ponds at the site may not be appropriate.
- HH.** Clarified language in Part III.F.4.(a) that permittees must minimize the offsite vehicle tracking of sediments and dust consistent with the EPA NPDES CGP. The SWP3 must include a description of controls utilized to control the generation of pollutants that could be discharged in stormwater from the site.
- II.** Added in Part III.F.7. requirements for operators to observe and evaluate dewatering controls to be more consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- JJ.** Clarified in Part III.8.(c).i. that inspections conducted within 24 hours of the end of a storm event of 0.5 inches must occur on the first and last day of a storm for multi-day storm events and when the 24-hour inspection time frame occurs entirely outside of normal working hours, operators must conduct the inspection by the end of the next business day consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- KK.** Clarified in Part III.F.8.(c)(vi) that inspection frequency schedules can only be changed once per month and implemented within the first five business days of a calendar month.
- LL.** Added in Part III.F.8.(e) a requirement that inspections may be temporarily suspended for adverse conditions for consistency with other water quality general permits. Documentation of adverse conditions must be included in the SWP3.
- MM.** Added in Part III.F.8.(g) that inspection reports must include the dates of actions taken as a result of inspections for consistency with the EPA NPDES CGP.
- NN.** Clarified in Part III.F.8.(h) that site maps need to be updated as a result of inspections.
- OO.** Moved Part III.G. regarding Erosion and Sediment Controls to new Part IV to clarify that these requirements are federal effluent limitations. Changes were made to references throughout the permit as a result of this change to address the new Part.
- PP.** Clarified in Part IV that the effluent limitations representing the degree of effluent reduction attainable by application of the best practicable control technology currently available (BPT) also satisfy the effluent limitations requirements in 40 CFR §§ 450.24, 450.22, and 450.23.
- QQ.** Revised Part IV.A.(f) for consistency with language in 40 CFR § 450.21(a)(6).
- RR.** Clarified in Part IV.C. that dewatering must be managed by controls to prevent sedimentation and erosion and added a requirement for observation and evaluation of the controls during dewatering to be more consistent with the 2022 EPA NPDES CGP.
- SS.** Clarified in Part IV.D.3. that exposure of wastes to both precipitation and wind must be minimized and that minimization of exposure is not required where exposure to precipitation and stormwater will not result in discharge of pollutants or where a specific material or pollutant poses little risk of stormwater contamination for consistency with the EPA NPDES CGP.
- TT.** Added in Part IV.D.4. a requirement for cleaning waste and disposing of wastes in designated waste containers on days of operation at the site for consistency with the EPA NPDES CGP. Wastes must be cleaned up immediately if containers overflow.
- UU.** Added in Part IV.D.5. reference to federal rule requirements for reporting spills and leaks.
- VV.** Added in Part IV.D.6. a requirement to position portable toilets so that they are secure and will not be tipped or knocked over, and so that they are located away

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from surface water in the state and stormwater inlets or conveyances for consistency with the EPA NPDES CGP.

- WW.** Added in Part IV.F. a requirement for permittees to provide documentation in support of infeasibility determinations for consistency with the EPA NPDES CGP.
- XX.** Clarified in Part V.B.1.(b)-(c) that operators must address exposure to both precipitation and stormwater.
- YY.** Added in Appendices B-D captions and additional identifying information, such as units, to improve understanding of the information.

VI. Addresses

Questions concerning this general permit may be sent to:

TCEQ, Stormwater Team Leader
Wastewater Permitting Section (MC-148)
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087
(512) 239-4671
swgp@tceq.texas.gov

Comments on the proposed general permit renewal must be sent to:

By Mail:

TCEQ, Office of the Chief Clerk (MC-105)
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Electronically: www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/

Supplementary information on this Fact Sheet is organized as follows:

- VII. Legal Basis
- VIII. Regulatory Background
- IX. Permit Coverage
- X. Technology-Based Requirements
- XI. Water Quality-Based Requirements
- XII. Monitoring
- XIII. Procedures for Final Decision
- XIV. Administrative Record

VII. Legal Basis

Texas Water Code (TWC) § 26.121 makes it unlawful to discharge pollutants into or adjacent to water in the state except as authorized by a rule, permit, or order issued by the Commission. TWC § 26.027 authorizes the Commission to issue permits and amendments to permits for the discharge of waste or pollutants into or adjacent to water in the state. TWC § 26.040 provides the Commission with authority to amend rules adopted under TWC § 26.040 prior to amendment of the statute by House Bill (HB) 1542 in the 75th Legislature, 1997, and to authorize waste discharges by general permit. On September 14, 1998, the TCEQ received authority from EPA to administer the TPDES program. The Commission and the EPA have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that authorizes the administration of the TPDES program by the Commission as it applies to the State of Texas. TWC § 26.131, as amended by HB 2771 in the 86th Legislature, 2019, transfers regulatory authority for discharges into water in the state from oil and gas

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exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or transmission facilities from the EPA and the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) to TCEQ, upon EPA approval of NPDES authority for these discharges, which occurred on January 15, 2021.

Texas Health Code Section 401.0525, as amended by HB 7 in the second special session of the 87th Legislature, 2021, prohibits the Commission from issuing any TPDES authorizations for the construction or operation of a facility that is licensed for the storage of high-level radioactive waste by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission under 10 CFR Part 72 except for facilities located at the site of currently or formerly operating nuclear power reactors and currently or formerly operating nuclear research and test reactors operated by a university would be regulated under this general permit.

Clean Water Act (CWA), Parts 301, 304, and 401 and 33 United States Code (USC), Parts 1331, 1314, and 1341 include provisions that state that NPDES permits must include effluent limitations requiring authorized discharges to: meet standards reflecting levels of technological capability; comply with EPA-approved state water quality standards; and comply with other state requirements adopted under authority retained by states under CWA Part 510, and 33 USC Part 1370.

VIII. Regulatory Background

In 1990, EPA promulgated rules establishing Phase I of the NPDES stormwater program. Among other discharges, Phase I addresses discharges from large construction activities disturbing five (5) acres or more of land. The Phase I NPDES stormwater rule identifies eleven (11) categories of industrial activity in the definition of “stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity” that must obtain an NPDES permit. Category (x) of this definition is construction activity, commonly referred to as “large” construction activity. Under category (x), the Phase I rule requires all operators of construction activities disturbing five (5) acres or greater of land to apply for an NPDES stormwater permit before beginning construction. Operators of sites disturbing less than five (5) acres are also required to obtain a permit if their activity is part of a “larger common plan of development or sale” with a planned disturbance of five (5) acres or greater. “Disturbance” refers to exposed soil resulting from activities such as clearing, grading, and excavating. Construction activities can include road building, construction of residential houses, office buildings, industrial sites, or demolition.

In 1992, the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit remanded portions of the existing Phase I stormwater regulation to the EPA. The remanded portions related to the category (x) of stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity, specifically, discharges from large construction activity (NRDC v. EPA, 966 F.2d at 1292). EPA responded to the Court’s decision by designating stormwater discharges from construction activity disturbing less than five (5) acres as sources that should be regulated to protect water quality. The Phase II Rule designated those sources as “stormwater discharges associated with *small construction* activity,” rather than as another category under “stormwater associated with *industrial* activity.” Phase II of the NPDES stormwater program requires authorization for small site construction activities disturbing between one (1) and five (5) acres. Phase II rules were final on December 8, 1999, and required authorizations be issued by March 10, 2003.

The Stormwater Phase II Rule automatically designated, as small construction activity under the NPDES stormwater permitting program, all operators of construction site activities that result in a land disturbance of equal to or greater than one (1) and less than five (5) acres. Site activities disturbing less than one (1) acre are also regulated as small construction activity if they are part of a larger common plan of development or sale with

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a planned disturbance of equal to or greater than one acre and less than five (5) acres, or if they are designated by the NPDES permitting authority.

On September 14, 1998, the TCEQ received authority to administer the NPDES permit program in Texas (the TPDES program), for those discharges under the regulatory authority of the Commission. Under the MOA between the two agencies, EPA agreed to continue to administer the construction stormwater general permit until the July 7, 2003 expiration date. The original TPDES CGP was issued on March 5, 2003, and expired on March 5, 2008. The current CGP was issued on February 8, 2018, effective on March 5, 2018, amended on January 28, 2022, and will expire on March 5, 2023. This general permit continues authorization for existing regulated construction activities in Texas for five (5) years from the effective date of the renewed permit. The Commission expects to reissue this general permit prior to the expiration date of the current permit, in which case the renewed permit would supersede and replace the existing permit.

Prior to the amendments of TWC § 26.131 via HB 2771, the RRC had state authority for non-exempt stormwater discharges from construction activities at oil and gas exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or transmission facilities and EPA had federal authority for these discharges. HB 2771 required TCEQ to request NPDES authority for these discharges from EPA and transferred state regulatory authority upon EPA approval of NPDES authority. On January 15, 2021, EPA approved the transfer of NPDES authority to TCEQ for these discharges.

This general permit authorizes non-exempt stormwater discharges from construction activities at oil and gas exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or transmission facilities. Entities with potentially exempt stormwater discharges are *generally* defined by the following North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Codes and Titles: 211 – Oil and Gas Extraction; 213111 – Drilling Oil and Gas Wells; 213112 – Support Activities for Oil and Gas Operations; 48611 – Pipeline Transportation of Crude Oil; and 48621 – Pipeline Transportation of Natural Gas. This description with reference codes is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but is provided as a guide regarding entities that may be exempt. More information about exempt and non-exempt activities can be found on the following EPA webpage: <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/oil-and-gas-stormwater-permitting>.

On August 8, 2005, the President of the United States signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Section 323 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 added a new paragraph (24) to section 502 of the CWA defining the term “oil and gas exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or transmission facilities” to mean “all field activities or operations associated with exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or transmission facilities, including activities necessary to prepare a site for drilling and for the movement and placement of drilling equipment, whether or not such field activities or operations may be considered to be construction activities.” This term is used in Section 402(l)(2) of the CWA to identify certain stormwater discharges from oil and gas activities that do not require an NPDES permit. The effect of this statutory change is to make construction activities at oil and gas sites eligible for the exemption established by CWA Section 402(l)(2). On January 6, 2006, EPA proposed amendments to the NPDES regulations for stormwater discharges associated with oil and gas exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations or transmission facilities (71 FR 33628) to include the new provision in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. On June 12, 2006, EPA codified in the Agency's regulations changes to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, also known as the “Clean Water Act” or “CWA,” resulting from the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (71 FR 112). This action modified the NPDES regulations to provide that certain stormwater discharges from field activities or operations, including construction, associated with oil and gas exploration, production, processing, or treatment operations, or transmission facilities are exempt from NPDES permit requirements. EPA's 2006 Oil and Gas

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Stormwater Rule was vacated by an opinion from the Ninth Circuit on May 23, 2008 (Natural Resources Defense Council v. United States Environmental Protection Agency, 526 F.3d 591 (9th Cir. 2008)). Thus, EPA's previous regulations (November 16, 1990) regarding oil and gas stormwater apply to this permit.

On December 1, 2009, the EPA published ELGs and new source performance standards (NSPS) in 40 CFR Part 450, to control the discharge of pollutants from construction sites. All construction sites required to obtain permit coverage were required to implement a range of erosion and sediment controls and pollution prevention measures. The ELGs included a numeric effluent limitation for turbidity of 280 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU). Subsequently the EPA withdrew the limit to correct a calculation error that was identified in petitions filed by the Small Business Administration and the National Association of Homebuilders. On January 4, 2011, the EPA stayed indefinitely the turbidity effluent limit of 280 NTU in order to seek additional treatment performance data from construction and development sites before proposing a revised numeric turbidity limit. On February 16, 2012, the EPA issued their 2012 CGP which includes the new Construction and Development ELGs. The EPA CGP does not include the numeric effluent limitation for turbidity. The EPA amended the federal Construction and Development ELGs located in 40 CFR §§ 450.11, 450.21, and 450.22 and posted in the Federal Register, Volume 79, Number 44, March 6, 2014 and to 40 CFR § 450.22, which was posted in the *Federal Register*, Volume 80, Number 85, on May 4, 2015. The amendments added the definition of "infeasible" in 40 CFR § 450.11; revised the narrative limitations in paragraphs (a)(1), (a)(2), (a)(6), (a)(7), (b), and (d)(2) of 40 CFR § 450.21; added narrative limitations in paragraph (a)(8) to 40 CFR § 450.21; and made amendments to lift the indefinite stay on paragraphs (a) and (b) and removed and reserve paragraphs (a) and (b) of 40 CFR § 450.22.

IX. Permit Coverage

- A. The general permit applies to discharges of stormwater runoff associated with construction activities, stormwater runoff associated with certain other supporting industrial activities, and certain non-stormwater discharges, into Waters of the United States. The general permit specifies which facilities are eligible for authorization by the general permit, which must be authorized by an alternative individual or general permit, and the specific conditions that must be met in order to be excluded from the requirement to develop an SWP3 and from the requirement to submit a notice of intent. The guidelines for small site construction activities were published in the *Federal Register* on December 8, 1999 (64 FR 68722).

The general permit defines large and small construction activities, and includes requirements for both. The general permit specifies that a smaller project is regulated if it is part of a larger common plan of development or sale that will disturb one or more acres. A common plan of development or sale is defined in the permit as a construction activity that is completed in separate stages, separate phases, or in combination with other construction activities, that is identified by the documentation for the construction project that identifies the scope of the project. A common plan of development does not necessarily include all construction projects within the jurisdiction of a public entity (e.g., a city or university). Construction of roads or buildings in different parts of the jurisdiction would be considered separate "common plans," with only the interconnected parts of a project being considered part of a "common plan" (e.g., a building and its associated parking lot and driveways, airport runway and associated taxiways, a building complex, etc.). Where discrete construction projects occur within a larger common plan of development or sale but are located one quarter (1/4) mile or more apart, and the area between the projects is not being disturbed, each individual project can be treated as a separate

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plan of development or sale, provided that any interconnecting road, pipeline or utility project that is part of the same "common plan" is not included in the area to be disturbed.

An example of a smaller construction project that is regulated under the general permit would include the building of single houses on lots of a quarter-acre each within a larger residential development of five (5) or more acres. Any primary operator constructing single homes within that development would be regulated as an operator of a large construction activity, and required to develop an SWP3 and submit an NOI. If the development was generally completed, then a builder may be able to look at the size of the remaining area to be disturbed in determining the size of the larger common plan of development or sale by answering a two part question. First, was the original plan, including modifications, ever substantially completed with less than one acre of the original "common plan of development or sale" remaining (e.g., <1 acre of the "common plan" was not built out at the time)? If so, then was there a clearly identifiable period of time with no on-going construction, including meeting the criteria for final stabilization? If the answer to both of the questions is "yes," then it would be appropriate to consider the new project of less than one acre as a new common plan of development. Another example of a "new" common plan of development or sale would be the addition of a swimming pool, fence, or similar addition to a lot by a homeowner after having purchased the lot. Even if the rest of the homes have not been built, the additional construction by the homeowner would be its own common plan unless it was specifically delineated in the plans for the overall development.

- B.** A primary operator seeking authorization to discharge stormwater runoff from a large construction site under this general permit must electronically submit a completed NOI on a form approved by the executive director, and must also complete the applicable required site notice and post the notice at the construction site. The NOI shall include, at a minimum, the legal name and address of the construction site operator, the facility name and address, a specific description of the site location, (including the street address, if applicable, and county), the type of construction occurring, the estimated construction project start date and end date, the name of the receiving water, and any other information requested by the executive director. A secondary operator of a large construction site and an operator of a small construction site seeking authorization under this permit must complete the applicable site notice and post the notice at the construction site.

Applicants can locate information regarding the classified segment(s) receiving the discharges from the construction site in the TCEQ's Surface Water Quality Viewer, at the following TCEQ web address. This map viewer includes identification numbers, descriptions, and maps:

Surface Water Quality Viewer:

<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/gis/segments-viewer>

Applicants can find the latest EPA-approved list of impaired water bodies (the Texas 303(d) List) at the following TCEQ web address:

https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/assessment/305_303.html

- C.** Submission of an NOI or signing of the required site notice is an acknowledgment that the conditions of the general permit are applicable to the proposed discharges and that the applicant agrees to comply with the conditions of the general permit.

Effective September 1, 2018, all NOIs are required to be submitted to the TCEQ electronically. Operators who qualify for and obtain a waiver from electronic reporting may submit paper applications. Provisional authorization to discharge

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under the terms and conditions of the general permit begins immediately upon receipt of confirmation by TCEQ of an administratively complete NOI submitted electronically, 48-hours after a completed paper NOI is postmarked for delivery to the TCEQ unless otherwise specified in the general permit. If submitting a paper copy of the NOI, the NOI must be mailed to the address indicated on the NOI form with an approved waiver from electronic reporting. Following review of the NOI, the executive director will either confirm coverage by providing a notification and an authorization number to the applicant or notify the applicant that coverage under this general permit is denied.

Operators of existing sites that are required to submit an NOI for coverage must do so within the timeframe specified in the general permit in order to maintain authorization for the construction activity. Small construction sites must post the applicable required site notice as required in the general permit.

- D.** Coverage under the general permit is not transferable. If the primary operator of a large construction activity changes, then the original operator must submit an NOT electronically within 10 days prior to the date that responsibility for operations terminates, unless they qualify for a waiver from electronic reporting. The new operator must submit an NOI electronically at least ten (10) days before assuming operational control, unless they qualify for a waiver from electronic reporting. Operators who qualify for and obtain a waiver from electronic reporting may submit paper applications. Authorization for a termination of authorization is immediate, upon receipt of confirmation of an NOT form submitted electronically.

Provisional authorization to discharge under the terms and conditions of the general permit begins 48-hours after a completed paper NOI is postmarked for delivery to the TCEQ, with an approved waiver from electronic reporting, or immediately upon receipt of confirmation by TCEQ of an administratively complete NOI submitted electronically, prior to the new operator assuming operational control.

A change in operator includes changes to the structure of a company, such as changing from a partnership to a corporation, or changing corporation types that changes the filing (or charter) number with the Texas Secretary of State. Operators of small construction activities and secondary operators of large construction activities must remove the original site notice for the original operator, and the new operator must post the required site notice prior to assuming operational control for the site.

- E.** A primary operator of a large construction activity must submit current information to the executive director by submitting an NOC electronically, unless they request and obtain a waiver from electronic reporting, not later than 14 days before a change in information previously provided to the executive director in a NOI occurs (examples of changes may include changes to the operator's mailing address, a change to the project name, or an increase in the size of the project). The NOC forms must be signed by a person authorized to sign permit applications. An operator of a small construction activity and a secondary operator of a large construction activity may revise the information in the required site notice.
- F.** A primary operator of a large construction activity may terminate coverage under the general permit when all construction activity has ceased by submitting an NOT electronically, unless they qualify for an electronic reporting waiver. Operators who qualify for and obtain an electronic reporting waiver may submit paper applications. If an NOT is submitted electronically, authorization to discharge terminates immediately following confirmation of receipt of the electronic NOT form by the TCEQ, unless otherwise specified in the general permit. Authorization to discharge terminates at midnight on the day that a paper NOT is postmarked for delivery to the TCEQ. Effective September 1, 2018, all NOTs are required to be submitted to the

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TCEQ electronically. An operator of a small construction activity and a secondary operator of a large construction activity may terminate coverage under the general permit by removing the required site notice after final stabilization has been met.

X. Technology-Based Requirements

- A.** Construction and Development Effluent Limitations Guidelines (ELGs), 40 CFR §§ 450.11, 450.21, 450.22, 450.23, and 450.24

Technology-based effluent limitations must be included in the proposed general permit. With regard to conventional pollutants, CWA § 301 (b)(2)(E) requires effluent limitations based on “best conventional pollution control technology” (BCT). The BCT effluent limitations may never be less stringent than corresponding effluent limitations based on best practicable control technology (BPT), a standard applicable to similar discharges before March 31, 1989 under CWA § 301(b)(1)(A).

The general permit includes a requirement for construction operators to comply with the federal Construction and Development ELGs outlined in 40 CFR §§ 450.11, 450.21, 450.23, and 450.24. TCEQ adopted these guidelines by reference in 30 TAC § 305.541.

The general definitions (40 CFR § 450.11) include the following:

1. *New source*. New source means any source, whose discharges are defined in 40 CFR § 122.26(b)(14)(x) and (b)(15), that commences construction activity after the effective date of this rule.
2. *Infeasible*. Infeasible means not technologically possible, or not economically practicable and achievable in light of best industry practices.

The BPT effluent limitations (40 CFR § 450.21) and BCT effluent limitations (40 CFR § 450.23) are narrative in nature and are achieved through the implementation of BMPs.

Except as provided in 40 CFR §§ 125.30-125.32, any discharge regulated under this general permit, with the exception of sites that obtained waivers based on low rainfall erosivity, must achieve, at a minimum, the following effluent limitations representing the degree of effluent reduction attainable by application of the BPT currently available.

1. *Erosion and sediment controls*. Design, install, and maintain effective erosion controls and sediment controls to minimize the discharge of pollutants. At a minimum, such controls must be designed, installed, and maintained to:
 - (a) Control stormwater volume and velocity to minimize soil erosion in order to minimize pollutant discharges.
 - (b) Control stormwater discharges, including both peak flowrates and total stormwater volume, to minimize channel and streambank erosion and scour in the immediate vicinity of discharge points.
 - (c) Minimize the amount of soil exposed during construction activity.
 - (d) Minimize the disturbance of steep slopes.
 - (e) Minimize sediment discharges from the site. The design, installation and maintenance of erosion and sediment controls must address factors such as

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the amount, frequency, intensity and duration of precipitation, the nature of resulting stormwater runoff, and soil characteristics, including the range of soil particle sizes expected to be present on the site.

- (f) Provide and maintain natural buffers around Waters of the United States, direct stormwater to vegetated areas and maximize stormwater infiltration to reduce pollutant discharges, unless infeasible.
 - (g) Minimize soil compaction. Minimizing soil compaction is not required where the intended function of a specific area of the site dictates that it be compacted.
 - (h) Unless infeasible, preserve topsoil. Preserving topsoil is not required where the intended function of a specific area of the site dictates that the topsoil be disturbed or removed.
 - (i) TCEQ does not consider stormwater control features (e.g., stormwater conveyance channels, storm drain inlets, sediment basins) to constitute "surface waters" for the purposes of triggering the buffer requirement in Part X.A.1.(f) above.
2. *Soil stabilization.* Stabilization of disturbed areas must, at a minimum, be initiated immediately whenever any clearing, grading, excavating or other earth disturbing activities have permanently ceased on any portion of the site, or temporarily ceased on any portion of the site and will not resume for a period exceeding 14 calendar days. In arid, semiarid, and drought-stricken areas where initiating vegetative stabilization measures immediately is infeasible, alternative stabilization measures must be employed as specified by the permitting authority. Stabilization must be completed within a period of time determined by the permitting authority. In limited circumstances, stabilization may not be required if the intended function of a specific area of the site necessitates that it remain disturbed. Refer to Part III.F.2.(b) of the permit for complete erosion control and stabilization practice requirements.
3. *Dewatering.* Discharges from dewatering activities, including discharges from dewatering of trenches and excavations, are prohibited, unless managed by appropriate controls.
4. *Pollution prevention measures.* Design, install, implement, and maintain effective pollution prevention measures to minimize the discharge of pollutants. At a minimum, such measures must be designed, installed, implemented, and maintained to:
- (a) Minimize the discharge of pollutants from equipment and vehicle washing, wheel wash water, and other wash waters. Wash waters must be treated in a sediment basin or alternative control that provides equivalent or better treatment prior to discharge;
 - (b) Minimize the exposure of building materials, building products, construction wastes, trash, landscape materials, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, detergents, sanitary waste, and other materials present on the site to precipitation and to stormwater. Minimization of exposure is not required in cases where the exposure to precipitation and to stormwater will not result in a discharge of pollutants, or where exposure of a specific material or product poses little risk of stormwater contamination (such as final products and materials intended for outdoor use); and
 - (c) Minimize the discharge of pollutants from spills and leaks, and implement chemical spill and leak prevention and response procedures.

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5. *Prohibited discharges.* The following discharges are prohibited.
 - (a) Wastewater from wash out of concrete, unless managed by an appropriate control;
 - (b) Wastewater from wash out and cleanout of stucco, paint, form release oils, curing compounds and other construction materials;
 - (c) Fuels, oils, or other pollutants used in vehicle and equipment operation and maintenance;
 - (d) Soaps or solvents used in vehicle and equipment washing; and
 - (e) Toxic or hazardous substances from a spill or other release.
6. *Surface Outlets.* When discharging from basins and impoundments, utilize outlet structures that withdraw water from the surface, unless infeasible.

B. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWP₃)

The general permit continues the requirement to develop and implement an SWP₃ to control discharges of stormwater associated with construction activities, in accordance with the NPDES program. Conditions of the proposed general permit have been developed to comply with the technology-based standards of the Clean Water Act.

The general permit is based on a series of BMPs, in the form of a required SWP₃, rather than numeric limitations, to prevent or minimize pollutants in stormwater discharges. BMPs may include erosion controls, sediment controls, stabilization practices, and nonstructural controls. Erosion controls provide the first line of defense in preventing off-site sedimentation and are designed to prevent erosion through protection and preservation of soil. Sediment controls are designed to remove sediment from runoff before the runoff is discharged from the site. Sediment and erosion controls can be further divided into two major classes of controls: stabilization practices and structural practices. Part IV.B. of this fact sheet describes the elements of the required SWP₃. The SWP₃ must comply with the new construction and development effluent guidelines in Part IV of the general permit.

Small construction sites that obtain automatic authorization based on the precalculated R factor, or that receive a waiver from coverage based on a calculated R factor, are not required to prepare an SWP₃.

C. Benchmark Monitoring Requirements

The 1998 NPDES CGP for EPA Region 6 for large construction activities included numeric effluent limitations for stormwater discharges from concrete batch plants in Texas. The original TPDES CGP continued these limits and applied them to all regulated construction activities. The TCEQ's original recommendation on the NPDES CGP was based on the requirements for wastewater and contact stormwater found in TCEQ's authorization by rule for concrete production facilities, 30 TAC § 321.155.

The proposed general permit continues the benchmark sampling requirements, BMPs, and SWP₃ requirements for the stormwater-only discharges from concrete batch plants that are found in the 2018 TCEQ CGP. This is consistent with TCEQ's MSGP for discharges of stormwater runoff associated with industrial activity and with TCEQ's Wastewater General Permit for Concrete Production Facilities, TXG110000.

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The following benchmark monitoring requirements are applicable to all discharges from concrete batch plants, and are not applicable to other discharges described in the general permit:

Benchmark Parameter	Benchmark Value
Oil and Grease	15 mg/L
Total Suspended Solids	50 mg/L
pH	6.0 - 9.0 Standard Units
Total Iron	1.3 mg/L

Sampling for the above parameters is required to be conducted at each outfall that includes stormwater runoff from a concrete batch plant. Sampling is required at each regulated construction site that utilizes a concrete batch plant authorized under this permit. A concrete batch plant may alternatively be authorized under another TPDES individual or applicable general permit.

Sampling is required at a frequency of once per quarter when discharge occurs. Sampling shall be conducted during the following periods:

Period	Time Frame
First Quarter	January - March
Second Quarter	April - June
Third Quarter	July - September
Fourth Quarter	October - December

Applicants shall begin sampling in the first full quarter following submission of the NOI. For projects lasting less than one (1) full quarter, a minimum of one (1) sample shall be collected, provided that a discharge occurred at least once following submission of the NOI or automatic authorization.

XI. Water Quality-Based Requirements

The Texas Surface Water Quality Standards (TSWQS) are located at 30 TAC Chapter 307, and state that “surface waters will not be toxic to man from ingestion of water, consumption of aquatic organisms, or contact with skin, or to terrestrial or aquatic life.” The methodology outlined in the *Procedures to Implement the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards*, RG-194 (June 2010) is designed to ensure compliance with 30 TAC Chapter 307. Specifically, the methodology is designed to ensure that no source will be allowed to discharge any wastewater which: (1) results in instream aquatic toxicity; (2) causes a violation of an applicable narrative or numerical state water quality standard; (3) results in the endangerment of a drinking water supply; or (4) results in aquatic bioaccumulation which threatens human health.

TPDES permits contain technology-based effluent limits reflecting the best controls available. Where these technology-based permit limits do not protect water quality or the

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designated uses of the receiving stream, additional conditions are included in the TPDES permits, which may include discharge limitations. State narrative and numerical water quality standards are used in conjunction with EPA criteria and other toxicity data bases to determine the adequacy of technology-based permit limits and the need for additional water-quality based controls.

The TPDES stormwater permits generally do not contain numeric water quality-based effluent limitations (WQBELs). As stated in 30 TAC § 307.8(e), controls on the quality of permitted stormwater discharges are largely based on implementing BMPs or technology-based limits in combination with instream monitoring to assess standards attainment and to determine whether additional controls on stormwater are needed. Typically, a combination of stabilization practices, structural practices, and non structural BMPs are necessary throughout a construction site to provide adequate water quality protection. It has been preliminarily determined that if permit requirements are properly implemented, no significant degradation is expected and existing uses will be maintained and protected.

XII. Monitoring

No discharge monitoring is proposed for this general permit beyond those described in Part X.B. of this fact sheet, related to benchmark sampling applicable to stormwater runoff associated with concrete batch plants. This approach is continued from the existing general permit.

XIII. Procedures for Final Decision

The MOA between the EPA and TCEQ provides that EPA has up to 90 days to comment, object, or make recommendations to the general permit before it is published in the *Texas Register*. 30 TAC Chapter 205 requires that when the general permit is proposed, the executive director must publish notice, in at least one newspaper of statewide or regional circulation. The TCEQ may also publish notice in additional newspapers of statewide or regional circulation. Mailed notice must also be provided to the following:

- A. the county judge of the county or counties in which the discharges under the general permit could be located;
- B. if applicable, state and federal agencies for which notice is required in 40 CFR § 124.10(c);
- C. persons on a relevant mailing list kept under 30 TAC § 39.407, relating to Mailing Lists; and
- D. any other person the executive director or chief clerk may elect to include.

After notice of the general permit is published in the *Texas Register* and the newspaper(s), the public will have at least 30 days to provide public comment on the proposed permit.

A public meeting will be held at the end of the public comment period. A public meeting is intended for the taking of public comment, and is not a contested case proceeding under the Administrative Procedure Act. The public will be given notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting, as required by Commission rules.

The executive director will respond to all significant public comments raised during the public comment period and make the response available to the public. The proposed general permit will then be filed with the Commission to consider final approval of the

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permit. The executive director's response to public comment will be made available to the public at least ten days before the Commission acts on the proposed general permit.

For additional information about this general permit, contact the Stormwater Team at (512) 239-4671.

XIV. Administrative Record

The following section is a list of the fact sheet citations to applicable statutory or regulatory provisions and appropriate supporting references.

A. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and Federal Register (FR) Citations

40 CFR Parts 122, 124, and §§ 450.21, 450.23, and 450.24

Federal Register dated February 29, 2012 (Volume 77, No. 40, Pages 12286-12293),
Resissuance of NPDES General Permits for Stormwater Discharges From
Construction Activities in Region 6; Notice

Federal Register dated November 5, 2010 (75 FR 68217)

Federal Register dated March 8, 2010 (75 FR 10439)

Federal Register dated December 1, 2009 (74 FR 63057)

Federal Register dated June 12, 2006 (Volume 71, No. 112, Pages 33628-33639)
Amendments to the NPDES Regulations for Storm Water Discharges Associated with
Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Processing, or Treatment Operations, or
Transmission Facilities

Federal Register dated December 8, 1999 (64 FR 68722)

B. Letters/Memoranda/Records of Communication

Interoffice Memorandum dated January 14, 2022 from the TCEQ Water Quality
Standards Implementation Team.

Public comments received during the initial stakeholder meeting during development
of the 2023 general permit.

Public comments received during the public notice period for the 2023 CGP.

EPA Interim Objection Letter dated July 20, 2022.

TCEQ Response Letter to EPA dated August 4, 2022.

EPA Approval Letter dated August 18, 2022.

C. Miscellaneous

TPDES Construction General Permit (CGP) No. TXR150000, issued on February 8,
2018, effective on March 5, 2018, and amended on January 28, 2022.

TPDES Multi Sector General Permit (MSGP) No. TXR050000, issued on July 16,
2021, and effective on August 14, 2023.

TPDES Concrete Batch Plant General Permit No. TXG110000, issued on October 20,
2021, and effective on October 26, 2021.

EPA's 2017 Construction General Permit, TXR10F000, modified on June 27, 2019.

EPA's 2022 Construction General Permit, TXR10F000, issued on January 18, 2022.

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Addendum to Memorandum of Agreement Between Texas Commission of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 Concerning the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, January 15, 2021.

Energy Policy Act of 2005, H.R. 6, 109th Cong., Pub. L. No. 109-58, 119 Stat. 594 (2005).

EPA's Fact Sheet No. 3.1, *Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Construction Rainfall Erosivity Waiver*, January 2001 (EPA 833-F-00-014), revised March 2012.

Agriculture Handbook No. 282, *Predicting Rainfall-Erosion Losses from Cropland East of the Rocky Mountains, Guide for Selection of Practices for Soil and Water Conservation*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, in Cooperation with Purdue Agricultural Experiment Station.

Agriculture Handbook No. 703, *Predicting Soil Erosion by Water: A Guide to Conservation Planning With the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE)*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service.

Quality Criteria for Water (1986), EPA 440/5-86-001, 5/1/86.

The State of Texas Water Quality Inventory, 13th Edition, Publication No. SFR-50, Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, December 1996.

Procedures to Implement the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Publication RG-194, June 2010.

TNRCC Guidance Document for Establishing Monitoring Frequencies for Domestic and Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permits, TNRCC Document No. 98-001.000-OWR-WQ, May 1998.

TCEQ Rules, including: 30 TAC Chapters 39, 205, 213, 281, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 319, 321, and 331.