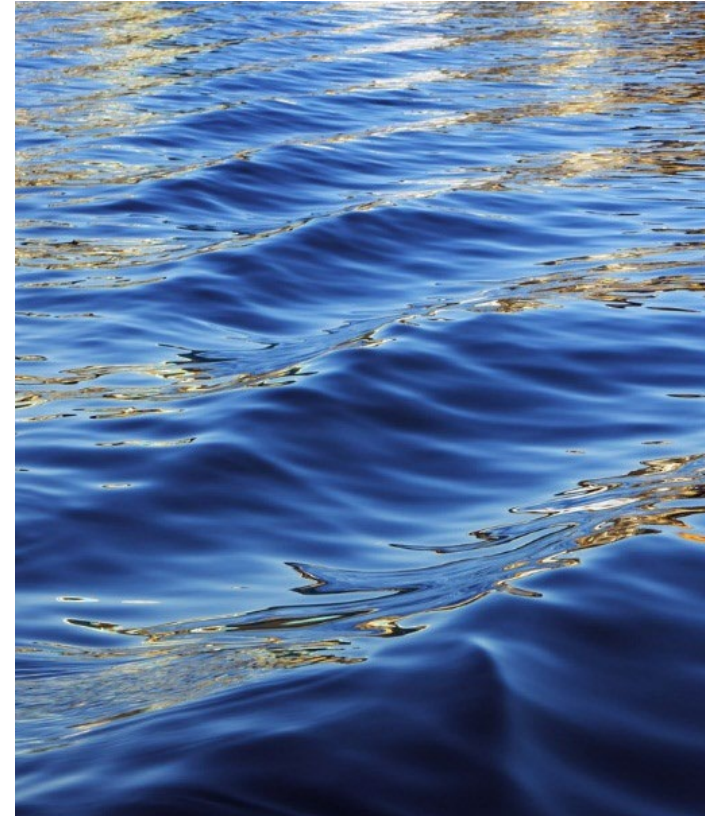




# NPDES Program Overview



# Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments - 1972

## Clean Water Act Section 101(a)

- Objective: restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters
- National Goals and Policies include:
  - Eliminate the discharge of pollutants to navigable waters by 1985
  - As an interim goal, achieve by July 1, 1983, wherever attainable, a level of water quality that provides for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and provides for recreation in and on the water
  - Prohibit the discharge of toxic pollutants in toxic amounts

# Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments - 1972

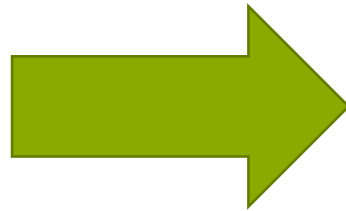
## (Continued)

- Section 402 NPDES
  - Establishes permit program to authorize discharges from point sources of pollutants to a waters of the US
  - Authorization of state NPDES permitting programs
  - Set maximum permit term of 5 years
  - "Permit as a shield"
- Section 301 - Technology- and water quality-based requirements
- Section 306 – New Source Performance Standards
- Section 307 - Pretreatment programs
- Section 309 - Significant penalties for permit violations

# The NPDES Program?

- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program?
  - Regulates the discharge of pollutants into Waters of the United States
  - Discharges to surface waters must meet applicable requirements to protect water quality and the uses of the waterbody
  - Facilities that discharge must have an NPDES permit, comply with permit conditions, and self-report data and instances of non-compliance

- *All point sources*
- *Discharging pollutants*
- *Into waters of the United States*



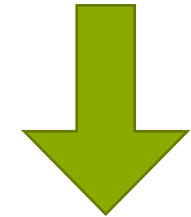
Must obtain an  
NPDES *permit* from  
EPA or an authorized  
state, territory, or  
tribe

# Either U.S. EPA or a State/Territory/Tribe Administers the NPDES Program

## U.S. EPA administers the NPDES permit program

unless a state, territory, or tribal government seeks and receives authorization:

- ▣ **Request:** State/territory/tribe [hereafter “state”] must submit a detailed request to EPA for approval [40 CFR Part 123]
- ▣ **Content:** The request must include requisite legal authority, resource commitment, and implementation procedures
- ▣ **Authority:** Upon EPA approval of the state program, exclusive authority for permitting transfers to the state
- ▣ **Oversight:** EPA assumes oversight role and reviews and objects to permits as necessary to assure consistency with federal requirements



**State  
DEQ**

# Regulated Discharges are Limited to Point Sources

- Point Source: Any discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance to a surface water.
  - Examples: Pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, landfill leachate, etc.
  - Exceptions: Return flows from irrigated agriculture or agricultural stormwater runoff
- Basically, any identifiable point of discharge into a Water of the U.S. is a point source
  - Examples: Publicly owned treatment works, power plants, food processing facilities, industrial and construction stormwater runoff, manufacturing, paper mills

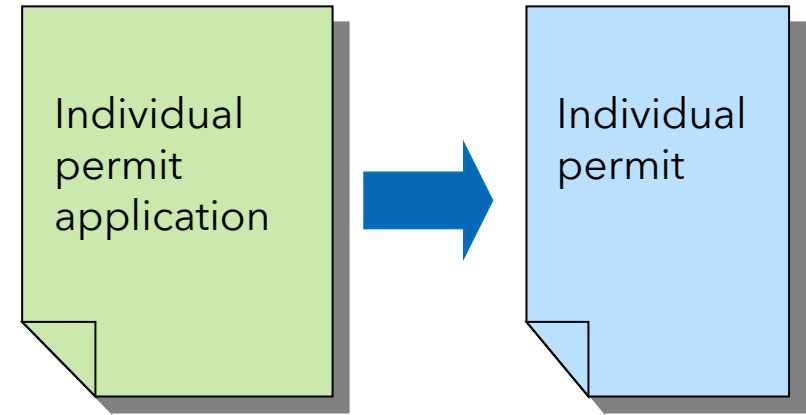


# What is a Pollutant?

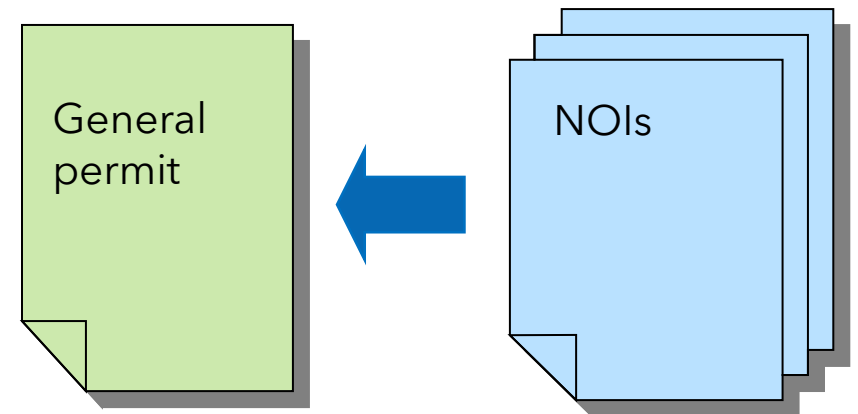
- Pollutant:
  - Anything that changes the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of the receiving water.
  - Example: dredged spoil, solid waste, incinerator residue, filter backwash, sewage, garbage, sewage sludge, munitions, chemical wastes, biological materials, radioactive materials, heat, wrecked or discarded equipment, rock, sand, cellar dirt and industrial, municipal, and agricultural waste discharged into water.
  - Exclusion: Sewage from vessels or certain materials related to injection wells.

# NPDES Permit Types

- Individual Permit
  - One application submitted for each permit issued
  - Appropriate where facility-specific permit conditions are needed
- General Permit [§ 122.28]
  - One permit issued and many Notices of Intent (NOIs) for coverage submitted
  - Appropriate where:
    - Multiple, similar sources within the same geographic area require permit coverage
    - Sources have similar discharges and would require the same or similar permit conditions

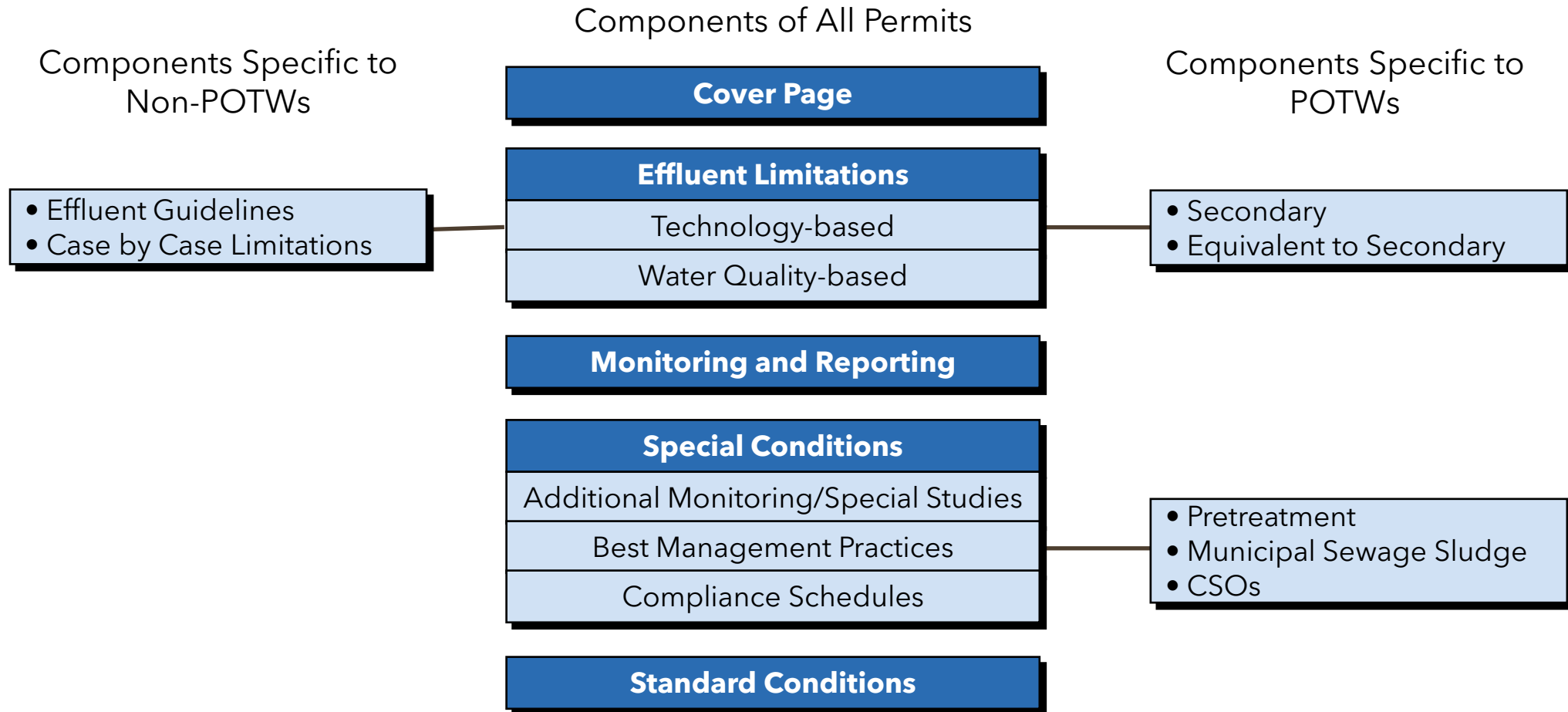


46,902 facilities (May 2024)



953 permits with 422,076 facilities  
(May 2024)

# Key Components of an NPDES Permit



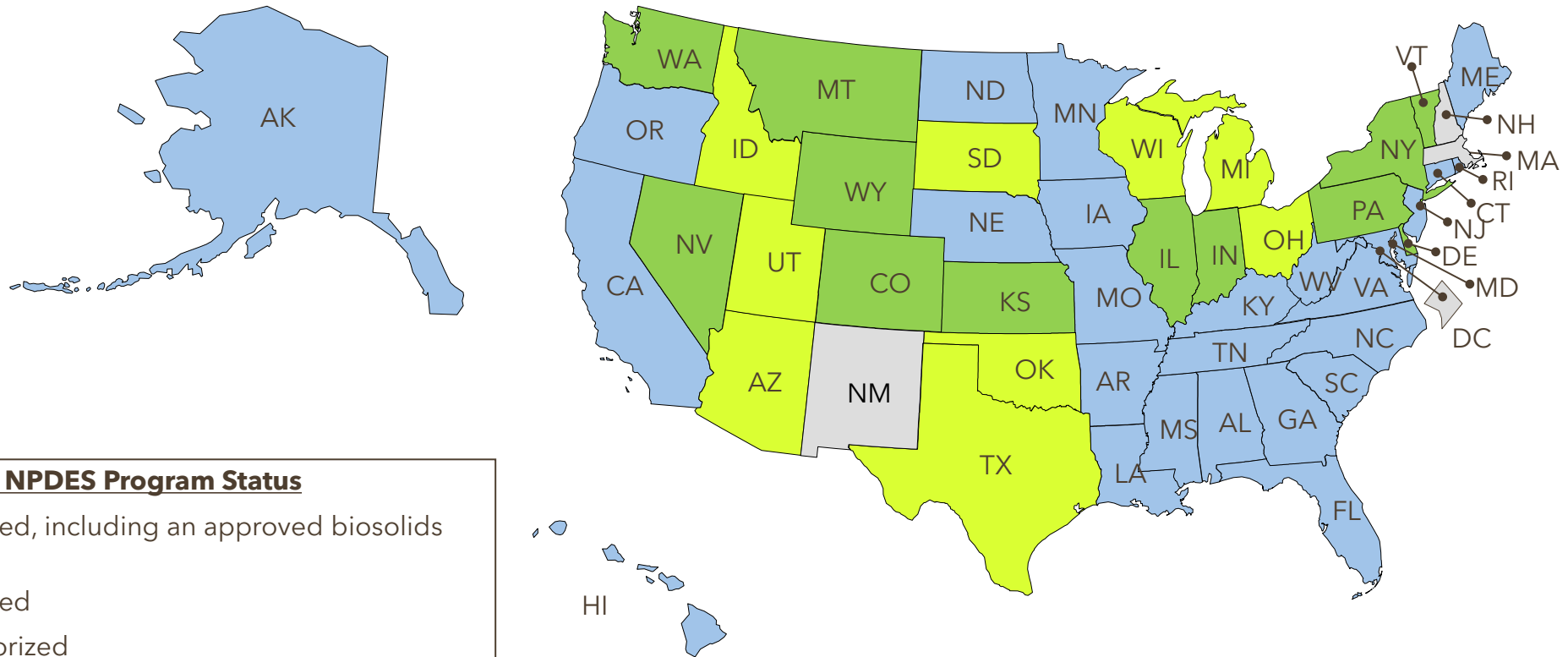
# Key Components of the Federal NPDES Program

- Basic Municipal and Industrial Permit Program
- Pretreatment Program
- Federal Facilities Program
- General Permit Program
- Sewage Sludge (Biosolids) Permit Program





Note: Stormwater and Confined Animal Feeding Operations are part of the core program

# US EPA or State Administers the NPDES Program

- US EPA administers the NPDES program unless a state, territory, or tribe seeks and receives authorization



## **State NPDES Program Status**

-  Fully authorized, including an approved biosolids program
-  Fully authorized
-  Partially authorized
-  Unauthorized

# More Information

- If you would like more information about the NPDES program, please check out EPA's NPDES webpage at: [www.epa.gov/npdes](http://www.epa.gov/npdes)

## National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)



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NPDES

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